

Module 3: Growing Self-Confident Children Through Goal Setting and Growth Mindset

1.1 Parent Engagement

WestEd presents the Parent Engagement Migrant Modules; a module series developed on behalf of the California Department of Education, English Learner Support Division.

Growing Self-Confident Children Through Goal Setting and Growth Mindset

Migrant Education Office - English Learner Support Division - California Department of Education

Visit the CDE website for more information (www.cde.ca.gov).

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1.2 Navigating the Module

The following information will help you navigate this module:

- Use the menu on the left side panel and the navigation bar on the bottom of the screen to control this module.
- The tab key can also be used to navigate forward through the module components; shift+tab can be used to move backward.
- Use the audio button at the bottom right of the screen to turn the slide's audio narration on and off.
- Use the captions button at the bottom of the screen to turn the captions on and off.
- Use the transcript button at the bottom left of the screen to turn the transcript on and off.
- Transcripts for the complete module can be accessed in the resources menu.

The following keyboard shortcuts have been enabled for ease of use:

- N = Move to the next slide
- P = Move the previous slide
- S = Stop/Pause slide
- R = Resume/Play slide
- C = Turn closed captions on/off
- A = Turn audio narration on/off
- T = Turn narration text transcript on/off

The module will automatically save any progress made if connected to the Internet.

1.3 Introduction

Welcome to Growing Self-Confident Children Through Goal Setting and Growth Mindset.

This is the third module in the supporting parent engagement module series.

Welcome and thanks for coming today and hearing about different ways of parenting and learning more about your child.

These modules may be viewed in any order, so it may not be the second module for you.

The content of this module focuses on the foundation of building self-confidence in children.

1.4 Module Objectives

To fully contemplate how to build self-confidence in children, we need to first talk about executive functioning skills-what they are and how we can support them in our children.

Next, we need to consider the idea of a growth mindset versus a fixed mindset and how our parenting practices can support a growth mindset.

Lastly, we will discuss how to practice goal setting with our children-especially adolescent children-as a key strategy for building success and self-confidence in life.

To better understand all of these concepts, we will watch video examples, consider how our parenting supports these concepts now, and practice new parenting strategies we can use to better help our students become self-confident, life-long learners.

During this module we will do the following:

Define the importance of executive functioning skills for children.

- Explore growth mindset for various ages.
- Discuss the impact of goal setting for adolescents.
- Reflect upon how goal setting and growth mindset applies to daily life.
- Practice new strategies and plan to use them.

1.5 Executive Functioning and

We will begin with an explanation of executive functioning skills and how these skills are connected to self-confidence in children.

1.6 Why is building self-confidence important?

Before we start moving through this module let's think about what self-confidence means and why building your child's self-confidence is important.

Can you think of an experience when you wished you had been more self-confident as an adult?

Maybe when you were talking with your child's teacher, when you met your spouse's family, or when you were trying to get a new job?

Being self-confident can help us in many situations throughout life.

Parents can influence their children in this area in how they think about self-confidence, how they talk with their child, and how they help their child grow.

Let's do an activity to help us consider about what is most important to you and what you would like for your children.

1.7 Activity: What is important to me for my children?

Picture your children five or ten years from now.

Imagine the life you want for them and what you hope they can achieve.

Helping your children get to that point means thinking about what is important to you as a parent and how you send those messages to your children.

Take a few minutes to think about what is important to you as a parent, then follow the activity directions.

1.8 What is executive functioning?

Executive functioning skills are the main skills of the thinking brain; think of them as the basic thinking skills needed to function in day-to-day life:

- Paying attention
- Planning and organizing
- Being able to complete tasks
- Regulating emotions
- Self-monitoring
- Self-control
- Flexible thinking

These skills and abilities help people to plan, organize, and remember.

Children that struggle with executive functioning often struggle in school and in life.

As parents, we can help our children develop these abilities by teaching them and holding them accountable for these skills.

Teaching independence, organization, decision making, and self-control are all important pieces to helping your child have strong executive functioning skills.

These skills build and grow quickly during the infant and early childhood years and continue to grow and be important all the way through the teen years.

As parents, you should always be working with your child to master these skills.

