Growth Mindset at Home

Help your child learn through practice, new strategies, and support. Try these six ideas during play, daily routines, and story time.

1 Model it yourself

Let your child see you learn something new, get stuck, and change your approach.

Try saying “This lid won’t turn. I’ll dry my hands and try again.”

2 Praise what helped

Name the effort or strategy your child used, even if the task is still unfinished.

Try saying “You turned the puzzle piece to see where it fit.”

3 Add “yet” and a next step

When your child says “I can’t,” acknowledge the frustration. Offer one small step or some help.

Try saying “Zippers are tricky. You don’t have it yet. I’ll hold the bottom while you pull.”

4 Make room for mistakes

Share a mistake you made and what you learned from it. Show how you recover.

Try saying “I spilled the water. I’ll wipe it up and pour more slowly next time.”

5 Notice small wins

Point out progress, such as asking for help, returning after a break, or doing one step.

Try saying “You got your heel into your shoe today. Yesterday I helped with that part.”

6 Read and talk together

Read a story such as Meet The Yet Set! and connect the character’s challenge to your child’s life.

Try saying “What helped the character keep learning? When did you try something like that?”

WHEN FRUSTRATION BUILDS

Pause and help your child settle. When they’re ready, offer a choice. “Would you like to try one step together or take a break and come back?”

Growth Mindset at School

Six ways to help children from preschool through first grade practice new skills, try different strategies, and ask for help.

1 Model it yourself

At circle time, let a block tower tip. Think aloud as you show the group a different way to build.

Try saying “My tower tipped. I’ll try wider blocks at the bottom.”

2 Praise what helped

During small groups, name a strategy children can try again or learn from a classmate.

Try saying “You moved each counter as you counted. That helped you count each one once.”

3 Add “yet” and a next step

Before centers, have children rehearse three choices: try one step, ask for help, or take a short break.

Try saying “This tower isn’t steady yet. Want to try a wider block or build the base with me?”

4 Make room for mistakes

Model a small mistake during a group lesson. Let children suggest how to fix it.

Try saying “I skipped a page. What should I do so we hear the whole story?”

5 Notice small wins

At cleanup or closing circle, invite children to share one step they took when something felt hard.

Try saying “You asked for help, then came back and tried another piece.”

6 Read and talk together

Pause during Meet The Yet Set! to discuss a challenge. Practice a strategy from the story at centers.

Try saying “What did the character try next? Where could we try it today?”

WHEN ONE CHILD GETS STUCK

Give the group a familiar task. Move close and speak quietly. When the child is ready, offer help with one step or a short break.

SHARE WITH FAMILIES

“At school, we’re practicing what to do when we get stuck. Ask your child what helps them take the next step.”