

Growth Mindset at Sandhurst School



Parental Guide



A Growth Mindset at Sandhurst School

Research by Developmental Psychologist Dr Carol Dweck of Stanford University points to people having one of two mindsets: Growth or Fixed. A child's belief about intelligence is an important factor in whether they become an effective learner. We all hold beliefs about concepts such as 'intelligence', 'ability' and 'personality', with roughly half of us holding a 'fixed' mindset and the other half a 'growth' mindset.

We are trying to encourage our students to have a Growth Mindset instead of a Fixed Mindset. A summary of the mindsets is listed below.

FIXED MINDSET	GROWTH MINDSET
Aim = to avoid making any mistakes and have immediate success	Understands that intelligence can be developed.
Students with a Fixed Mindset:	Students with a Growth Mindset:
Avoid challenges so they do not fail	View challenges as a way of stretching their learning
View effort as a sign of failure	Understand that mistakes can lead to learning and will persist when things get difficult
Will give up easily when a task becomes hard	View effort as the path to mastery
Will only focus on grades given, not any useful feedback which is given to help improve the quality of work produced.	Will learn from feedback – “How can I improve?”
Believe intelligence is fixed e.g. “I’m not good at Maths”, “I can’t spell”	Is able to persevere – “I struggle at maths but I will improve”
Think “Why bother – I can’t do it!”	Develops a positive attitude “I can’t do this yet ”

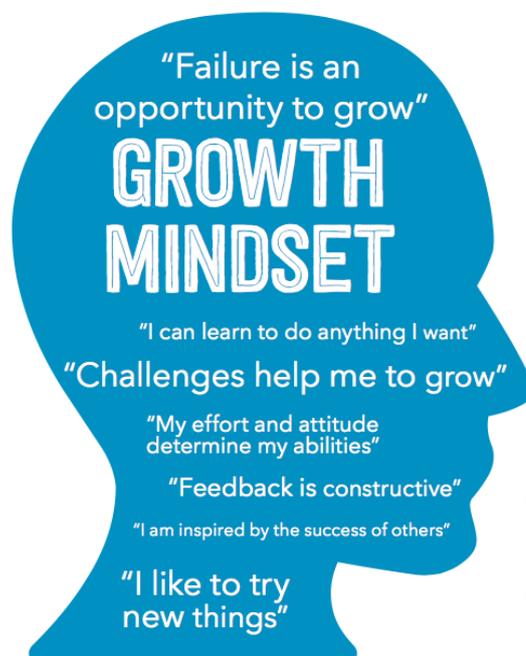


Image from www.big-change.org

Parental Support

Have 'learning discussions' at home to reinforce what has happened that day.

"What did you learn today?" "What did you try hard at today?"

Give feedback on the process not on the outcome.

For example if your child does well in a History assessment, "Well done, you have been working hard" instead of "You are talented at History". This will help in showing that the reverse is true when things don't go well.

Explain to your child that brains can grow.

Brains can grow and learning changes our brains. This is called brain plasticity – intelligence is not fixed. A great video can be found from Professor Robert Winston on You Tube showing this. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4np5wLAhWw>

Encourage risk, failing and learning from mistakes.

This helps children to become resilient and persevere when things get tough.

"It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all - in which case, you fail by default."

-J K Rowling

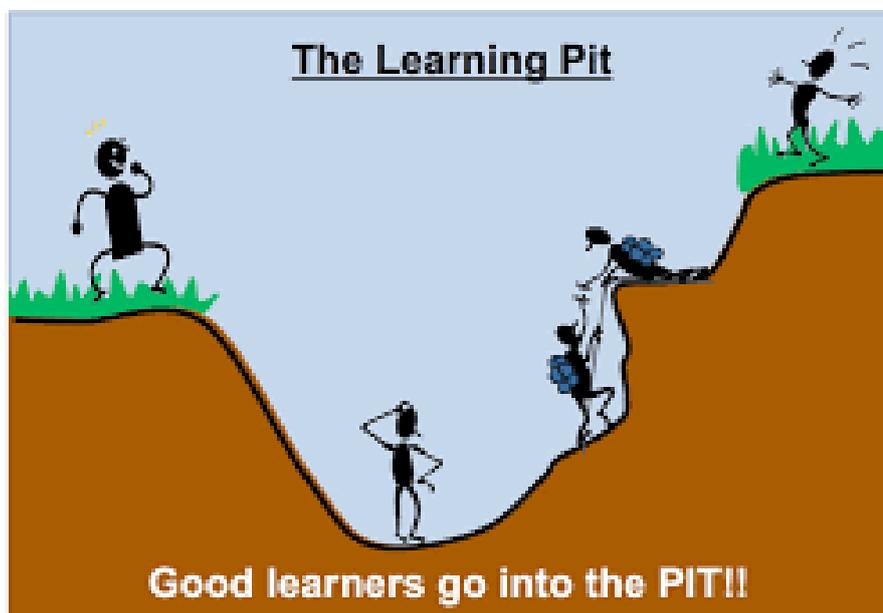
Encourage and model positive self-talk

What Can I Say To Myself?

Instead of:	Try thinking:
I'm not that good at this.	What am I missing?
I'm awesome at this.	I'm on the right track.
I give up.	I'll use some of the strategies we've learned.
This is too hard.	This may take some time and effort.
I can't make this any better.	I can always improve, so I'll keep on trying.
I just can't do maths.	I'm going to train my brain in maths.
I made a mistake.	Mistakes help me learn better.
She's so smart. I'll never be that smart.	I'm going to figure out how she does it so I can try it.
Plan A didn't work.	Good thing the alphabet has 25 more letters.
It's good enough.	Is it really my best work?

How does Sandhurst School promote Growth Mindset?

- Displays around the school and in classrooms to encourage students to develop a “Growth Mindset”.
- Year 7 Character Education
- Tutor time activities which promote “Growth Mindset” and develop positive mindsets
- House assemblies fostering “Growth Mindset”
- “Star of the Lesson” to reward those students displaying effort and persistence
- Continued quality feedback to improve learning
- Continued effort grades on reports
- Students familiar with the “Learning Pit”



Find out more:

“Mindset” by Carol Dweck (Numerous articles by Dweck can be freely found online)

https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve?language=en TED Talks video

Professor Robert Winston on brain neurons <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4np5wLAhWw>

<http://www.centreforconfidence.co.uk/flourishing-lives-young-people.php?pid=541>