

Parent's Growth Mindset checklist

Do you want your child to be successful, happy and resilient? Sometimes we don't realise that words that we think encourage and praise can actually undermine your child's ability to become the best learners they can be. Every word or action sends a message to your child. Are you sending messages that suggest you are judging them or supporting them to learn and grow?

To help your child reach their real lifelong potential and be emotionally resilient try this:

Do	Do say	Don't	Don't say
Praise effort rather than focus on outcome	<i>I'm so proud of how hard you are trying and how much you are learning</i>	Praise their intelligence and talents – as if they are fixed	<i>You must get 10/10 – it's the only result that matters because you are so bright</i>
Give lots of feedback about how they have done and what they could do next – without criticising and judging.	<i>You have written such an exciting story – how about redrafting and checking some of the spellings I have underlined?</i>	Judge their outcomes – either good or bad	<i>You are so talented, I expected more from you OR This is full of mistakes you can do better!</i>
Focus on what they are learning and developing and celebrate that	<i>You have really tried hard with those sums – how do you work them out?</i>	Make them feel all that matters is their scores and grades	<i>You got an A that is brilliant You need to get good grades if you are ever going to be successful</i>
Help them realise that mistakes are part of learning and you only learn by making mistakes and sticking at it until you can make progress	<i>Did you find that book hard with all those difficult words – just think how much you are learning if you get through it all</i>	Get upset if they can't do it – and show you think they are useless	<i>Are you too stupid to read that book?</i>
Model growth mindset yourself by sometimes getting it wrong and showing how you learn from it	<i>I'm finding it really hard to learn a few Spanish phrases for the holiday but I'm going to stick at it!</i>	Demonstrate you are stuck in your ways and nervous about learning new things	<i>I don't do foreign languages..and I'm no good at maths, so I'd rather not bother</i>
Praise them for specific achievements and persistence	<i>I'm impressed with how you have found a new way to understand algebra. You stuck at it and I'm so proud.</i>	Only praise when they get it all right	<i>You've only done 5 I thought you could get at least 10 done</i>
Help them fix it when they make mistakes	<i>Hey you got it wrong – that's good because it shows you can keep learning</i>	Make judgements about their ability and compare them with other children	<i>Hope your teacher doesn't think you can't do this because I bet all your friends can.</i>
Talk to them about the learning process and journey	<i>What have you learnt today that has really pushed your comfort zone?</i>	Let them think you can learn and make progress without the pain of hard work!	<i>If it's too hard, don't do it – you don't want to get upset</i>
Help them choose challenging tasks that stretch them even if they may not get everything right	<i>Isn't it exciting when you are working really hard on something and it's so very hard but eventually you get it!</i>	Advise them that they don't have to do anything they don't want to	<i>It's not fair if you get it wrong, your teacher should help you more.</i>

Praise EFFORT not outcome

DO. Use words that encourage:

Wow!	How did you work that out?	What do you plan to do next?
Look at that!		
Tell me about it.	I see that you _____ (be specific)	That looks like it took so much work.
Show me more.	That looks like it took a lot of effort.	Are you pleased with what you did?
How did you do that?		
Let's see what you did.	How many ways did you try it before it turned out the way you wanted it?	
How do you feel about it?		

DON'T. Use labels that judge:

Smart.	Pretty.	Lovely.	Better than... _____ (another person)
Cute.	Good.	Intelligent.	
Great.	Quick.	Right.	
Fast.	Clever.	Amazing.	
Best.	Beautiful.	The best.	

DO. Use mindset growing conversations

"What did you struggle with today?"

"You can grow your intelligence"

"This is hard, but this is fun, what should we do next?"

"You can learn. You can stretch. You can keep mastering new things"

"I don't think there's anything better in the world than a child hearing from their peers, a parent or teacher the words, '*You'll get there*'"

Remember - praising kids' ability *lowered* their IQ scores!

"Do you label your kids? E.g. "This one is the artist and that one is the scientist." Next time, remember that you're not helping them – even though you may be praising them.