1.9 What does self-confidence look like?

Strong and developed executive functioning skills lead to a high level of self-confidence.

When children feel independent and capable, they are confident in who they are and the decisions they make.

Self-confident children are able to perform in our society with more ease and ability.

They are better able to tackle problems, make healthy and safe decisions, and are more likely to feel connected to people.

Feeling connected and having strong relationships is a key factor in the overall growth and development of any child.

Self-confident children are more likely to do the following:

- Try new things.
- Try hard and enjoy school.
- Become involved in activities outside of home and school.
- Ask for help.
- Create strong relationships.
- Become connected to someone or something.
- Utilize solid decision-making strategies.

As you can see, strong executive functioning skills are an important part of a well-developed child.

As parents, we want to encourage and help our children grow the skills necessary to be successful adults in our world.

1.10 How do we support self-confidence?

It is important to think about why we value self-confidence so we can understand why it is so important to support our children developing it.

One sure way to help our children become more self-confident is to focus on their executive functioning skills.

Again, executive function is a way to describe how we think, plan and organize.

Strong executive functioning skills can help self-confidence grow.

Three main executive functioning skills are focusing attention, developing memory, and solving problems.

Let's take a closer look at these three main skills.

1.11 Focusing Attention Examples

Attention is an important skill for everyone-kids and adults alike.

Children especially need to have strong attention skills as they are learning so many new things.

In school and at home, being able to pay attention to directions, complete tasks, and work or persevere through problems are all important skills.

Attention is especially important in school, and if children haven't practiced this skill before going to school, they will find it hard to be successful once they are there.

1.12 Support the development of attention skills

Support the development of attention skills by giving children two and three-step directions:

- After you eat, take the trash out and then feed the dogs.
- Help your brother with his homework and then clean the dishes.

Support children to complete something they have started:

- If they are folding laundry, make sure they finish folding all of it.
- If they are helping clean up the yard, make sure they complete the task before moving on.

1.13 Memory Examples

Having a good memory is another important skill for children of all ages.

Remembering to do something asked of you, holding on to information taught, and even remembering everyday task- like brushing teeth and putting away clothes in the hamper-are all important memory building skills.

As children get older, having a good memory is important for driving, following rules and laws, and succeeding in school.

Specifically, children need to have a strong working memory, which is the memory that is working in our brains all of the time.

Working memory relates directly to remembering something short term-like asking your child to take a shower-and being able to complete it.

1.14 Support the Development of Working Memory

Support working memory by providing opportunities to practice and restate what occurred:

We always clear our plate when we are done eating.

I always pick my little sister up from the bus stop.

1.15 Self-Control

Other important skills that are part of executive functioning are self-control and self-regulation.

Self-control is being able to stop or control one's actions when something is really wanted, and self-regulation is being able to control one's emotions.

These skills are important to practice in early childhood so that they are well developed as children reach adolescence and adulthood.

It is common for teachers to see many children who did not get enough practice at this before they arrived at school.

Self-control can be practiced by holding children responsible for the rules or boundaries you give as parents.

If the child has been told they have 10 minutes left playing video games, make sure you follow through and turn off the game if they don't in 10 minutes.

If you child gets upset or angry, talk to them about the importance of boundaries and rules.

This is also a good time to help children understand how to control their emotions.

It is okay for children to be mad if they do not get their way, but there are appropriate ways to be angry and ways that are not appropriate.

For example, if a child wants to spend a few minutes alone when they are angry, that is appropriate; but if a child yells or throws a tantrum, that is not appropriate.

Help them understand their feelings, how to get their emotions in control, and give them ideas for what they can do when they are angry.

1.16 Support the Development of Self-Control

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1.17 Slow Down and Discuss (1)

Let's take a moment to discuss these examples and share some others from your families.

Use the Supporting Self-Confidence handout to start this discussion.

1.18 A Closer Look at Executive Function

Now that we have thought about when we notice executive function in our children, let's talk a little more about why it is important and what you can do to support it.

Choose which question you would like to discuss first.

Then look at, listen to, and discuss the information provided.

1.19 A Closer Look at Executive Function

Question 1:

When children develop executive functioning skills, they see the impact through their whole life and this has a positive impact on the community they are a part of. Some examples of this are:

- Doing well in school—children remember and follow instructions, avoid distractions, control responses, adjust when rules change, don't give up on problem solving, and manage long-term assignments.

The community gets well educated adults capable who can handle problems.

- Positive Behaviors—children develop skills of teamwork, leadership, decision-making, working toward goals, critical thinking, adaptability, and being aware of our own emotions as well as those of others.

This makes for more stable communities and less crime.

- Good Health—people make healthier choices about nutrition and exercise, resist pressure to take risks, and are more aware of their own safety and the safety of others. These skills also help us respond better to stress.

The community is healthier which makes them more productive in their work.

- Successful Work—adults who developed these skills can get good jobs because they are better organized, able to solve problems and plan, and prepared to adjust to change.

For the community, there are prepared and hardworking people working in businesses around them.

1.20 A Closer Look at Executive Function

Question 2:

Children can build effective executive functioning skills when the important adults in their lives do the following:

- Establish routines.

This means focusing on what you can control and making a routine of it.

It may be that different adults care for children during the week because of work, but some routines always happen with a parent.

One possible example is bedtime.

A predictable bedtime routine can be getting ready for bed, telling a story, and giving a kiss goodnight.

This routine will help children know what to expect and supports the skills around focusing attention and memory.

- Ask questions.

Have family conversations where everyone talks and listens.

Asking questions about what children are thinking and planning is very important.

For example, when making dinner you might find time to ask your child what they plan to eat first on their plate, or what they are looking forward to doing at school tomorrow.

Both of these questions help them to plan, think, and practice problem-solving skills.

Asking questions of older children helps them develop independence and allows them to begin to make their own decisions.

This is a slow process where parents allow the children to make safe, small decisions at first and then talk to them about more responsibility as they make better decisions.

Adolescents should not have full independence too young but should have opportunities to practice this in many situations to become successful.

- Provide protection from chaos, violence, and constant stress.

Brain development is impacted when this protection is not available.

It is important to note that when individuals-both adults and children-are not protected they often show “act-now-think-later” behaviors.

1.21 Bilingual Bonus

Now that we are realizing the importance of strong executive functioning skills, and seeing where you can support that growth, it is also important to mention the effect bilingual skills have on executive functioning skills.

Did you know? Children and adults who are bilingual may have an increased ability to do the following:

- Focus their attention.
- Filter out competing information.
- Be flexible in problem solving.

Remember that these are the abilities that make up executive functioning skills.

So what does that information mean for you? Be sure to provide support:

- Teach your children your home language; it is important for many reasons, such as social-emotional understanding, communicating with family, and executive function (our topic today).
- Be proud of being bilingual yourself and of raising bilingual children.

Use your talents to support executive function in your children.

1.22 Activity: Creating Routines and Asking Questions

We talked about more ways to support these important skills with your children.

Let's look at the interactions you have with your family and where you can add routines and questions to support building executive functioning skills with your children.

1.23 Growth Mindset and Goals

It is clear that supporting executive functioning skills will help your children become more self-confident learners.

In the last 10 years, another phrase has come to provide information to parents and teachers regarding the development of self-confident children: growth mindset.

Growth mindset may be new to you, but it is likely that you are familiar with what it means.

Let's watch a short video to help us consider what growth mindset is.

1.24 Teaching Perseverance

Teaching Perseverance video; video opens in a new window.

1.25 What is a growth mindset?

This video is about perseverance. Perseverance is an important part of growth mindset. Having a growth mindset also refers to the ability to put in effort and focus and to be willing to put in time and practice even in the reality of possible failure.

Individuals with a growth mindset believe that what someone is able to do can change as a result of effort, perseverance, and practice.

It is important for families and teachers to understand this, because differences in a child's mindset can lead to achievement gaps in grades, test scores, class behavior, and other student outcomes that last for years.

1.26 Mindset: The New Psychology of Success

Carol Dweck is the founding researcher on growth and fixed mindsets.

She is the author of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*.

This book changed how many people think and is one of the many reasons we consider mindset such an important part of child and young adult development today.

