

# Common Core State Standards

## *A Spotlight for Parents*

*Issue #13*

### **The Importance of a Growth Mindset**

#### **How those little comments impact mindset**

What is mindset? a **Mindset** is a set of assumptions, methods, or notations held by one or more people that is so established that it creates a powerful incentive within these people or groups to continue to adopt or accept prior behaviors, choices, or tools. Have you ever said or heard someone say “I am bad at math, that must be why he is bad at it...”, or “I was always a terrible speller too.” or “They get their athletic ability (or not) from me.” These are all examples of how we as parents place a mindset on our children. The child is fixed into believing they can (or can’t) do something. A child be told they are brilliant or the smartest in the class or the next Michelangelo can create a fixed mindset as well. What happens when something gets tough, the school work doesn’t come easily, or the work takes effort? The child gives up in frustration.

The central message that all children need to hear is the importance of encouraging resilience. Children who are shielded from opportunities to learn about resilience will often shy away from situations they are not very sure that they will be successful. So what can you do at home?

- Use growth mindset praise . Praise a child’s willingness to try, effort, patience, and practice. Attribute success to hard work and perseverance.
- Model Flexibility. Being able to change plans is important when building resilience in children. Talk about change being a part of life, that life isn’t fair, but through flexibility and effort anything can happen. If plans have to change model flexibility by selecting an alternate activity.
- Adopt a “glass half full” mentality at home. Even during hardship we need to find positivity. A child with hope believes there can be a positive side to most situations.
- Help your child find their own niche. A successful child is a confident child. Sometimes it means trying lots of different things before a child finds an area where she can thrive.

As parents we need to communicate growth mindset to teachers. Express to your child’s teachers that you value your child’s effort and perseverance more than outcome. In a conversation with your child’s teacher talk about the positive first. Tell the teacher what your child loves about the class. Give the teacher information about what works (and doesn’t) at home. Share stories of resilience, perseverance and effort. Share what frustrates your child, keep the teacher in the loop. Work together for the benefit of your child and remember the goal is for ongoing growth.

Mindsets in the Classroom  
Mary Cay Ricci

## Common Core State Standards are here. HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD?

**Talk to teachers.** Work with teachers to understand what will be expected of children this year and create a plan to help them succeed. Start your conversation with these questions about the Common Core State Standards.

- ▶ **Ask your child's teachers for specific examples of how Common Core has changed their curriculum and lesson plans.** The Common Core is a framework for what students must learn but educators are still the ones who decide what they will teach to get students to the new benchmarks. Talk with your child's teacher to learn what will be new in your child's classroom.
- ▶ **Ask your teachers how you can best help your child succeed in school.** Transitioning to the higher, more in-depth Common Core standards may make some lessons more challenging than normal for your child. This will mean changes in homework, tests and possibly grades.
- ▶ **Go beyond the classroom.** If your child needs a little extra help or wants to learn more about a subject, work with his or her teacher to identify opportunities for tutoring, to get involved in clubs after school, or to find other resources.
- ▶ **Do your homework.** Read the standards at [www.engageny.org](http://www.engageny.org). Get the facts. Don't listen to rhetoric and hearsay. Talk to the principal and teachers at your child's school, get the facts about what is happening in your child's classroom.

**Help your child learn at home.** Learning does not end in the classroom. Children need help and support at home to succeed in their studies. By taking these small steps, you will be helping your child become successful both in and outside the classroom.

- ▶ **Make a place for study at home.** Create a quiet place for schoolwork at home, and carve out time every day when your child can concentrate on reading, writing and math uninterrupted by friends, brothers, or sisters, or other distractions.
- ▶ **Make your child's homework your business.** Sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics.