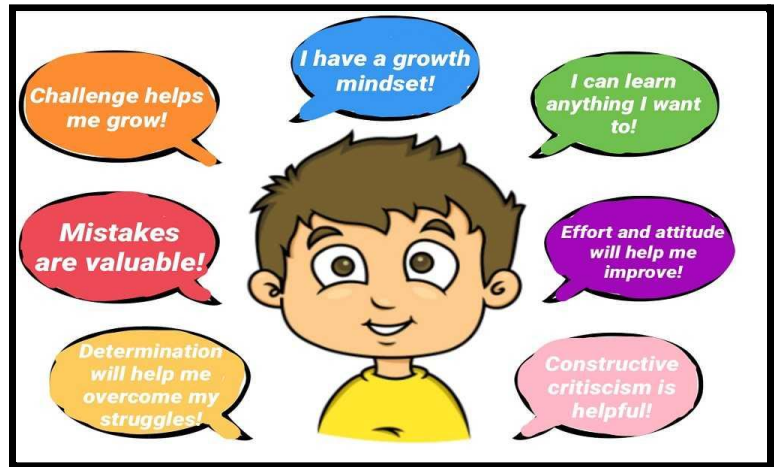


Caregiver's Corner

NEWSLETTER



Take a peek!

Inside this month's issue:

- Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset
- How to Help Your Perfectionist Child Worry Less and Do More
- Resource recommendations
- 10 Growth Mindset Conversation Starters
- Addressing Masking with Your Child

Buzz Words:

Growth Mindset

We all have beliefs about our own abilities and potential. These beliefs are part of our mindset, which is so powerful it can fuel our behavior and predict our success. A willingness to confront challenges, a passion for learning & viewing failure as a springboard for growth are characteristics associated with a growth mindset.

Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset

When a student has a **fixed mindset**, they believe that their basic abilities, intelligence, and talents are fixed traits. They think you are born with a certain amount and that's all you have. These students always want to appear intelligent because they believe they were born with a fixed level of intelligence that cannot be modified. These types of students have a fear of trying new things because they do not want to fail. They have fear of being embarrassed in front of their peers. They do not believe that they can redeem themselves once other people look at them as being unintelligent. In a **growth mindset**, students believe their abilities and intelligence can be developed with effort, learning, and persistence. Their basic abilities are simply a starting point for their potential. They don't believe everyone is the same, but they hold onto the idea that everyone can become smarter if they try.

As adults, it's important that we lead by example. Be mindful of your own responses to mistakes and failure. Talk about what you've learned, and be willing to pick yourself up and try again. Encourage and celebrate your child's mistakes as learning experiences. Try placing emphasis on effort, not ability. When they struggle with something new, discuss specific strategies that might work next time. Be sure to also demonstrate unconditional love! Make it clear to your child that you love them unconditionally, even when they make mistakes or use poor judgment.

How to Help Your Perfectionist Child Worry Less & Do More

If you're raising a perfectionist, you've likely seen firsthand how difficult it can be. Torn up papers, late nights, and crying episodes are just a few of the behaviors you might witness in a budding perfectionist. Whether your child melts down whenever they make a mistake on the athletic field or in the classroom when they don't get a perfect score on a math test, perfectionism can take a toll on children's lives. It's good for kids to hold high expectations of themselves. But if they expect everything to be *perfect*, they'll never be satisfied with their performance.

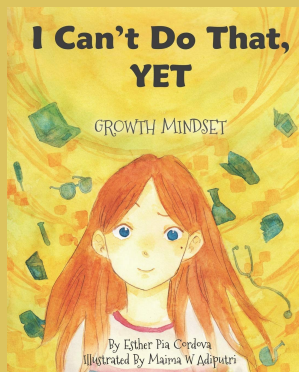
Perfectionists hold unrealistic expectations of themselves. Then, they place enormous pressure on themselves to try and reach their goals. Warning signs of perfectionism vary depending on your child's age and the type of perfectionism they experience. But, in general, some signs of perfectionism include: high anxiety surrounding failure, high sensitivity to criticism, procrastinating to avoid difficult tasks, self-criticism and/or being very critical of others, and trouble making decisions.