1.27 What is growth mindset?

Let's listen to Carol Dweck talk about growth mindset.

Select the video to play it.

As you watch, think about how the information applies to your own life and your children's lives.

We will discuss your thoughts and questions after the video.

1.28 What are the terms we need to define?

To think more about what makes up a growth mindset we will need to define some terms.

Choose a term you want to think about.

1.29 Growth Mindset

Growth mindset is about how we face challenges and setbacks.

It is the belief that you have control over how and what you learn and that what you learn and how smart you are can be shaped by what you do.

It means that what you know, and how and what you are able to do, is not something that is set in cement.

That people are able to change, grow, and get smarter or stronger through effort and learning.

Having a growth mindset can have real benefits for kids with learning and attention issues.

There are many ways to help your child develop a growth mindset.

1.30 Fixed –Ability Mindset

The fixed-ability mindset is the belief that you were born with the skills you have and nothing can change those skills.

Thinking like this means believe do not have control over what you learn throughout your life.

Fixed-ability mindset refers to the belief that intelligence and academic ability are fixed qualities that students either possess or do not possess and that cannot be changed through effort (Dweck et al., 2011).

It is very easy for some children who struggle with school assignments or test taking to have a fixed-ability mindset.

Without the right messages and support a child may never change how he or she thinks about themselves or their abilities.

1.31 Academic Mindset

Academic mindset refers to students' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions regarding themselves, their academic potential, and their relationship to school (Dweck et al., 2011).

This mindset focuses mostly on school abilities.

1.32 Academic Behaviors

Academic behaviors are commonly associated with being a "good student," including getting to school ready to work (with the books needed for the day and assignments ready to turn in), regularly attending class, paying attention and participating in class, and devoting out-of-school time to studying and completing homework (Farrington et al., 2012).

Most children do not display these behaviors without some reminding or support from teachers and parents.

1.33 Slow Down and Discuss (2)

Let's talk about what the video says about praise and about the mindset terms we learned.

In the video, Carol Dweck talked a lot about what teachers can do, but parents can give the same support to children at home.

1.34 Setting a Growth Mindset

It is the responsibility of families, teachers, and the whole community to set a growth mindset culture.

Everyone children come into contact with can support-or combat-the development of a growth mindset.

Take a moment to think about your own life.

Who modeled a growth mindset for you?

Maybe you didn't meet that person until you were older.

Now think about your children.

Who in their lives models a growth mindset?

Maybe it is a coach, religious mentor, supervisor, or family member.

Before we move on to helping our children develop a growth mindset, let's first look at our own mindset and where we are personally in the journey from a fixed to growth mindset.

1.35 Activity: Mindset Quiz

Take the Mindset Quiz.

Do not worry about the results.

Growth mindset isn't how everyone looks at the world.

Many of us were raised with different beliefs in our abilities.

It is never too late to think about things differently for ourselves or our children.

1.36 Five Steps to a Growth Mindset Culture

If our goal is to support our children to be more self-confident, it means that we too need to gain skills so we can be more confident.

Let's go through the five steps that can be used right now to increase a growth mindset culture in our families: learn, recognize and acknowledge, tell and praise, focus, and set goals.

1.37 Learn

The first step is to learn about how your brain learns.

Learning about the human brain helps with more than just growth mindset.

When kids understand how the brain works, they are better able to understand their emotions and work through moments of worry and frustration.

The brain as a muscle.

It is always growing and changing, and the more you challenge it, the stronger it gets.

If you run away from hard things, the brain won't learn that new thing.

If you keep trying, the brain will grow and develop new problem-solving strategies.

Be open to learning new things or new ways to do something.

If kids see their parents try new things, they will be less afraid to try new things.

1.38 Recognize and Acknowledge

The second step is to recognize when you are using a growth mindset and practice telling yourself about what you did in self-talk.

Self-talk is an essential tool for stopping the negative worries and thoughts and focusing on the potential or the positive.

One strategy for helping your children with this will be to make a list of the negative thoughts you hear from your child and ask your child to think of ways to make these thoughts or situations more positive.

These positive thoughts are called counterstatements.

