

# THE POWER OF YET...

Here at Fingringhoe Primary School, we are trying to teach the children to love challenge, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort and keep on learning (even when they find work challenging).

Has your child ever said to you: I'm not good enough... There's no point... I'll never be able to do this... Have they avoided doing things because they've failed in the past? Feelings like this can be related to what children believe about what makes them good at something – whether it's school work, sport or even their ability to manage their emotions and behaviour. Some children give up too easily when faced with a challenging task or avoid tasks they've failed at before. They believe that being good at something is a fixed state and is something they can't control. In psychology, this way of thinking is called a fixed mindset.

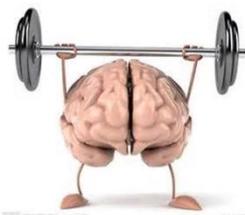
We are very excited about the growth mindset approach to learning. Practising the growth mindset theory with children is a great way to get them engaged with learning. One of the main things holding us back from learning or trying new things is the fear of getting things wrong or not being good enough. Others might bounce back from failure quickly and be more likely to explore how they can get better at doing something. They tend to be children who believe that you can improve your abilities by practising or by finding a different way to achieve your goal. GROW YOUR MIND! This way of thinking is called a growth mindset and developing it can help make children resilient for life.



There are lots of things you can do to help your child develop a growth mindset. Most babies are excited to learn. However, as soon as children are able to compare themselves to others, some will stop focusing on learning and will instead focus on performance. Although no one likes failing, children with a growth mindset do not let failure define them; instead they use setbacks to motivate them.

## How to promote a growth mindset in your child:

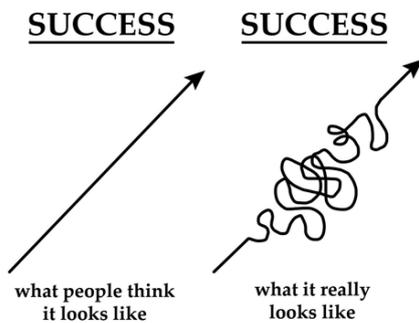
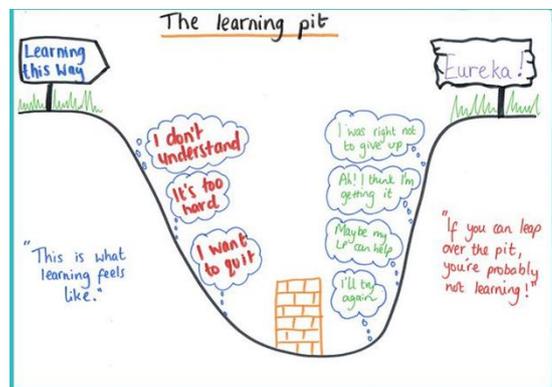
1. **Set high expectations:** It is commonly believed that lowering our expectations promotes self-esteem in children, e.g. "Never mind, let's try an easier one", but this is not the case. Having high expectations works like a self-fulfilling prophecy. It shows that you believe that they can have a go and challenge themselves or even accomplish it, which in turn has a positive effect on their own beliefs and expectations.



2. **Encourage children to be resilient and not give up:** even when they find something difficult or frustrating. We now know that the brain adapts to new information and practice by creating new connections, so help your child to believe that challenge is a positive thing because it means that they are growing their brains! This can help them to be comfortable with the times that they struggle and means that they see this as a sign of learning.

3. **Making mistakes is OK:** The learning pit helps children to understand that when they are learning something new, they will make mistakes and this will make them feel differently. There is a point when we are learning something new that we enter the bottom of the pit and we feel out of our comfort zone. Some children feel stupid, some children feel embarrassed, some children feel worried... The fear of making mistakes can stop children from giving something a go in the first place. We all make mistakes, so try to embrace these mistakes and

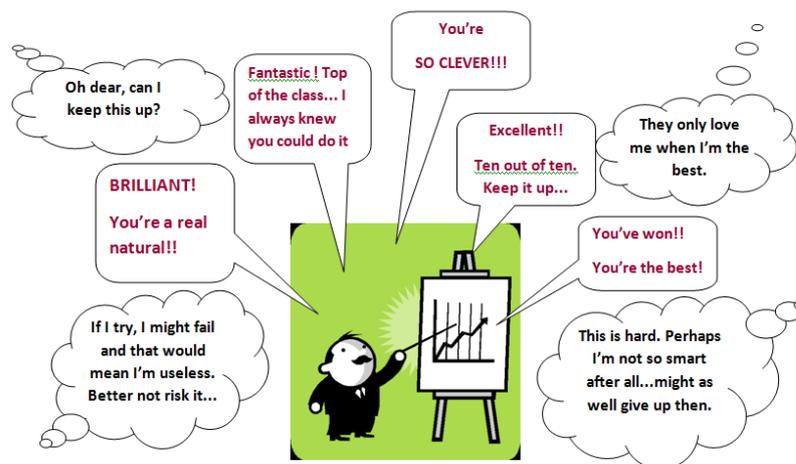
use them as learning opportunities, rather than feeling embarrassed about them. If we are not making mistakes then we are not stretching ourselves.



4. **Use Inspirational Role Models:** Think about your child's favourite athlete, musician or teacher and talk about their journey to success. We call this unravelling the talent myth. If someone has done well, we have a tendency to think they were born that way. We need to show our children that this is not the case. Rather than focusing on somebody's 'natural talents', focus on their early efforts, strong work ethic and the mistakes and learning that led them to where they are now.

5. **Think about how you praise your child:** It's natural to want to praise your child when they have done something well, but we need to do this carefully. Research suggests that the type of praise that we use can have a big impact, and even positive praise can encourage a fixed mindset – this can lead to the belief that it is out of their control.

AVOID:



Instead try:

### 'Growth mindset' language

- 'Well done. You are learning to...'
- 'I'm really pleased you tried that. Look what you achieved.'
- 'I like the way you...'
- 'Don't give up'
- 'What are you most proud of?'
- 'How are you more successful than before?'
- 'This is what we did last time. Let's see what we can achieve today.'
- 'Good learner' instead of clever
- 'Be brave'
- 'Have a go, have another go'
- 'Not work - learning'

**So when you next hear your child say, "I can't do this", follow it up with "YET"!**