



Motivation

An excerpt from *Shared Discoveries: positive parent-child relationships and child development*

Most parents would not give a second thought to praising children's abilities to boost their self-esteem and increase motivation. However, three decades of research by Carol Dweck and her colleagues demonstrates that the type of praise that children hear can influence behavioral outcomes including motivation, persistence, and achievement that are associated with learning skills.

Dweck's work shows that our mindset permeates all aspects of our lives and shapes our attitudes, goals, and perspective on work, relationships and how we raise our kids. Additional real-world studies by Gunderson et al. show that when very young children hear process-based praise (e.g., "you worked hard"), they are more likely to adopt a growth mindset as they grow up. The research suggests that interventions focusing on the type of praise parents give to their toddlers can have a long-term impact on children's beliefs about intelligence.

"When parents help their children construct growth minded ideals, they are giving them something they can strive for. They are also giving their children growing room, room to grow into full human beings who will make their contribution to society in a way that excites them."

Carol Dweck

Ways to foster a growth mindset:

Pay close attention to how you praise children, even at the youngest ages. Does the praise focus on their hard work leading up to the positive result or your child's intelligence or talent?

Try to focus on the process (e.g., effort, choices) rather than product to foster a growth mindset. For example, instead of saying, "Wow, you got an A on that test! You're so smart!" try saying something like, "Wow, you did really well on that test! All of the time you spent studying really paid off."

To read *Shared Discoveries*, please visit:
CenterforChildhoodcreativity.org/research/

Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random House Digital, Inc.

Gunderson, E. A., Gripshover, S. J., Romero, C., Dweck, C. S., Goldin-Meadow, S., & Levine, S. C. (2013). Parent praise to 1-3 year-olds predicts children's motivational frameworks 5 years later. *Child Development, 84*(5), 1526-1541.

Fixed Mindset

Ability is fixed and unchanging

Avoid challenges because of fear of failure

Negative view of mistakes and helpless responses to failure or setbacks

Growth Mindset

Abilities can be developed through practice and learning

Embrace challenges because they are opportunities to learn

Mistakes lead to learning and personal growth

Dweck, 2006



Creative thinking begins early in every child's life. It enables original thought and the ability to see solutions where others don't. It unlocks possibilities and fosters innovation. It provides the fundamental building blocks for success in school and beyond.

The mission of the Center for Childhood Creativity is to ignite and advance creative thinking for all children.