Education
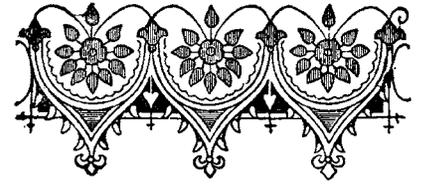
Spring into a GROWTH Mindset!

Pamela Elmi, Founder & Director, Robbinsville Extended Day

'Yet' is one of the most powerful words in the English language. It implies endless possibility and hope. Scholars like psychologist *Carol Dweck will tell you 'yet' comes from a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset. A fixed mindset focuses on a person's abilities being set in stone. In a growth mindset, it is possible to change one's ability level with effort and perseverance.

In the R.E.D. after school program, we try to live within a growth mindset every day. After all,

6 years ago our program started with 90 students. Now we serve over 500! If a child has a discipline incident with consequences, the child is reminded that 'tomorrow is a new day'.

If a giant block castle tumbles due to poor structure, the young builders are told that failure is not an ending-it's a beginning. A breathtaking art project is complimented with the words 'You must have worked very hard at that' rather than 'You are so talented'. If at snack time, a kindergartener struggles with opening his little carton of milk and spills it all over the table, he is assured that mistakes are proof you are trying!

Why not start this glorious new season with a growth mindset of your own? Pay attention to the thoughts in your head throughout the day. Enhance words like 'I can't' by adding 'I can't…YET'!

To learn more about growth mindset: 'Mindset, The New Psychology of Success' Dweck, Carol S., Ballantine Books, 2007.