

RESILIENT THINKING & GROWTH MINDSET

As a parent, you've got dreams for your kids – dreams of courage, adventures, and the thrill of conquering challenges. Why? Because these are the building blocks of resilience, self-discovery, and finding those passions that light up their world! It's the secret sauce to helping them shine both on and off the field.

But here's the exciting twist --> There's a magic formula that can help your kid become a learning dynamo, supercharge their confidence, and make tackling challenges a blast. It's all about nurturing that awesome thing called a growth mindset.

Whether your little one is a sprightly 7 or a savvy 17, know that your words and actions pack a punch. They're powerful messages that shape your kid's world. That's why we've got a treasure trove of super-parenting tips to help you bond better with your kiddo and guide them towards embracing that growth mindset in everything they do, whether it's on the field or off. Get ready to rock these steps below:

WHEN YOUR KID IMPROVES OR ACHIEVES

Praise is very important to help your kid develop a growth mindset. The key is HOW you praise.

1. Praise your kid's effort, persistence, courage, and willingness to use effective strategies.
2. Explain your kid's improvement or achievement as a result of their hard work and use of strategies.

Here are two examples of what to say to your kid:

- *"When you took that fierce shot with your left foot right before halftime, I could see the extra work you put in practicing in the backyard this week. I'm so proud of you!"*
- *"How did it feel to win so many tackles today? I remember when that was hard for you. How did you learn to do that?"*

By praising your kid's effort and willingness to try strategies when they improve or achieve, your kid will learn:

1. My parent will join me in celebrating my accomplishments (builds connection).
2. My parent values the process of how I was able to improve or achieve more than the outcome (increases motivation to work hard and try new strategies).
3. My parent values my work ethic and courage to try things even if it didn't result in an achievement, like a goal. (increases perseverance and lowers performance anxiety).

Try NOT to praise your teen by giving them labels based on their performance or achievements. Here are several examples of what NOT to say to your kid when they perform well:

- "You're an amazing striker!"
- "You're the best defender!"
- "You're so smart!"



WHY: Labels feed a fixed mindset, create an outcome focus and foster a **performance identity** (my value comes from how I perform). When your kid scores a goal and you tell them they are an "amazing forward," they learn they are "amazing" because they scored today. It feels awesome to be great, but what happens to your kid's view of themselves when they don't score? Now your kid is more likely to think of themselves as a "horrible striker." That creates a lot of pressure to keep your kid's "amazing" status and your kid's self-worth can get tied to outcomes.

WHEN YOUR KID HAS A SETBACK

Everyone has setbacks. The key is how we respond.

1. Remind your kid everyone has setbacks, and if they keep working hard and using strategies they will improve.
2. Focus on what your kid can learn from their setback to help them be more prepared for the next time they face this challenge.

Here are some examples of what you can say:

- “We all have different learning curves. It may take more time for you to adjust to this new level of play. But as you keep working and practicing like you have, you’ll begin to feel more and more comfortable and confident.”
- “I know you wanted to send more accurate crosses today. Do you think it would help to practice more or find a different strategy?”

WHY: Your kid will be more motivated to work hard and use strategies when they learn that setbacks are not meant to be feared, but are great opportunities to learn where and how we need to improve. Without setbacks, we wouldn’t need to add more strategies and skills.

Try NOT to label your kid based on their setback.

Here are several examples of what NOT to say to your kid when they have a setback::

- “You think too much when you get the ball. You should play goalie.”
- “You aren’t built to play center back. That’s no who you are.”
- “You just can’t play striker. You’ve tried all season.”



WHY: When your kid is in a fixed mindset, they believe they can’t get better at something. However, if you let them know that when things are harder, it simply means that it will take more effort and more strategies to make improvements. If your kid chooses not to work hard at something because it’s not worth the effort and trying out strategies, then their lack of progress is a choice. That’s different than believing they can’t get better no matter how much they work at it.

RESILIENCE BUILDER

When your kid has an improvement or achievement, write down two growth mindset thoughts and say them to your kid to motivate them to continue to work hard and use strategies to improve:

SITUATION: Your kid connected most of their passes and got an assist.

GROWTH MINDSET THOUGHT: “Wow! You connected a lot of passes today – and got an assist. This was something that used to be a big challenge. You’ve put in a lot of extra training and I’m proud of you for working hard to improve.”

SITUATION: _____

GROWTH MINDSET THOUGHT: _____

GROWTH MINDSET THOUGHT: _____

When your kid makes a mistake or has a setback, write down two growth mindset thoughts and say them to your kid to motivate your kid to continue to work hard and use strategies to improve:

SITUATION: Your kid made a poor pass which was intercepted and the other team scored.

GROWTH MINDSET THOUGHT: I am really proud of you. After the other team took your pass and scored, you kept your head up and kept working.

SITUATION: _____

GROWTH MINDSET THOUGHT: _____

GROWTH MINDSET THOUGHT: _____
