

Growth Mindsets

A Guide For Parents



Why Are We Learning About Growth Mindsets at Newington Green?

At Newington Green, the children, staff, governors and parents have been learning all about growth mindsets. We have been looking at the research of world renowned psychologist Carol Dweck who has been researching mindsets for over 20 years. Her research shows us that by learning about mindsets, children can increase their learning power, become more resilient and improve their mental wellbeing.

What Are Mindsets?

Our mindset is the view we have of our qualities and characteristics – where they come from and whether they can change. Dweck has discovered that our mindset can have a significant impact on our lives and in particular, the way we learn. In one of Dweck's studies, she found that characteristics of either growth or fixed mindsets can be seen in people as young as 4 years old. Just by learning about mindsets and how our brains work, children can change from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset.



Fixed Mindsets

People with a fixed mindset believe that their qualities are set in stone. We are born the way we are born and it cannot be changed. Intelligence, personality and creativity are fixed traits, rather than something that can be developed.

When people have a fixed mindset, they often display the following traits:

- Belief that talent and intelligence is everything.
- Only less talented/intelligent people need to put in effort. Geniuses don't need to put in hard work.
- Finding the idea of trying and failing terrifying.
- Not listening or responding to feedback from others.
- Shying away from challenge for fear of embarrassment or failure.
- Being threatened by the success of others.
- Confidence which is fragile and easily undermined by setbacks
- An urgency to prove themselves and show they are better than others.
- A lack of resilience when something is challenging or they fail.
- Using the phrase "I can't do this," and giving up easily.

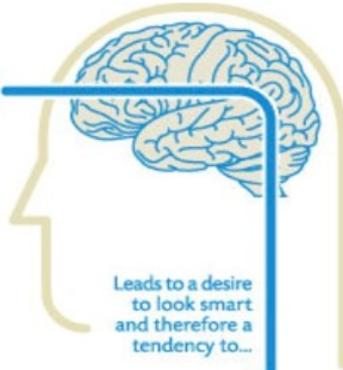
Growth Mindsets

People with a growth mindset believe that they can cultivate and grow their intelligence and understanding, through purposeful practice, effort and experience.

When people have a growth mindset, they often display the following traits:

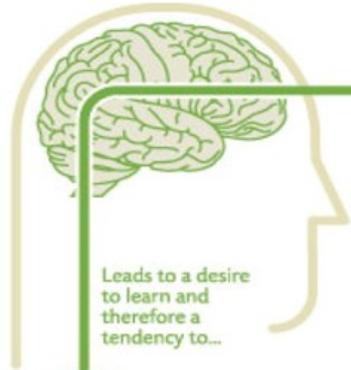
- Understanding the importance of effort and that the right kind of effort can lead to achievement.
- Understanding that intelligence can be grown.
- Thriving on failure – viewing mistakes as learning opportunities
- Responding positively to feedback from others and using it to help them improve
- Learning from other people and their successes.
- Seeing challenge as positive
- Using the phrase "I can't do this...yet."

Fixed Mind-set
Intelligence is static



Leads to a desire to look smart and therefore a tendency to...

Growth Mind-set
Intelligence can be developed



Leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to...

CHALLENGES

...avoid challenges



...embrace challenges



OBSTACLES

...give up easily



...persist in the face of setbacks



EFFORT

...see effort as fruitless or worse



...see effort as the path to mastery



CRITICISM

...ignore useful negative feedback



...learn from criticism



SUCCESS OF OTHERS

...feel threatened by the success of others



...find lessons and inspiration in the success of others



As a result, they may plateau early and achieve less than their full potential.
All this confirms a **deterministic view of the world.**

As a result, they reach ever-higher levels of achievement.
All this gives them a **greater sense of free will.**

Mixed Mindsets

In reality, most of us have mixed mindsets, most of the time. In other words, our mindsets might change, depending on the subject we are learning or the situation we are in. A child's mindset could even differ at different stages of a lesson.

TOP TIPS

for helping your child develop a growth mindset

1) Be A Growth Mindset Role Model

- Talk to your child about your experiences of being a learner, even as an adult.
- Explain to them what you do when you find something challenging. Have you had an experience of finding something difficult? Tell them how you kept going.
- Avoid making statements that imply intelligence is fixed, e.g. avoid talking about simply being clever, a genius or talented. Instead, talk about the journey people take to improve.
- Encourage your child to see challenges as learning opportunities.

2) Focus Your Praise on Effort, Not Intelligence

- Avoid praising your child for being clever, intelligent or talented. (Carol Dweck's research shows that this helps to develop a fixed mindset).
- Instead, praise the effort they have made to get there, rather than the end result.
- Ask your child what they think they could do to challenge themselves further.

Instead of saying...

“You’re amazing at spelling!”

“Don’t worry, I’m not good at maths either.”

You could say....

“Wow! You tried really hard at your spelling today.”

