



## Optimistic Thinking PROGRAM TAKE HOME

This month, we're exploring OPTIMISTIC THINKING: Feeling hopeful - even in challenging times, understanding those things we can control and confidently directing our actions toward the positive. Dialogue with your kids about what they learned and discover how everyone can apply the skills and tools they explored.

*Some activities to try at home:*

- **3 Stars and A Wish** - As a group or individually, come up with 3 things that you do well and pick one "wish" to work toward. Together, you can create strategies to positively move toward and achieve the goals you set, even when challenges present themselves.
- **Positive Self Talk Chart** - Divide a piece of paper in half. Label one half "Change your Words" and the other half "Change your Mindset".
  - Think about any less-than-positive things you have said to yourself in the past when you came up against challenges or stressful situations. Write them in the "Change your Words" column.
  - Now, on the "Change your Mindset" side, think of what you can say instead, to focus instead on a positive, or move toward a positive outcome. For example:

"I'm not good at playing basketball"	shifts to	"I can play basketball just for fun" or "I can practice if I want to improve at basketball" or "I'm really good at soccer"
"This is too hard for me"	shifts to	"This may take some time and effort, but, I can figure this out or I can ask _____ to help me with it"

- Hang your chart in space where you can see it when negative thoughts might creep into mind. This might help you shift your mindset in order to engage your optimistic thinking muscle!
- **Jar of Awesome** - Take an empty jar; Every day for a month, make a note with a small win or a happy moment from your day and place the note into the jar. Whenever you need some motivation or positive energy, select a note from the jar and rejoice in how awesome you are!

### Additional reading/viewing:

Parents/Teens: <https://kindnessmatters365.org/2020/07/12/optimistic-thinking-at-home-aperture-education/>  
Elementary:

- [Making Lemonade Teaching Young Children to Think Optimistically](#) by Colker and Koralek
- [Bubble Gum Brain](#) by Julia Cook
- [I Can't Do that Yet](#) by Esther Pia Cordova
- [The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes](#) by Mark Pett

Upper Grades:

- [Big Life Journal](#)
- [The Grit Guide for Teens](#) by Caren Baruch Feldman
- [I Was Born to Make Mistakes Not Fake Perfection](#) By Drake and The Big Life Journal
- [Relentless Optimism: How a Commitment to Positive Thinking Changes Everything](#) by Darrin Donnelly

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Kindness Matters 365 (KM365) is a nonprofit that guides children and teens to explore essential life skills such as being kind and compassionate, respecting others, developing stronger relationships, and coping with challenges. After our kids figure out how to feel and be their best, they practice what they discovered through interactive projects and community engagement initiatives ([km365.org](https://km365.org)).

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