For example, if your child often says, “I just can’t do this,” a counterstatement might be, “This is hard and will take time, but I can figure it out.”

Another example is when a child says, “I always make mistakes,” the counterstatement can be, “Mistakes help me learn new things.”

Acknowledge where you are as a parent in your mindset.

Do you naturally have a fixed mindset?

If so, try and adjust your language about things in your life so your kids see what it looks like every day.

This is very hard to do, especially for adults because we have been thinking the same way for so long.

It takes some practice.

1.39 Talk and Praise Efforts

The third step is to give clear praise for the effort, not the success, and to teach your kids to seek knowledge, not approval.

This is not something parents do naturally.

Most parents grew up only being praised for successes.

But working hard, even if the outcome isn’t the best, is important too.

We all want to tell our children what we think of their art or their writing, especially when they are little.

Children will be just as happy to hear you tell them how hard they worked on what they did.

Here are some things you can say to praise the effort:

- “Wow, I really love the color of that pumpkin you painted.”
- “How did you make that color?”
- “What is your favorite part of the painting?”
- “Wow, you studied a long time for that test!”
- “You worked hard on that drawing.”

When we reframe our own thoughts and ask questions instead of providing automatic approval every single time, our kids learn to consider the process instead of looking for that praise.

1.40 Focus on Opportunity

The fourth step is to focus on opportunity.

One of the difficult parts of parenting is that there is no time off from being a parent.

Our children are listening to everything we say and watching everything we do.

They are learning from our words and actions, even when we think they are unaware.

As you move through your day, find chances to remind your children to think about how they can learn from their efforts and mistakes.

You might do this by sharing something new that you have learned that makes you proud.

Above all, it's important to focus on the steps we and other members of our family take toward learning new things instead of the final result.

When children observe that you see the value of growth that occurs over time, they will begin to believe that is true for themselves as well.

This helps them to stop worrying about failure and helps them think about what they can learn from their mistakes.

1.41 Set Goals

The fifth step is to set challenging, achievable goals.

Goal setting is both a step and a strategy.

When we set goals, we are telling ourselves that we believe we can do what we have set out to do.

When we share these goals with our family or a teacher, we are telling others that we believe in our ability to learn and accomplish something, even if it takes time.

A growth mindset goal is unique because it is always stated in a positive way, it can be measured, and it is challenging, but achievable.

Set goals allow us to look at how much we grow in capacities and skills.

There may even be barriers we need to overcome, but that makes meeting the goal an even bigger achievement.

When you set goals for yourself or talk to your child about goal setting, remember to be clear and focused on what you are trying to accomplish.

For example, “What grade do you want to get on your test?” or “Can you remember to feed the dogs without a reminder?”

1.42 Personal Reflection: How can you model a growth mindset?

Earlier you were asked to think about who models a growth mindset for you.

Now it's time to reflect on your children and how you can model a growth mindset for them.

Use the How can you model a growth mindset? handout to help you think about your own mindset.

Then answer the following questions:

What can you do to model a more positive response to challenges?

How is this different from what you already do?

1.43 A Closer Look at Goal Setting

When we have a growth mindset, we believe that we have power over what we learn.

The next step is to write goals so that we can make a plan for what we want.

Let's take a closer look at goal setting.

Select a question to explore.

1.44 Question 1: Why is goal setting important?

Kids and adults think about what they want in life.

Whether it is something at school, at home, or at work, we often picture what we want.

Writing goals is a step needed to get what you want and have been picturing.

Writing a goal down on paper makes it even more important; it can be a reminder to keep working toward that goal or the start of making a plan with steps to meet that goal.

Writing goals will help your child do the following:

Plan ahead for what they want.

Learn and practice persistence.

Decide what is meaningful and important to them.

An example of a goal for your child may be to get a better grade in one of their classes.

By writing that goal, your child can think about what they can do to meet that goal, such as doing all of the homework for that class or talking to the teacher when they are struggling with something.

1.45 Question 2: How can I help my child set “good goals?”

Your child will probably need some help with writing their goals.

While they know what they want, they may need some help making sure what they put as a goal is something they can actually achieve.

If it is more than they can actually do, your child will get frustrated, angry, and may give up.

