



10 Steps to Fostering

Creative Confidence

The LEGO® Group
©2024

Developed in collaboration with Jennifer B Wallace (Best Selling Author & Parenting Researcher)

PlayUnstoppablePlayUnst



Get Creative Confidence

What and why it matters!

Creative confidence is trusting and believing in one's creative growth and abilities. It means having the self-assurance to generate ideas, take risks, speak up, and contribute unique solutions without fearing judgment or failure. Creative confidence fosters innovation, problem-solving skills, adaptability, resilience, self-expression, and keeps your love for learning alive!

The parents we asked agree, saying creative confidence is important for children to:





Here's what creative confidence looks like in action

Freedom to explore

Creative confidence encourages a curious mindset, allowing young people to explore new ideas and possibilities without fearing judgment or failure.

Risk-taking

People with creative confidence are more willing to take creative risks and step outside their comfort zones.

Problem-solving

Creative confidence enables children to approach challenges with a fresh perspective, leading to innovative solutions that may not be immediately apparent through conventional thinking.

Adaptability

Creative confidence helps children navigate uncertainty with resilience in a rapidly changing world.

Collaboration

When children trust their creative abilities, they are more likely to contribute their unique perspectives, fostering a collaborative environment and deeper connections.

Personal empowerment

Believing in one's ability to generate creative solutions enhances self-esteem and well-being.

Expression of creativity

Feeling safe to express their true selves and interests allows children to feel seen and known for who they are deep inside, making them feel more comfortable with self-expression and their own creativity.

Global research commissioned by the LEGO Group of more than 61,500 parents and children reveals that everyday language can dampen creativity:

Perfection words

Common phrases that indicate excessively high standards or trigger an expectation of flawless performance can contribute to perfectionistic tendencies, such as "Failure is never an option" or "You always have to work to be the best at everything you do."

Gendered bias

Stereotypes – such as boys being encouraged to be assertive, bolder, to take risks, while girls are often praised for being polite, nurturing, and playing it safe – can curb creative courage. It can limit a child's confidence to express themselves creatively or to take bold creative risks and instead default to conformity.

Limiting language

Sometimes the language adults use when discussing interests or aspirations can inadvertently convey limitations. Phrases like, "Oh, that's for the boys" can create barriers and discourage girls from exploring certain creative pursuits, and vice versa.

Subtle discouragement

Subtle cues, such as an adult stepping in to help on a challenging project without being asked, can contribute to a child's self-doubt, unintentionally signalling a lack of faith in their abilities.



10 Steps to Fostering

Creative Confidence

1 Champion progress over perfection

Lots of kids feel the need to be perfect because of society, culture, or their own thoughts. But, by just changing how we talk, grown-ups can ease that tension. Instead of focusing on flawless results, cheer on the little wins of creative development. Say things like, "I love the colours you picked!"

2 Play with words

Watch out for gender stereotypes when talking about creative ideas! We all fall into this trap. And we know that society as a whole does too - using words such as "genius", "clever" and "brave" more often to describe boys' work. Whereas words such as "pretty", "cute" and "gorgeous" are more likely to be used to describe work by girls. Mix it up. Encourage your child to ask questions and challenge those stereotypes. It's important to have open chats about how society sometimes expects different things from boys and girls.

3 Celebrate setbacks

They're not failures, they're growth opportunities! Show how learning from mistakes is valuable by sharing them as a family. Get playful with it - build a "Rewards Chart" out of a big LEGO® baseplate and add a new piece, like a minifigure or mini-doll, every time a family member shares a story where they have overcome a setback. Soon you'll have a new scene that you will all have made together!

4 ARGH! Build frustration tolerance

Being creative means getting cool with frustration and making friends with discomfort. Consider a fun series of challenges for you and your child, such as the "Eyes-shut Challenge". Gather random LEGO bricks. Close your eyes and build something without seeing the bricks. When you're done, reflect on the challenges you faced, share your thoughts and feelings, break down the strategies you employed, and the surprises that came up.

5 Cultivate a growth mindset

Having a growth mindset means believing that you can get better at stuff by working hard and never giving up, instead of thinking you're just born with certain skills. When kids have this mindset, they're more likely to bounce back from tough times, enjoy learning new things, and be up for trying out new stuff, even if it's tricky.

6 Dial down pressure: Praise the process

To avoid the pressure pitfalls of praise, consider praising effort over ability. For example, instead of saying, "You're a great artist" you might say, "You've chosen such interesting colours and patterns", or "I love to watch you express yourself through your LEGO designs."

7 Consider play your superpower!

Like any skill, creative confidence develops over time. Use playtime to ask open-ended questions, encouraging your child to share more and open up their creative courage. For example, during a pretend play session, you might ask, "Tell me about the story you're creating", or "What do you like most about this game?"