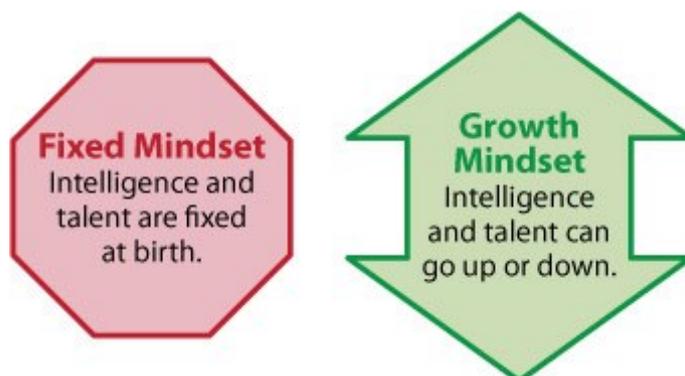
“We both find maths hard, but we just can’t do it yet. How could we get better?”

3) Build Your Child’s Resilience

- Talk to your child about ‘growing’ or ‘exercising’ their brain.
- Remind them that mistakes are great because they help us to learn.
- Talk about challenges in a positive way, e.g. “I can see that you’re finding your maths challenging today. That means that you’re exercising your brain and helping it to grow.”

4) Talk About Mindsets With Your Child

- Talk to your child about what they are learning in school about mindsets
- Ask them if they have had a growth or a fixed mindset today and encourage them to explain why.
- Look at the school growth mindset charter together.



Our Growth Mindset Charter

At Newington Green

- We understand that we can train our brains and make them grow.
- We love challenges and are always looking for ways to improve.
- We are not scared of mistakes, because we know they help us learn.
- We are not afraid to take risks in our learning, or ask questions.
- We understand that the effort and the journey taken are often more important than the final outcome.
- We understand that 'purposeful practice' and feedback help us to improve.
- We don't put limits on ourselves or others.
- We recognise that our strengths and skills can change.
- We learn from and encourage each other and are inspired by the success of others.
- We use encouraging language with each other.
- We realise that success is the result of hard work, determination and perseverance.
- We keep going, even when it's challenging.
- We share and celebrate our successes in all areas of learning.

Useful Links for Growth Mindsets

BOOKS



For Further Background Reading

- 'Mindset: How You Can Fulfil Your Potential' by Dr. Carol S. Dweck
- 'Mindset: The New Psychology of Success' by Dr. Carol S. Dweck
- 'Growth Mindset Pocketbook' by Barry Hymer and Mike Gershon
- 'Mindsets In The Classroom' by Mary Kay Ricci
- 'Bounce' by Matthew Syed
- 'Black Box Thinking' by Mathew Syed
- 'Peak: Secrets From The New Science of Expertise' by Anders Ericsson
- 'Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance' by Angela Duckworth

To Read with Children

'Your Fantastic, Elastic Brain: Stretch It, Shape It' by JoAnn Deak Ph.D.
'The Dot' by Peter H. Reynolds
'I Can't Do This...' by K. J. Walton
'The Mindset Melting Pot' by K.J. Walton
'A Muddle of Mistakes' by K. J. Walton
'The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes' by Mark Pett and Gary Rubinstein
'Beautiful Oops' by Barnett Salzberg
'Thanks For The Feedback' by Julia Cook
'Everyone Can Learn to Ride A Bicycle' by Chris Raschka
'Rosie Revere, Engineer' by Andrea Beaty
'Ada Twist, Scientist' by Andrea Beaty
'Stuck' by Oliver Jeffers
'The Most Magnificent Thing' by Ashley Spires
'What Do You Do With An Idea?' by Kobi Yamada
'Giraffes Can't Dance' by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees
'Mistakes That Worked' by Charlotte Jones



WEBSITES

<http://www.growthmindset.org/> website from author K.J. Walton with useful resources and texts to buy linked to growth mindset
<https://www.mindsetkit.org/> website for educators with videos and links about growth mindset
<https://www.mindsetworks.com> Website with a wealth of information about mindsets, including some free resources and info about the science behind mindsets.
<http://www.growthmindsetmaths.com/> Lots of useful links for videos and resources linked to mindset and maths
<http://mindsetonline.com/whatisit/about/> Interesting reading about growth mindsets
<http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/> Educational blog – search for growth mindsets for a wealth of resources and links to use in class.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/help-your-child-try-new-things> Cbeebies webpage - useful to share with parents

VIDEOS ONLINE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fq1jvly2AE> 'The Growth Mindset Song' (I HAVE A GO) music video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SnrHZ_uvtxk Sesame Street Do Growth Mindset (with Bruno Mars)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vchWYQyZtec> Elmo Doesn't Give Up Song (Yet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLeUvZvuvAs> Sesame Street: Janelle Monae - Power of Yet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zrtHf3bBmQ&list=PLgcsquFBelxLEmHSbM395aYyl4qhs5bsc> Class Dojo animated story about growth mindsets

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7FdMi03Czl&list=PLbAGBJeYaVuB7bzwQqPqu01lusegJ0nbH> Animated video about neuroplasticity and learning from challenges with Ned The Neuron

You can also search on youtube.com for read-aloud versions of growth mindset books.