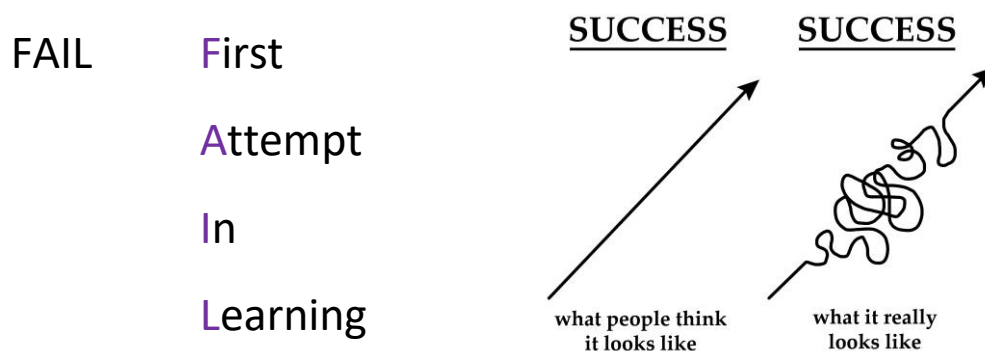


Brownlow Fold Primary School

Growth Mindset

At Brownlow Fold we teach the children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort, and keep on learning (even when they find work challenging).



Practising growth mindset theory with children is a great way to get them engaged with subjects and activities that they try to avoid through fear of getting things wrong or "not being good enough." Carol Dweck is one of the world's leading researchers in the field of motivation. She focuses on why people succeed and how to foster this success in schools.

Some children often say 'There's no point, I'll never be able to do it' or avoid doing something because they've failed at it 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 on challenging tasks easily, or avoid tasks they've failed at before. They believe that being 'good' at a particular activity is a fixed state, and is something they can't control. In psychology, this way of thinking is called a '**fixed mindset**'.

Others might bounce back quickly from failure 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 their goal. This way of thinking is called a '**growth mindset**'.

Below are a few tips and ideas that can help promote a **growth mindset** in children.

Set high expectations for your child: 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 they can do it, which in turn has a positive impact on their own beliefs, behaviour and outcomes.

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 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.



Celebrate mistakes: 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.

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.

Key points to remember for Parents/Carers

- Praise carefully – not for intelligence but for effort
- Encourage deliberate practice and targeted effort
- Encourage high challenge tasks to grow those brain cells!
- Discuss errors and mistakes and help your children to see them as opportunities to learn and improve
- Encourage family discussions about mindset and which mindset they (and you) are choosing to use
- Teach children to talk back to their 'fixed mindset' internal voice with a 'growth mindset' internal voice

Start by redefining the meaning of a few ordinary words...

Effort is...

The secret to getting smarter. The more targeted effort you put in, the more you'll get out. You can help your children to focus their effort and attention, encourage practise. Regularly recognise this effort with effort praise.

Difficulty...

Difficult and challenging tasks give the opportunity for growth. Create excitement with your children as they take on a new challenge and push outside of their comfort zone. Recognise each achievement and point out to them how much they're learning.

Mistakes...

Mistakes are a great opportunity to get feedback, to learn and to grow. Help your children to see that mistakes are feedback (not failure). They provide a great opportunity and motivation for growth. Recognise that when working outside of their comfort zone, they are likely to make mistakes that they can learn from.

Yet...

A small and empowering word....YET...shifts thinking from a fixed to a growth state instantly, use it in conversation with your children. When you hear...

"I can't do it"rephrase and add 'Yet'. "You can't do it yet, is there anything I can do to help you?"