8 Introduce inspiring role models

Help your kids discover a range of role models to spark their creativity and boost their confidence. Talk with children about others who inspire you. Whether it's a friend, a family member, or someone you admire from afar, explain how their accomplishments can serve as a powerful reminder that we are all capable of achieving great things.

9 Challenge your own comfort zone

Kids pick up lessons best by watching what adults do. When they see us trying new stuff even when it's tough, it teaches them that you can get better at things with practice. So, why not try something new with your child? Ever fancied dabbling in watercolours? Watch a tutorial together, and when things get tricky, show them how to use growth mindset talk like, "I'm not good at this, yet." Or dust off those roller skates and give it a go, even if it's been ages. Let them see you taking risks, learning as you go, and most importantly, having a blast!

10 Check your progress!



1 Champion Progress Over Perfection



10 Steps to Fostering Creative Confidence

1— Champion Progress Over Perfection

12



Here are some ways to release children's creative strengths:

Foster a supportive atmosphere

Create an environment where kids feel totally safe sharing their thoughts and ideas, knowing they won't be judged. Let's make it a place where open communication is key, and where we always give a thumbs-up to their ideas and efforts.

Cheer them on for the way they're tackling things!

Did you know? Around two-thirds of children aged 5-12 feel like the words they hear can stop them from trying new things and make them feel like they have to be perfect in what they create. So, when they're working on something, give them a boost! Try saying something like, "Wow, I love how you're using those colours! Can you tell me more about why you picked them?" It helps them feel good about what they're doing and keeps their creativity flowing!

Model curiosity: "why, why, why?"

As much as it can sometimes test our patience, that natural curiosity kids have is actually what helps them feel more confident in their creativity. So, let's encourage them to keep asking questions, trying out new stuff, and looking for answers. Parents can lead the way by showing our own curiosity - talking about a great book we're reading, trying out a new hobby, or even just wondering aloud why things are the way they are. When they see that curiosity is something we value and enjoy, it'll inspire them to dive in and explore too.

Encourage a growth mindset

"I can't do it!" When you hear those words, it's a golden opportunity to introduce your child to the concept of a growth mindset. That's the idea that you can improve your skills through effort and persistence. Teach them to add "yet" to their challenges, saying, "I can't do it, yet." This simple shift emphasises that creative abilities are not fixed, but something they can develop with practice and belief in themselves.

Many children report feeling pressured to be perfect due to a combination of societal, cultural, and individual factors.

But there's good news...

By creating an environment that supports, nurtures, and values creative thinking over perfection, adults can help loosen the pressure valve.

According to children, asking about the creative process behind their idea or creation and telling them that we care more about this than the outcome will make them feel...





2

Celebrate Setbacks

oppablePlayonst



I fail, you fail, we all fail...



Everybody fails

I fail! You fail! We all fail! Everybody fails, but when we make it no big deal, it actually helps children become more creative and braver. They start seeing challenges and mistakes as chances to learn and get better, not as reasons to feel bad about themselves. So, as grown-ups, let's make it safe for kids to talk about their mess-ups by sharing our own stories.

Maybe it's about a project that totally flopped at work, a DIY project that turned into a disaster, or a performance that didn't go as planned. These stories aren't just tales - they're like super-powered pep talks showing that failing is totally okay. When we talk about how we felt, what we learned, and how we got stronger from those tough times, it shows that setbacks are just part of growing up and can lead to awesome new ideas and successes.

81%
of children

say hearing from adults around them that mistakes are okay and can help them learn will make them less afraid to try new things.



Taking creative risks isn't risky! Support creative risks

Celebrate effort

Acknowledge and celebrate the effort your child put into a task, regardless of the outcome, as in, "You really challenged yourself building this, and that's something to be proud of." Let them know that sticking with it is what counts, and success isn't just about the final product.

Use positive language

Constructive language when discussing failures is powerful, such as, "I noticed that things didn't go as planned with your recent project. I want to acknowledge your efforts and the hard work you put into it. Sometimes things don't work out the way we hope, but that's okay. It's a chance for us to learn and grow."

Encourage reflections

When your child steps outside their comfort zone, take a moment to reflect, "It's brave of you to take creative risks like that. What did you learn from trying something new?" Maybe even dig a little deeper, "What do you think worked well, what were some of the challenges you faced, and what could have been improved?" If things didn't go as planned, encourage your child to set new goals based on what they've learned from taking that risk.

Emphasise playfulness

Encouraging a playful attitude towards creativity can help ease self-consciousness and fear, freeing up creative expression. A fun way to get into that playful spirit is to try a "Get Messy Art Project", where you and your child can explore different textures and colours without worrying about making everything perfect. Or how about throwing a toy party in the living room, letting the toys go wild and not stressing about the mess (easier said than done, we know...)? Laugh together at the creative chaos that unfolds - it's all part of the fun!

