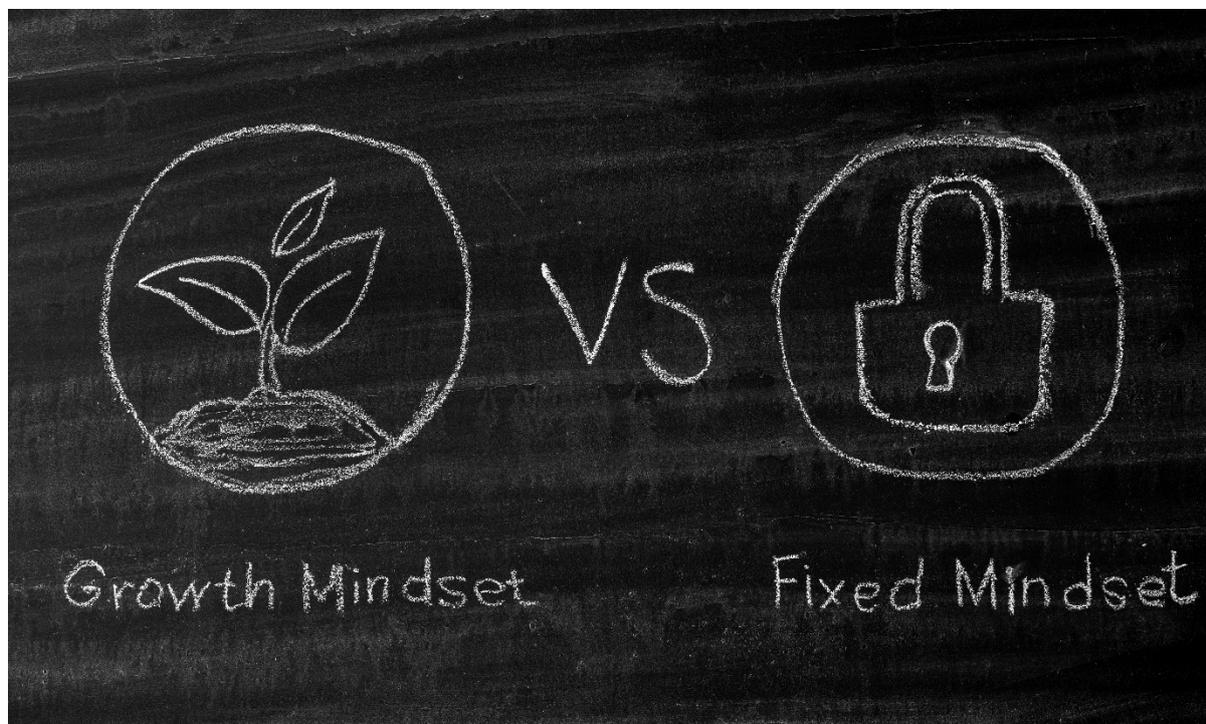


## THE POWER OF A GROWTH MINDSET



**Our partners at Role Models explain the importance of a growth mindset and how to help your children begin their journey.**

The transition back to school and work can be a tricky one for children and adults. Learning and practising a growth mindset can be a really helpful way to equip your child (and your whole family!) for the inevitable ups and downs that lie ahead this term and for life beyond.

### **What is a growth mindset?**

Having a growth mindset gives your child the thinking skills and attitude to become successful and happy in life. It enables them to understand the concept of progress compared to perfection and instils the belief that our skills and intelligence are not fixed traits at birth.

We've created a visual chart which outlines some of the differences between a fixed mindset and a growth mindset to help parents and children understand *how* a growth mindset can positively impact your outlook.

Being aware of these two different mindsets is the first step and it's important to say that it's unrealistic to expect anyone to have a growth mindset 100% of the time. Use this awareness to listen in to the thoughts and language used within your family.

Could you all try and make a shift to responding with more of a growth mindset attitude?

### **When and how might a Growth Mindset be important over the next few months?**

After such an extended break there may be aspects of the return to school your child finds difficult, both with their learning and the social side. Use a growth mindset response to help them see that any mistakes or bumps along the way are proof that they are working hard at their learning and these are inevitable as we all begin doing the things we have had a break from.

