



PESA

Positive Education Schools Association

Community of Practice

Have you joined your local state or territory discussion group yet? Go to www.pesa.edu.au/discussion-groups/ to join!

Each week we post a 'conversation starter' question to encourage the sharing of ideas, approaches and strategies.

In August, our topics were:

- Growth mindset
- Benefit mindset
- Grit
- Kindness
- Neuroscience

Below is a collation of responses across all State Chapter Facebook pages.

Special mention of Juliette Foenander (Victoria) and Alex Acworth (ACT) for contributing to a number of these weekly topics. Thank you to all contributing members for sharing some fantastic ideas and practices.

We hope to hear from many more of you next month!

Week 1 – People with a growth mindset believe their basic qualities are things that can be cultivated through effort, strategy, and help from others. What strategies does your school use to encourage students to develop a growth mindset?

- Wellbeing - learning persistence, confidence, resilience, etc. We also have the Peaceful kids program for kids and parents. Student of the week awards are Wellbeing focused (Juliette Foenander – VIC)
- Having conversations about grit when kids are in the bottom of the pit can be helpful to cultivate a growth mindset. Assisting students to shift their focus towards long term gain, not the short term road bumps. Perseverance and effort is key (Alex Acworth – ACT)
- We have posters around the school and in student diaries. It is also incorporated into Pos Ed lessons. Many teachers use this language, especially in the Junior School (Jon Humphries – NSW)



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Week 1 - Continued...

- In our Connect (Wellbeing) Program we teach our students about 'The Learning Pit'. We help students understand that learning takes time and that confusion is an acceptable part of this process. This approach helps to cultivate a growth mindset (Matt Smith – QLD)

Week 2 - A benefit mindset builds on a growth mindset, where we not only seek to fulfil our potential, but choose to do it in a way that serves the wellbeing of all. How have you demonstrated a benefit mindset this week?

- For some great information on benefit mindset, check out Ash Buchanan's excellent 'Benefit Mindset Schools Guide' on the PESA dashboard by clicking on the 'Growth Mindset & Benefit Mindset' topic tile on the PESA website:
www.pesa.edu.au/dashboard/resources-by-topic/growth-mindset-benefit-mindset/
(Matt Smith – QLD)

Week 3 - Grit is defined as 'passion and perseverance toward long-term goals'. What strategies do you use to encourage your students to use grit when the going gets tough?

- To add on 'yet' when they say things like, 'I can't do it' (Juliette Foenander – VIC).
- We try to help our students with purposeful goal setting. If the goal is meaningful, there is a greater chance of students approaching this goal with passion and perseverance (Matt Smith – QLD)



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Week 4 – “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted”. How do you promote kindness at your school?

- By being kind! (Alex Acworth – ACT)
- One of our school values is 'Being Kind'. We talk a lot about being kind to self as well eg. eat well, move well and sleep well (Matt Smith – QLD)

Week 5 – Our brains are our most complex organ and serve as the command centre for our bodies and minds. Learning about how our brains work may enable us to better understand how to optimise our learning. Is your school teaching students about neuroscience and if so, what are you doing and hoping to achieve?

- Definitely and even young children are capable of understanding that their brain is like a muscle and grows when they learn hard things. My year 1s loved looking at images of neurons connecting and were amazed to see that you have the most neurons when you are 6. We made a jelly brain to see what our brains looked like (Fiona Boylan – WA)
- Our Science lessons do, but this is definitely something we could incorporate into our Health and PE sessions. Making the link between subjects is always a bonus too! (Alex Acworth – ACT)
- As part of our approach to study skills, we teach our students one of the most important priorities is looking after the brain. The 'eat, move, sleep' mantra reminds students to have the right nutrition, sufficient physical exercise or movement and effective sleep hygiene so they optimise their brains for learning (Matt Smith – QLD)