

# Mindset *Matters*

A Curriculum to Help Students  
Understand how to Help Themselves Succeed  
with a **GROWTH MINDSET**



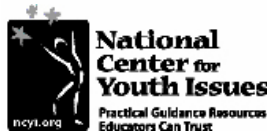
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# **Mindset** *Matters*

# Part **ONE** 1

**Introduction**

**Mindset Matters for Small Group Counseling**

**Mindset Matters for Classroom Curriculum**

**Staff Professional Development**

**Mini Grant Sample**



# INTRODUCTION

## How this Curriculum Came to Be...

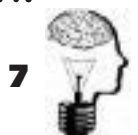
As a school counselor in an elementary school, I am always looking for a fresh approach to teach “how to do your best.” When I learned about Carol Dweck’s body of research on Growth Mindset, I was excited to see that she had found positive outcomes in student achievement in teaching this theory to students. I was excited and interested in finding out more. It was on my to-do list, my “maybe I’ll integrate that into my curriculum someday” list. Then, on a plane ride home this past summer, I browsed my on-board movie list to find that Carol Dweck’s TED talk was available. Game changer. Yes, this 10 minute video turned my to-do list desire into action.

To understand the subsequent pages and the ideas within this book, allow me to present the overview of this Curriculum with a Top 5 reasons I think it works (in no particular order):

- 1. FLEXIBILITY:** At first I thought about creating a small group curriculum surrounding this idea, but as I did more research, I wanted to make this curriculum accessible for both small group and classroom curriculum. I wanted to create a curriculum that is easy to use, easy to get buy-in from teachers and students and that is FLEXIBLE. I use a certain curriculum in kindergarten (*Peaceworks I-Care Rules*) because I can teach those 5 rules in any way I want. However, *I Care Cat* and his 5 *I-Care Rules* give me a framework and room to be creative within that framework.
- 2. RESEARCH-BASED:** Google one of these: “Growth Mindset,” “Carol Dweck.” Prepare to have your mind blown. There are some smart people involved in these studies. As you see from the table below (*Mindsets in the Classroom* by Mary Cay Ricci © 2013, Prufrock Press, pg. 11,) children start off their elementary school career having a growth mindset. They think that they can do anything! But as they get older, they start thinking about how things are harder. They form more of a fixed mindset, as the culture of our society trains them in a way to quash their optimism and lends them to a more fixed mindset of searching for praise instead of progress. This curriculum is great for elementary age children so that we can teach growth mindset at a young age.

**Table 1**  
*Changes in Fixed and Growth Mindsets Across Grade Levels*

Grade	Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
K	n/a	100%
1	10%	90%
2	18%	82%
3	42%	58%



- 3. KIDS LIKE IT:** I have had a student write me an individual referral form to learn more about the brain (really!). I have parent emails telling me how their son is coming home talking about our Mindset group. When kids have fun and find interest in a topic, they want to talk about it. That is just cool.
- 4. CONNECTS WITH ACADEMICS:** When you are talking to students about grit, stamina, how to get smarter and get better outcomes, teachers like it. Academic connections are essential for counselors to make. It's one of the ASCA domains because it is critical for us to teach at the elementary level.
- 5. STRUCTURE FOR YOUR YEAR:** One of the things that threads through these lessons is what I call the Mindset Chant (page 13). This chant talks about "Training your Brain," and that can be tied into any skill-based lesson we do. Make this curriculum a universal theme for a grade level worth of lessons or to integrate if you are a Mindset School.

## More about the Structure (a/k/a Making it Easy to Follow)

For either small group or classroom lessons, having a structured curriculum is easy for students to follow and easy for us to implement. Aligned with each letter of the word **MINDSET**, this curriculum has 6 learning topics: **M**indfulness, **I**dentify Brain Basics, **N**ot Yet is OK (a/k/a the Power of Yet), **D**etermination and Grit, **S**elf-Talk, **E**veryone is Unique, and the last letter **T** is for **T**eaching Others (because we know that when students show mastery, then they can teach others what they have learned.)

As you can see in more detail on page 33, Mindset Matters can be taught in as few or as many sessions as desired. The recurring theme of this curriculum is training and understanding your brain so that you can show the world you can get smarter with effort. Many major teaching points are reflected in the Mindset Chant (page 13) which reinforces the essence of the Growth Mindset theory, so you will see it in many of the lessons within the curriculum. Also, because most counselors like to adapt their lessons to their time frames and comfort levels, this curriculum gives a framework of the topics and allows counselors some latitude. For example, if you have a lesson on determination, you can use that in lieu of the ideas provided here. It's up to you!





## Tell me more about the background of this... what IS growth mindset??

*"In a fixed mindset students believe their basic abilities, their intelligence, their talents, are just fixed traits. They have a certain amount and that's that, and then their goal becomes to look smart all the time and never look dumb. In a growth mindset students understand that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence. They don't necessarily think everyone's the same or anyone can be Einstein, but they believe everyone can get smarter if they work at it."*

The above quote describes Fixed vs. Growth Mindset. It is about teaching kids that with effort they can get smarter and grow their brains. Research tells us that kids who learn about Growth Mindset actually **DO BETTER**. Growth mindset promotes that one's ability can be developed through dedication and hard work; brains and innate talent are just the starting point.