### **My child is lacking confidence in his/her ability**

Remind your child that our skills and 'intelligence' are not fixed. Through practise and effort, they can increase both their confidence and competence. It's also likely their friends might be feeling the same; they're not alone.

### **My child is struggling to get back into their school work for fear of failing.**

Help your child see that no one is expecting perfection. Making mistakes is often part of the learning journey and actually helps your brain consolidate the skills you are learning.

### **My child is finding school too hard and just wants to give up when things get tricky.**

Remind your child of previous examples where they have struggled with a skill they now find easy. Let them see how the learning process involved finding it hard at first then with practise and commitment it became easier. Remind them of their capability and help them apply the same resilience and skills they did then to this new situation.

### **Collaboration and Communication**

After 4-5 months at home with family, your child may be feeling unsure about being thrust back into the social situation of school. Although excited to reconnect with friends, your child might be anxious about talking, working and communicating as part of a group again. How can we help prepare them for this increase in social interaction after such a long break?

### **Recognise your child's fears and anxieties**

Try and take opportunities to reassure your child that it's ok to feel nervous and unsure about seeing their friends again. Remind them that they've been at home for a long time with the same people, so feeling a bit strange about spending time with

lots of different people is completely understandable. Resist the well-meaning urge to say 'Don't be silly' or 'You'll be fine'. Try and find ways to reassure your child without dismissing the feelings they have shared with you.

### **Ease back into it**

Try and make the transition back into socialising a smooth and gradual one. Rather than going full pelt with a packed social diary to make up for the last few months, think about giving your child time to adjust slowly. They are likely to find the transition back to school extremely tiring, so keeping after school time free will be essential for some down time.

### **3 exciting things**

Discuss with your child 3 exciting things they would like to share with their friends and teachers about their time over lockdown. Prepping these in advance will give your child confidence in having something to say and a way to connect in those moments when they can't think what to say.

### **Communication is not just speaking**

After any long break we often feel like we've forgotten how to do the things that came easily to us before. Your child might feel like they've forgotten how to socialise with their friends. Remind them that interacting with others is not just based on talking; communication and connection is also based on listening. Your child might feel like they have nothing interesting to say, remind them to listen as well and enjoy just being in the company of others. It's also easy to forget the power of a good question; as well as prepping your child with things they want to tell their friends and teachers about, help arm your child with some good questions to ask too.

Following any form of socialising, children are likely to be tired, drained and have very big emotions. We should prepare ourselves for this 'social hangover' they might experience and think about what they might need; more sleep, extra downtime, understanding and empathy from other family members...

No doubt your child is excited to see their friends again after such a long time at home. Let them know that it's completely normal to feel both excited and nervous at the same time.

### **Examples of Fixed Mindset vs Growth Mindset**

**Belief:** I am born with my skills & intelligence vs I can develop my skills & intelligence

**Focus:** I have a fixed end focus on results vs I focus on constant improvement

**Resilience:** Resilience isn't useful – I'm good at what I'm good at vs resilience is useful – I can get better by trying harder

**Obstacles:** I'm not persistent with difficult tasks – I'll give up vs I can get better with tasks I find difficult – I'll try harder

**Mistakes:** I don't like mistakes, I try to avoid them vs I see mistakes as an opportunity to learn

**Feedback:** I take feedback personally, I don't find it helpful vs feedback helps me improve I like to track my progress

**Outcome:** I find it difficult to achieve my full potential vs I enjoy the learning process and constantly improve

### Role Models

Role Models is an impact driven education provider based in the UK. We focus on life skills that promote social & emotional wellbeing and dynamic thinking, helping young people to thrive in life. We complement traditional academic education by delivering online and offline courses that develop young peoples' skills in leadership, confidence, resilience, creative problem solving, collaboration and growth mindset.

Role Models was started because we know that academic success alone is not enough to build tomorrow's leaders. The World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report explains how life skills are the most essential skills for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.