Celebrate small wins

Celebrating small wins is crucial for staying motivated, especially when working towards bigger goals. Try having a weekly family get-together where everyone shares something little they accomplished during the week, like progress on a creative hobby. This regular recognition reinforces the importance of celebrating progress and boosts your child's sense of pride and accomplishment.

Make it Playful

Create a "Rewards Chart" to celebrate and reflect wins

Bring out a big LEGO® baseplate and add a new piece, like a minifigure or mini-doll, every time a family member shares a story where they have overcome a setback. Soon you'll have a new scene that you will all have made together!





3

Play with Words



The way we talk every day can really shape how kids see themselves, what they think they can do, and what they dream of doing in the future. Those little messages they hear early on can stick with them and affect how they feel about themselves and what they think they can achieve in later life. If they keep hearing that certain things aren't for them, it can really shake their confidence in their own creativity, not just now but for a long time.

The good news?

Adults can help counteract the subtle biases in our culture. It starts with being aware of them. Let's dive into how children can pick up on gendered messages and what we can do as adults to help them see past them.

"The words used by adults around me about my ideas affect how I feel about being creative"

81% of children

Gender stereotypes

The problem:

Gender-specific language can reinforce stereotypes by associating certain qualities, behaviors, or career choices with a particular gender. For instance, praising girls for building something "pretty" while praising boys for building something "bold" can pigeonhole them into traditional roles. The study found that society is almost seven times more likely to describe the creative outputs of women as "sweet," "pretty," "cute," and "beautiful," while terms like "brave," "cool," "genius" and "innovative" are about twice as likely to be attributed exclusively to creative output by men.

What can we do about it?

When describing children's creative outputs, consider mixing up descriptive words like "sweet," "pretty," "cute," and "beautiful" with "brave," "genius" and "innovative" to ensure no words are limited to one gender. When speaking, be mindful of job titles and roles, such as using terms like "firefighter" instead of "fireman" or "police officer" instead of "policeman" to be inclusive and inspire children to explore and envision themselves succeeding in a wide range of career fields.

Self-perception

The problem:

The words adults use shape a child's self-perception. For example, praising a girl for being "helpful" and a boy for being "smart" can influence their understanding of their value and worth. Girls may feel valued for their nurturing qualities, while boys may feel pressured to excel intellectually, which can impact their choices and pursuits later in life.

What can we do about it?

Be proactive in challenging and debunking gender stereotypes whenever they arise. Have open conversations with children about gender stereotypes and the limitations they impose. Help children understand that interests, abilities, and personality traits are not determined by gender. Encourage critical thinking by gamifying the challenge - ask your child to spot whenever they see or hear gender bias in school or wider society.

Limiting potential

The problem:

Assigning specific words and expectations based on gender can limit a child's perceived potential. Girls may feel confined to nurturing or caregiving roles, while boys may be discouraged from expressing vulnerability or pursuing artistic endeavors because they seem to be in girls' realm.

What can we do about it?

Adults can model equitable attitudes and behaviors by promoting equality in their relationships and interactions, such as household duties. Inclusive language that recognizes and values a person's individual strengths, regardless of gender, can help children reach their full potential.



10 Steps to Fostering Creative Confidence

4 ARGH!

Build Frustration Tolerance

Capable Play Unst





You can improve your child's frustration tolerance through fun “just right” LEGO® play challenges like these:



Younger children

Eyes-shut challenge

This is a fun challenge you and your child can do together. Grab a bunch of random LEGO bricks. Now, shut your eyes and build something without looking. When you're done, take a moment to chat about the hurdles you faced, the tricks you used, and any surprises that popped up. Share your thoughts and feelings about the whole creative process, and then celebrate imaginative stuff you made together!

Colour & shape challenge

Provide your child with a limited selection of LEGO bricks or limit the colour palette and challenge them to build a specific object or scene using only those pieces. A fun game is also to find the most creative solutions on how to repurpose specific elements. Whether that's a sausage turned into a phone arm, or a basketball ring used as a toilet seat. The opportunities are endless! Perhaps there's a favorite in between?

By encouraging creativity within constraints, children must adapt and lean on their creativity and problem-solving skills to find alternative solutions.

← Psst!

For anyone in the household dreaming of becoming a LEGO® Designer, you can tell them these are actual steps that designers have to think of for every set they design.

Older children

Speedy build challenge

Set a timer and challenge your child to build a specific LEGO creation within a certain time limit. Of course, the fast-paced nature of this task can lead to frustration, especially if your child encounters difficulties or runs out of time. Encourage them to stay positive and manage their frustration with deep breaths and laughs while they make their way through the obstacles. You might start with longer time limits and gradually increase the difficulty as they become more confident.

