

Buiding A Growth Mindset in Your Child

As report cards come out for the second marking period, and we head into the second half of our school year, your child may need a bit of an emotional boost. Increasing your child's Growth Mindset is a wonderful way to help them in both school, and in life beyond the school-age years. Growth Mindset is the belief that our abilities are always changing (not fixed) and that we are able to improve with hard work and practice. It is a focus on personal growth, using internal dialogue to combat negative thoughts and viewing mistakes as opportunities for growth. Students with this mindset may become more successful in school because they bounce back from failure and do not get stuck in a negative thinking pattern of self-defeat. Teaching your child Growth Mindset tools is a way to help them to become the best version of themselves.

Catching and Changing Negative Thoughts

Our minds have thousands of thoughts every hour, and many of those thoughts are automatic and negative. If we don't pay attention to them and change their tone, they can control our behavior and mood. The good news is that we have the power to change those thoughts from negative and automatic to positive and intentional. Helping our kids recognize those patterns and turn them around is key to developing a growth mindset.

The Power of YET

Help your child change the phrase "I cannot do this..." to "I cannot do this, YET..." By simply adding that word, they have decided not to give up. They are acknowledging the fact that they can do hard things with hard work. Embracing challenge is at the heart of a

growth mindset. When you catch your child saying that they cannot do something, have them rephrase their sentence by adding “YET.”

Personal Growth

Explain to your child that comparing themselves to others has little meaning. A healthy competition is fun, but it should never define who you are as a person. Everyone has different abilities and learns at a different pace. Teach your child that the real prize is being able to compare yourself to YOURSELF. The end goal should be personal growth, not a letter grade or a trophy.

Positive Self-Talk

To combat automatic negative thoughts, help your child practice saying positive things over and over. A fun way to do this is to look in a mirror and read a script of compliments. (We will be doing this in our February Counseling lessons). Ask your child to write down a list of wonderful things about a person they admire. Then have them read that list to themselves. Eventually, those words begin to stick and it becomes easier to get rid of negative thoughts.

Self-Control

Before a child can fully attain a growth mindset, they need to work on their self-control. This includes letting go of worries that may be holding them back. Help them distinguish between worries that are not in their control and ones that they can work on with a specific plan.

Having a Growth Mindset will not only help your child in the short term, but these skills will also help your child prepare for life’s inevitable “curve balls.” Resiliency is so important and we can truly help our kids bounce back and regroup with these important skills.