If you see warning signs that your child is a budding perfectionist, there are several things you can do to help. Help your child develop healthy self-esteem by engaging in activities with them that help them feel good about who they are, not just what they accomplish. Avoid praising your child for getting 100 on their spelling test and instead praise them for studying hard. You can also share stories of your own failures and how you coped with it. In addition, teaching healthy coping skills for the many things they will encounter in life can be beneficial as well.



Book Recommendation:

"I Can't Do That, Yet"
By Ester Pia Cordova



Dinnertime Do Now:

Celebrate mistakes! Remind your kids that mistakes are great because they help us grow. Share a mistake you have made recently and a way it is helping you to learn. Then have everyone at the dinner table share a mistake they made during the day. After each share give high fives all around to celebrate!

Virtual Resource:

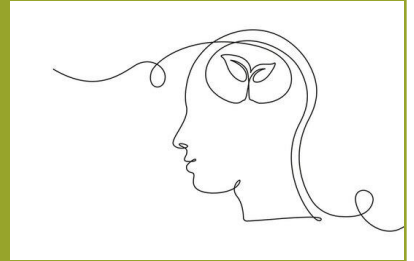
Khan Academy's "The Power of Yet" with Zoe and Elmo!
["The Power of Yet"](#)

Khan Academy meets Sesame Street! Check out this video that introduces the idea of using "yet" in a fun and straightforward way.

10 Growth Mindset Conversation Starters

Sometimes, as adults, we aren't sure where to begin to cultivate a growth mindset in children. Here are 10 conversation starters you can use with your child to develop and maintain a growth mindset:

1. What did you do today that made you think hard?
2. What challenge or problem have you worked on today?
3. Can you think of something new you tried today? What was it?
4. Was there anything that made you feel stuck today?...Great! What other ways might be there to solve this?
5. What did you learn today outside of school?
6. Can you think of a mistake you made today?...Great! How can you use this mistake to do better next time?
7. Is there anything you are struggling with?...Excellent! What new strategies can you try next?
8. Can you think of something you could have done better today?...Great! Who can you ask for feedback from to make it better?
9. What would you like to become better at?
10. Did you do anything today that was easy for you? How can you make this more challenging?



Addressing Masking with Your Child



Governor Murphy has lifted the **mandatory mask mandate** for NJ schools as of **March 7, 2022**. Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District will be going **mask-optional**. This means families will have the opportunity to make a choice as to whether or not their child will wear a mask to school. This transition can feel different for each family and child.

While some kids may feel relieved about the mandate lifting, others may not. They may

have **questions** about why other friends or families may make choices different from their own. They may also be **concerned** about those choices.

It's important to remind your child that, just like with any other personal choice, we can be respectful even if we have differing opinions. While you may not be able to fully explain someone else's choice, you can still validate

your child's feelings - *"I hear that you are confused and frustrated. It can be hard when we don't understand someone else's thoughts or choices. When I feel confused and frustrated I take deep breaths to help calm my feelings."* As we move to a more "normal" looking world, discuss and emphasize to your child the importance of respect and boundaries. Feel free to equate this experience to going to the grocery store. When we go, we see some people wearing masks and others who are not. However, we don't ask those people why they made that choice. We simply accept their choice for what it is; the same thought process should apply at school.



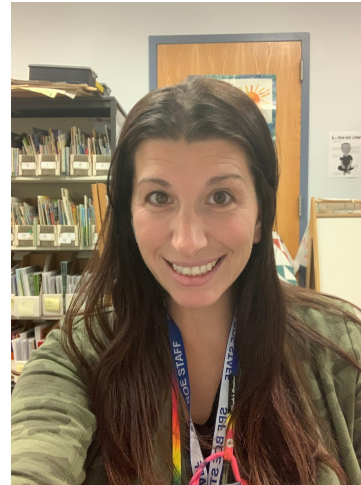
Meet the Student Assistance Specialists



Kristine Iarussi
kiarussi@spfk12.org
McGinn



April Chestang
achestang@spfk12.org
Evergreen



Lori Lidofsky
LLidofsky@spfk12.org
School One



Lakendra McFadden
LMcFadden@spfk12.org
Brunner



Cailin Frantz
CFrantz@spfk12.org
Coles