

# “The Secret to Raising Smart Kids”

## by Carol S. Dweck

<http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=the-secret-to-raising-smart-kids>)

### Main Ideas

- Many people assume that superior intelligence or ability is a key to success. But more than three decades of research shows that an overemphasis on intellect or talent—with the implication that such traits are innate and fixed—leaves people vulnerable to failure, fearful of challenges, and unmotivated to learn.
- Teaching children to have a “growth mind-set,” which encourages a focus on effort rather than on intelligence or talent, produces high achievers in school and in life.
- Parents and teachers can engender a growth mind-set in children by
  - Teaching them how the brain grows and changes through the learning process,
  - Telling them success stories that emphasize hard work and love of learning,
  - Praising them for their own effort and persistence rather than for their intelligence.

### Summary

In the *Scientific American Mind* article, “The Secret to Raising Smart Kids” (28 Nov. 2007), Stanford University developmental psychologist, Carol S. Dweck, exposes the myth that praising students for their intelligence or talent promotes their self esteem and success in school and in life. Thirty years of research reveals that this focus actually makes students unmotivated, reluctant to face learning challenges, and susceptible to failing. Instead, parents and educators should teach young people to have a “growth mind-set,” based on understanding that the brain develops by making new connections as we learn. Praise effort rather than intelligence, Dweck recommends. Foster success by telling stories that highlight the value of persistence, dedication, and joy in learning.