Many of us work with students who believe that they will not amount to much, kids who realize that they are in remedial classes or in a cycle of poverty. To teach them (and watch them get) that they create their future is awesome. And thank you to Dr. Dweck and the many scientists and psychologists that have done the work that has provided the opportunity to create ideas surrounding a research-based theory.

### Why No Discussion of Fixed Mindset

As I read Carol Dweck's book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success (2007)*, I was excited to create lessons about this great theory. I jumped into a third grade class the following week and did a lesson on Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset. It was not a success. The students at the elementary level seemed confused by which one was which. I actually stopped teaching about Growth Mindset for about a year, until the idea of breaking Growth Mindset down into skills occurred to me. SO, teaching what Growth Mindset IS rather than what it ISN'T has proven much more successful. Focusing on what has been successful is what growth mindset is about, hence this curriculum has not spent much time on defining or learning about Fixed Mindset.

Download the PowerPoint file to guide you through this lesson at:  
[www.ncyi.org/mindsetmatters](http://www.ncyi.org/mindsetmatters)

#### PPTS to Guide You

If you see this icon, this means the lesson you are reading about has a PowerPoint to guide your lesson. Why recreate the wheel? Use this as a guide for your students and also for you.



## Create a Growth Mindset Culture

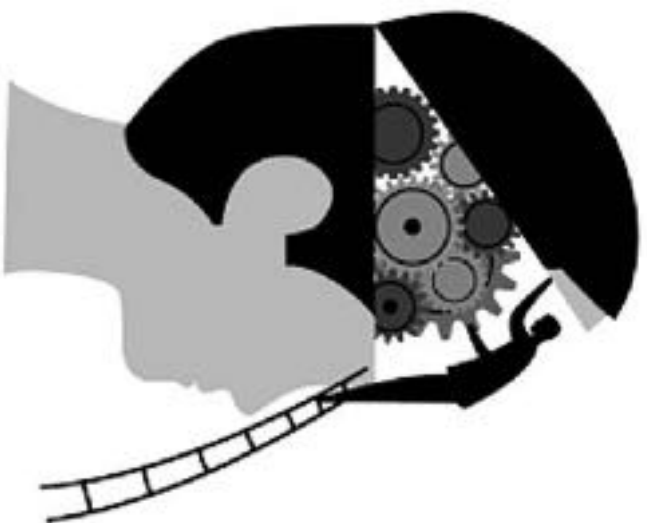
### Ideas to create a Growth Mindset culture in your school are:

- Make Growth Mindset your school-wide theme.
- Have staff book studies.
- Have student small counseling groups using this curriculum.
- Use this curriculum for core lessons in the classroom.
- Show video clips listed on page 163 at staff meetings.
- Encourage teachers to create brain stations in their classroom and ask counselors to have one in their office.

## Create Brain Stations

Brain Stations are corners or nooks in a classroom or office with gadgets, books, and fidgets about brains. Why? This is a great place where kids can explore and remember that their brain can be trained. Brains can grow with the practice of skills. Some classes have cool down corners, so why not add this to your room, too? Encourage kids to realize that they are in control of how smart they can be.





# BrainStation

**Here you can explore more about  
how your brain works!**

## What's the "Mindset Chant"?

Kids remember songs and chants. This one has motions. Even better, right? I made this up, taught the students, and it stuck. It embodies what we are trying to teach about Growth Mindset. It can be done in class, group, on morning announcements, made into a video, etc.

**Leader:** Whatcha gotta do?

**Class:** I've got to train my brain.

(Motion: Make a muscle and then point to brain.)

**Leader:** Why you gotta do it?

**Class:** Gotta show the world.

(Motion: Hand over eyes, like you are searching)

**Leader:** Whatcha gonna show them?

**Class:** That I've got some skills.

(Motion: Point to yourself with both thumbs)

**Leader:** What kind of skills?

**Class:** Whatever I work on!

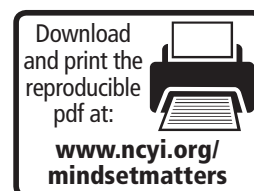
(Motion: Wag pointer finger at someone and say in a silly voice)

**Leader:** What's that called?

**Class:** Growth Mindset, Growth Mindset, Growth Mindset

(Motion: Do a little dance)

See the next page for a mini poster of the chant that can be printed out for classrooms. It is also available for download (p13\_Mindset Chant.pdf) so you can display it in a PowerPoint presentation, Smartboard, etc.



# MINDSET CHANT!

Whatcha gotta do?

I've got to train my brain.

Why you gotta do it?

Gotta show the world.

Whatcha gonna show them?

That I've got some skills.

What kind of skills?

Whatever I work on!

What's that called?

Growth Mindset, Growth Mindset,  
Growth Mindset!



# *Let's do the* **MINDSET CHANT!**



**Leader:** Whatcha gotta do?

**Class: I've got to train my brain.**

**Leader:** Why you gotta do it?

**Class: Gotta show the world.**

**Leader:** Whatcha gonna show them?

**Class: That I've got some skills.**

**Leader:** What kind of skills?

**Class: Whatever I work on!**

**Leader:** What's that called?

**Class: Growth Mindset,  
Growth Mindset, Growth Mindset!**