

5 WAYS TO INSTIL A GROWTH MINDSET

TEACH CHILDREN TO RISE ABOVE SELF-LIMITING BELIEFS AND DO THEIR BEST.

When children face a new or challenging task, their response can be either "This is too hard; I give up" or "I don't know how to do it yet, but I want to try". How they respond is crucial. Having a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset — terms coined by psychologist Carol Dweck — will encourage and motivate children to strive harder, as well as strengthen their mental and emotional well-being. It is important for children to nurture a growth mindset so that they are excited to explore and try new things, without being bound by fear of failure or doubts about their abilities.



1 MODEL A GROWTH MINDSET
Children's attitudes are shaped by observing their parents. Show them you are not daunted by failure, and work on fixing your mistakes or improving yourself. This teaches them to respond to setbacks in the same manner. Being open to new experiences is also important, as it helps children build self-confidence to take risks and challenge themselves.



2 SET UP AN ACCOMPLISHMENT JAR
Get children to write down one thing they have accomplished every day. It can be an act of kindness ("I gave my friend a hug when he cried"), a new skill ("I buttoned my own shirt today") or new knowledge ("I learned to spell 'cat'"). Put these notes in a jar. At the end of the week, take them out and read them together. Reviewing and celebrating children's achievements motivate them to build on their success.

3 DO THE '3-2-1' EXERCISE
This self-reflection activity can be done at the end of each day or week. Find a quiet moment to avoid distractions, and get children to ask themselves three questions:

- "What are three things I have learned?"
- "What are two things I want to learn?"
- "What is one question I still have?"

Doing this exercise regularly helps children gain perspective and insights on their learning and growth.



4 USE WORDS WISELY
Be process-oriented, not outcome-oriented. If a child struggles with a math problem, say "This is difficult, but let's try again" rather than "It's okay, not everyone is good at maths". Instead of giving praise like "You're so smart to get that trick right", say "Wow, you practised very hard to learn this trick". Emphasise perseverance and determination, rather than intelligence. It teaches children the importance of values and nurtures resilient children who can bounce back when they fail.



5 CRUSH THE PROBLEM
When children feel upset or angry about a mistake or failure, have them write it down on a piece of paper, crumple it into a ball, and throw it at the wall. After a minute or two, ask them to unfold the paper, read it and think about what went wrong. Explain that everyone has slip-ups and discuss how they can do things differently or better next time. Finally, get them to crumple up the paper again and throw it in the bin to symbolise that the mistake or failure is a thing of the past.