Goals should be hard enough to be a challenge, but something you know they can do.

You can help your child set goals by making sure the goal meets the following criteria:

- The goal should be positive (“I will learn to...,” “I will be able to...”).
- The goal should be challenging but within their ability to accomplish.
- The goal should give them a chance to gain skills that they want to attain.

Remember, it is your child’s goal.

You are just there to make sure they can achieve it.

1.46 Make it personal!

Use the Goal Setting Worksheet handout to help you think about your goals.

Then use the bookmarks to write down your goals.

1.47 Practicing Strategies

Throughout this module we have shared many strategies on how to support your child to have a growth mindset, to set goals, and to build their executive functioning skills.

The next few slides will show some scenarios.

Each one displays a situation where a parent can provide support to build one or more skill.

Let's read through them together and discuss as a group what you, as a parent, could do in each situation.

This will allow you to practice all of the strategies shared in this module.

1.48 Sharing Feelings

What can you say to Ruben to help him practice self-control?

Ruben is 11 years old and loves playing video games. He asks to play his games on the TV every day after school.

You come home from work and see Ruben on his game and none of his jobs are done.

You ask Ruben to turn off his game three times and each time he says "ok" but does not turn off his game.

When you take his game away, he goes to his room and slams his door.

1.49 Supporting Goal Setting

What can you do to help Susana with setting her goal?

Susana is nine years old and loves playing soccer. She has played with the same team for two years.

Each year, a few of her teammates get picked for the all-star team. Susana is always disappointed when she isn't chosen.

She tells you she really wants to make the team this year.

1.50 A Closer Look at Praise

What words of praise might you offer Jugo to focus on a growth mindset?

Jugo is a 14-year-old eighth grader who has just completed his first engineering challenge roller coaster.

He stayed home all weekend to complete the project by 8:00 a.m. on Monday.

He had to walk the project to school and left at 6:30 a.m. on Monday morning to ensure he was there in time to submit it to the Maker Fair.

1.51 Everyone Needs Practice

Maybe you knew just what to say for each of these situations.

But for most parents, supporting goal setting, giving praise, and supporting executive functioning skills isn't something that comes easily.

It may require some practice and rethinking of what to say to provide support.

Here are some examples of things we might frequently say to our child along with a new way to say the same thing:

- Example 1: I have told you three times to take out the trash and it is still not done.

Select the arrow to reveal what you could say instead.

Your job is to take out the trash. How can you remember to do this everyday?

- Example 2: You got 75% on your test. I want you to spend more time studying next time.

Select the arrow to reveal what you could say instead.

You got 75% on your test. What can you do before your next test to get a higher score?

- Example 3: Stop crying about that toy. You need to share with your sister.

Select the arrow to reveal what you could say instead.

Sharing is hard to do. Here is another toy to use while your sister plays with that one.

1.52 Everyone Needs Practice

It takes practice to use praise that focuses on a growth mindset.

The following are words of praise that you might say to your children and a different way to send the same message:

- Example 1: Good job, you did so well!

Select the arrow to reveal what you could say instead.

Wow, you worked hard; you must be so proud!

- Example 2: You are always so smart; I knew you could do it!

Select the arrow to reveal what you could say instead.

I am proud of your determination and perseverance!

- Example 3: You are so good at math and building!

Select the arrow to reveal what you could say instead.

You focused on the math and detail a lot; it is easy to see how hard you worked!

1.53 Activity: Praise Poster

Using the last slide as a starting place, make a poster of some positive phrases you and your children can say.

You can take this home as a reminder to help support your journey, and the journey of your children, toward a growth mindset.

1.54 Make a Plan

Many new ideas were shared in this module.

You may be excited and ready to try some of the strategies you have learned.

As parents, you are very busy and sometimes working and taking care of the family feels like it takes up most of your day.

To support you in trying these new strategies, there is a resource called Action Planning.

Download this resource and answer the questions about what you are going to try with your children before the next meeting.

Keep this resource with you so you can make notes as you try new things at home.

We hope that you share your experiences with the group next time.

You may find that others have had the same types of experiences.

1.55 Thank you

Thank you for completing Module 3!