

# PARENT TIPS: GROWTH MINDSET AT HOME

## WHY IS WELLBEING IMPORTANT?

Wellbeing is about feeling good and doing good. Research shows that children who are more fulfilled, learn better and achieve more. These resources are to help families support their children's wellbeing and build on the foundations that have been taught at school.

## THE SCIENCE BEHIND A GROWTH MINDSET

A growth mindset is the belief that intelligence and abilities can be grown by embracing challenges and trying new strategies. The opposite is a fixed mindset which is the belief that we are born with certain abilities and we can't do much to change them. Research shows that parents have a big influence on helping foster a growth mindset in their children. Children who have a growth mindset:

Show  
greater  
motivation

Achieve  
better  
academically

Are more  
resilient in  
the face of  
setbacks

Are more  
likely to  
achieve  
their goals

The Oxford Education team have worked with an expert in the field, **Adrian Bethune**, to produce this parental toolkit.

Adrian Bethune is a teacher, writer and the founder of [www.teachappy.co.uk](http://www.teachappy.co.uk). He is the lead author of the Oxford International Curriculum for Wellbeing.

## FOR PARENTS

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET AT HOME?

Parents are very influential in determining their children's mindsets, so try these ideas to help foster a growth mindset:

- **Model it** – show your children that you challenge yourself and learn from your mistakes. Share stories of when you try to do difficult things and what you do to overcome your obstacles.
- **Praise the process** – praising children for their intelligence (for example, “You’re so clever!”) has been shown to foster a fixed mindset. Instead, praise the process your child goes through to accomplish things. Praise their effort, determination and resilience. For example, “I’m so impressed that when you got stuck on that maths problem, you tried a different strategy and didn’t give up!”
- **Set challenges** – set meaningful challenges for your children such as things they want to do but can’t do yet, and give them your support and encouragement to achieve them.

## FOR KIDS

### THREE ACTIVITIES FOR YOU TO TRY!

Try out these ideas at home to help you develop a growth mindset.

- **The power of yet** – If you are struggling to learn or do something, say “I can’t do this...yet!” Using ‘yet’ means you know you have the potential to master that skill but it’s going to take more time and practise.
- **Keep learning** – Learning happens everywhere, not just at school. Choose a topic you’re really interested in and research five interesting facts about it. Then present your fun facts to your family.
- **Teach someone else** – Every time you learn something new at school, try and teach a parent at home about it. Teaching others helps you get better at it too!

## PARENT TIPS: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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### THE SCIENCE BEHIND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical activity is one of the best ways to look after our physical and mental health. It is recommended that children get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

Children who are physically active have:

stronger  
muscles and  
bones

stronger  
immune  
systems

more  
active  
brains

better  
concentration  
and do better  
in school

## FOR PARENTS

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD GET ACTIVE?

Children who have parents who are active are 50% more likely to be physically active themselves, so it is important families get moving together. Why not try some of these ideas to see if they work for you and your family:

- Walk, cycle or scoot to school at least three times a week
- Go on a family bike ride at the weekends
- Play sports or go swimming with your children
- Use the car less and see if you can walk to more places together

## FOR KIDS

### FIVE ACTIVITIES TO BE MORE ACTIVE

Try these fun activities with your family and friends. The aim is to try and beat your score from the previous attempt:

1. **Try new sports** – learning new sports can be a great way to stay active, meet new friends and learn new skills. Over this term, try and learn two new sports you've never tried before.
2. **Move every hour** – sitting down for long periods is bad for our health. Every hour, get up and move around. Try star jumps, running on the spot, or walking somewhere. It doesn't matter what you do but get moving and get your heart beating faster.
3. **Walk to school challenge** – can you walk to school at least three times a week? If you have to drive, can you get your parents to park further away from school and walk the rest of the way? Being active before school helps to wake up your brains for learning and exercise puts you in a better mood.
4. **Active TV challenge** – every time you watch one programme on TV or an electronic device can you do one minute of physical activity? Every time we move our bodies we make them healthier and stronger.
5. **Stairs challenge** – instead of using a lift, see if you can use the stairs instead. And if you have stairs in your home, when going up them, see if you can safely take two steps up a time – it'll increase your strength.

## PARENT TIPS: POSITIVE EMOTIONS

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### THE SCIENCE BEHIND POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Positive emotions are ones that feel good and that we enjoy when we experience them. The top 5 positive emotions that people enjoy most often are: love, joy, amusement, gratitude, and hope.

Research shows that when people experience positive emotions regularly, they tend to be happier, more fulfilled and more successful. People who experience positive emotions regularly:

Are more flexible with their thinking

Are better at problem solving

Are more creative

Build stronger relationships with others

Enjoy better health

## FOR PARENTS

### WHAT CAN YOU DO AT HOME TO FOSTER MORE POSITIVE EMOTIONS?

Families that enjoy experiencing positive emotions together are happier and enjoy closer relationships. This doesn't mean families should expect or try to only experience these emotions (it is normal for families to have disagreements and experience negative emotions too) but these ideas should help your family:

- **Keep it positive** – research shows the strongest relationships have 5 positive interactions for each negative one.
- **Have a laugh** – watch a funny film with your children and laugh with them.
- **Treat your family** – special experiences like a theatre trip, a meal out or a **family holiday** can help families experience positive emotions.
- **Express your love** – regularly let your children know that you care about **them and want the best** for them.
- **Use the power of touch** – hugs and cuddles with our children release **hormones in the body** that lower our stress levels and boost our mood.

## FOR KIDS

### FIVE ACTIVITIES TO BE MORE ACTIVE

Try these three ideas to help you experience a range of positive emotions.

1. **Amusement** – spend time playing with your friends and enjoying the feeling of laughing with them.
2. **Calm** – when you feel worried or upset, take three big deep breaths in and out.
3. **Joy** – draw or paint a picture of all the things that make you happy. Include your friends, family, pets, your favourite teachers and subjects at school and all of your hobbies.



**Oxford Owl for Home**

Find free educational activities and support for parents at  
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