Opportunity Mindset Tips
Transforming Challenges into Possibilities

“My child won’t share with other kids. It’s embarrassing!”

CHALLENGE
How can I get my child to understand that sharing is an important part of building relationships?

CHOICE
You can decide how to think about this moment and how to respond. You can choose to see this challenge as a chance for your child to learn and grow.

OPPORTUNITY
You can help your child learn to share by helping them see things from another person’s point of view. Thinking about how others might feel can help them learn empathy, which can help them build the life skill of Perspective Taking. Children with this skill are more likely to succeed in and out of school.

STRATEGIES FOR 4- TO 8-YEAR-OLDS

1. TAKE YOUR CHILD’S VIEW
   TRY TO FIGURE OUT why your child isn’t sharing. Are they afraid they won’t have enough for themselves? Try to notice your own feelings too. What’s behind feeling embarrassed? Do you worry they won’t make friends, for example? Let your child know that even though sharing can be hard, together you will find a way that works for them.

2. SHARE REASONS
   EXPLAIN YOUR POINT OF VIEW. Talk with your child about how sharing is part of being a friend and classmate. Ask them how it feels when someone shares with them and how it feels when they don’t. Remind them that sharing is a way to make others feel included.

3. PROVIDE CHOICES
   SET LIMITS and give your child options within those limits. You can say, “We try to say yes when someone asks us to share. OR, if you really don’t want to share, you can explain why and find something else to share. That will help your friend understand what you’re thinking and feeling.”

4. PROBLEM-SOLVE TOGETHER
   INVITE your child to think of how it feels when someone does something kind for them, like sharing. Make a list together of how it feels to be a giver or a sharer. Post the list where they can see it. When they have an opportunity to share, invite them to look at the list. You can also share a story about a time you felt good when you shared.

5. SCAFFOLD
   BUILD ON and recognize the progress your child makes, even if it’s something small. Try saying, “May I have one of your pretzels, please?” Then you can say, “Thank you for sharing! Even more important than the pretzel is the kindness you are showing me.”

An Opportunity Mindset means choosing to see a challenge as a chance to learn and grow.

Perspective Taking means trying to understand what others think and feel. This requires Self-Control because we have to take a step back and manage our own thoughts and feelings to consider how others think and feel. This skill helps children adjust to school, understand what their teachers and parents expect, make sense of what they read, and build positive relationships. For more information visit: www.mindinthemaking.org

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