

Growth Mindset & Children's Mental Health

A growth mindset is a belief that we will get better at something with effort, practise and time. Having a growth mindset is important for children as they will be able to cope with life's challenges and learn how to work through difficult times more effectively. Twinkl.com have put together some ideas for parents to help children develop a growth mindset. We have slightly adapted these ideas to include teachings of the Glorious Qur'an and our Messenger ﷺ.

Celebrate and praise the positive changes your children make. These changes can be any number of things; for example, if they persevered with something, showed responsibility with a task or helped someone in some way. It's great if you can praise the process rather than the result. This is called effort-based praise and can motivate kids to work hard and try new things. Praising is great when it is really sincere and as specific as possible. This can boost their sense of **self-worth** and **confidence**. Allah ﷻ says, "... Certainly, your efforts have been appreciated," (76:22).

Talk about challenges they have overcome in the past. You could have a chat about a time they gave something a go and it worked out well, or when they felt good about trying something new. Remembering good, positive memories together can help children feel more **empowered** and **resourceful**. Giving them space to go into detail and explore their feelings about those great times or fulfilling moments will make this activity even more effective. This will make them feel more courageous. Our Prophet ﷺ would make dua to Allah: "I seek Your protection from inability and laziness. I seek Your protection from cowardice..."

Encourage your children to just give things a try. Trying out new food, doing something independently or taking part in a new hobby are all examples of a growth mindset. It can help if you can remember to mark the times when your child does try something new. If they are feeling stuck with this, try asking them to visualise a positive end result of something. They can imagine how it feels to **rise to the challenge** and **have a go**. This can help your children feel more **positive about themselves**. Remind them that Allah ﷻ says, "Surely, with difficulty comes ease," (94:5). Even if something is difficult at first, persevering will ultimately make it easier for them.

Try not to push them too hard. Even though being ambitious is great, remember to allow them space to **flounder** and **find a challenge difficult** and **to rest**. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud said, "The Prophet ﷺ used to take care of us in teaching by selecting a suitable time, so that we did not tire," (al-Bukhari). Let them have time to tell you when they are finding a challenge difficult and validate their feelings with words like, 'You look upset right now,' and, 'It's okay to ask for help'. It's great to listen to and respect their thoughts and feelings, even if you feel you wouldn't react in that way.

Educate them on the importance of setbacks and how they are just **stepping stones to success** rather than failures. You could try talking about things you have struggled with and what you did to overcome those obstacles. It's important that we let them fail at times too so they have a chance to develop **problem-solving** and **resilience** skills.