

✦ Youth Success Movement Presents

# Mindset Matters

*How Your Words Shape Your Child's Future*

Module 1 · Parent Mini-Course



# What Is Mindset?

The belief system behind how your child learns

■ ■ *Mindset is the set of beliefs a person holds about their own intelligence and abilities.*

— Carol Dweck, Stanford University

## These beliefs shape everything:

- How children respond to challenges
- Whether they bounce back from setbacks
- Their love of learning — now and for life



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## Types of Mindset

Fixed · Growth

# Two Ways of Seeing Ability

Which beliefs is your child developing?

## Fixed Mindset

### Challenges

Avoided — they feel risky

### Effort

Sign of low ability

### Mistakes

Shameful and permanent

### Feedback

Taken personally

*"I'm just not a math person."*

## Growth Mindset

### Challenges

Embraced — they build skill

### Effort

The path to mastery

### Mistakes

Information for improvement

### Feedback

Welcomed as a tool

*"I don't get this yet — let me try again."*

# Why Mindset Matters

The ripple effect on your child's development



## Higher Achievement

Children with a growth mindset embrace challenges and persist — leading to stronger academic results over time.



## Resilience & Well-Being

They see setbacks as temporary and learn from mistakes, reducing anxiety and fear of failure.



## Love of Learning

Effort feels rewarding. Growth-minded children explore beyond their comfort zone — for life.

# You Are the Architect

Parents shape mindset through everyday words and actions



🗣️ *Research shows a mother's use of process praise with her baby can predict that child's growth mindset years later.*



## Your Praise

Process praise builds growth mindset; ability praise builds fragility



## Your Reactions

How you respond to failure teaches children what mistakes mean



## Your Modeling

Children learn by watching how YOU face your own challenges

# Praise the Process, Not the Person

A simple shift with a powerful impact

## ✗ Fixed Praise (Avoid)

*"You're so smart!"*

*"You're a natural!"*

*"You're so gifted!"*

**Links success to a trait they can't control → fragility**

## ✓ Process Praise (Use)

*"I love how hard you worked on this!"*

*"Great strategy — what will you try next?"*

*"Your persistence is paying off!"*

**Links success to effort → confidence and resilience**

## Try These Phrases Today

☆ *"I can see how hard you worked on this. Your effort really paid off."*

🧠 *"The more you practice, the stronger your brain gets."*

🔥 *"I love your determination — you kept trying even when it was difficult!"*

# The Most Powerful Word in Your Vocabulary

Reframing ability into possibility

# Yet

*One word. Infinite possibility.*

*"I can't do this."* → Add "Yet" *"I can't do this yet."*

Turns a closed door into an open one.

## Normalizing Mistakes

💡 *"Mistakes are proof that you are trying."*

🔄 *"Every expert was once a beginner."*

↗️ *"Failure is just part of the learning curve."*

# Pitfalls Every Parent Should Know

Well-meaning words that can backfire



## Praising Intelligence

"You're so smart!" creates fear of challenges that might disprove the label.



## Labeling Children

"She's the math whiz" limits exploration and discourages growth outside set roles.



## Overreacting to Failure

Anxiety or disappointment after a bad grade teaches children failure is shameful.



## Preventing Struggle

Stepping in too quickly robs children of the resilience built by working through difficulty.

# Mindset in Everyday Moments

Same situation. Very different message.

Situation	Fixed Response ✗	Growth Response ✓
 <p>Poor grade on a science test</p>	<p><i>"Science just isn't your thing. Focus on what you're good at."</i></p>	<p><i>"Let's look at this together and make a plan for next time. What do you think you need to work on?"</i></p>
 <p>Can't ride a bike — keeps falling</p>	<p><i>"Maybe you're not ready yet. We'll try again when you're older."</i></p>	<p><i>"You can't do it yet! Every fall teaches your brain something new. What could you try differently?"</i></p>

# Start Today

Four steps to build a growth-mindset home

- 1** Swap ability praise for process praise  
*"I love your effort" instead of "You're so smart!"*
- 2** Add "yet" to your vocabulary  
*"You can't do it yet — keep going!"*
- 3** Treat mistakes as learning moments  
*"What did we learn from this?"*
- 4** Model your own growth mindset  
*Share your struggles and how you work through them*



*Your words are building  
your child's brain.*

Every encouraging phrase, every reframed  
mistake — it all adds up.

**Youth Success Movement**