Stop-motion animation challenge

Dive into the world of movie-making with a LEGO Stop-Motion Animation Challenge. Your kids can bring their bricks to life by creating their very own blockbuster. Sure, they might hit some snags along the way — maybe a minifigure won't stand still or the scene doesn't look just right. But hey, that's all part of the director's chair experience! When things get a bit tricky, you'll be there to cheer them on, reminding them that every challenge is an opportunity...

Frustration tolerance – or the ability to cope effectively with obstacles and setbacks – is a foundation of the creative process.

Any parent who has struggled through a tough LEGO® build can attest to that! (Don't worry, we've all been there). Creative projects often involve experimentation, refinement, and iteration, and frustration tolerance allows young people to navigate multiple attempts and revisions without becoming discouraged.

Coping with frustrations also allows children to focus on the creation process rather than on the outcome – and in that appreciate and celebrate the small victories and learnings along the way.

How to gradually build frustration tolerance

“Just right challenges” are age-appropriate challenges that strike a balance between being too easy and too difficult. These challenges are designed to build a tolerance for discomfort while encouraging creative thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and adaptability. It's why LEGO products are tested by kids, to ensure the level of difficulty is high enough to challenge them but easy enough to give them a positive experience.

OppablePlay



5

Cultivate a Growth Mindset



10 Steps to Fostering Creative Confidence

5— Cultivate a Growth Mindset

A growth mindset means believing you can improve by working hard and learning new things, while a fixed mindset is all about thinking your abilities are set in stone. When kids have a growth mindset, they're more likely to bounce back from tough times, enjoy learning, and feel ready to tackle challenges and try new things.

How to explain to children the difference between a growth and fixed mindset

Fixed mindset brain

"Some people think of their brains like a house. They believe the house is built a certain way, and that's how it will always be. If they find something hard to do, they might think, 'Oh no, I can't do this and I never will be able to do, this isn't my house. I'm just not good at it.'"

Growth mindset brain

"Others see their brains like a garden. They know that with care, effort, and learning, the garden can grow and become even more beautiful. When they face something challenging, they might think, 'This is hard, but if I water it and give it time, I can learn and get better at it.'"

In other words, having a growth mindset means believing that you can always learn and improve, just like how you help your garden grow by taking care of it. It's okay to find things difficult because that's when you can learn and become even better! It's a common myth that people are either born creative or they're not. In fact, 66% of all children believe you are either creative or not - so it's a normal feeling, but we can change it!



Examples of fixed mindset vs. growth mindset talk

Fixed mindset talk

"I'm not good at it"

"I can't do this, and I'll never be able to do it"

"It's too hard for me"

"I'm really not the creative type"

Growth mindset talk

"I can't do this, yet"

"I can learn to do it"

"This is challenging, but I'll try my best"

"I just need to nurture my creative side a bit more"

Ideas for encouraging a growth mindset

Realistic goal setting and reflection

Help children set their own fun, realistic, short-term goals in various areas (personal, hobbies, academic). Encourage reflection on their progress regularly.

Keep a family learning jar

Family members can jot down new things they've learned, challenges faced, and how they overcame them on strips of paper and put them into the jar. At the end of the week or month, read the challenges and talk through lessons learned over family dinner.

Model the power of yet

Whenever faced with a challenge or when unable to accomplish something, get in the habit of adding the word "yet" to the sentence. Go from saying, "I can't do this" to "I can't do this, yet."

Use growth mindset language

Sprinkle growth mindset language into daily conversations. Phrases like "I see it's challenging but you're pushing through" and "What are some ways we can approach an obstacle like this differently next time?" to reinforce a burgeoning growth mindset.



6 Dial Down Pressure

Capable Play onst





When our kids do something well, it's natural for us to feel super proud and want to shower them with praise like, "Wow, you're such an amazing artist." And kids deserve all the praise in the world! But sometimes, well-intentioned praise can feel like another form of pressure to young people. It's like suddenly the bar has been set really high, and they feel like they have to keep hitting it. Even more, praise that emphasises inherent traits or abilities (e.g. "You're so smart") can inadvertently reinforce a fixed mindset, an added burden to always appear intelligent or talented, along with a fear of failure that might challenge this identity.

Adults can feel like they can't win here, but the sweet spot for getting this right is much bigger than we may think.

Examples of effective praise:

Praise the idea

"Your imagination inspires me."

Praise approach

"I'm really inspired by how you're approaching this challenge."

Praise the detail

"You've chosen such interesting colours/patterns/bricks."

Praise self-expression

"I love to watch you express yourself through your LEGO® designs/drawings/stories."

Praise curiosity

"I admire your unique way of looking at the world."

Praise the process

"I can see you're putting a lot of effort into this."

Praise experimentation

"It's great to see you experimenting and trying different approaches."

Praise the effort

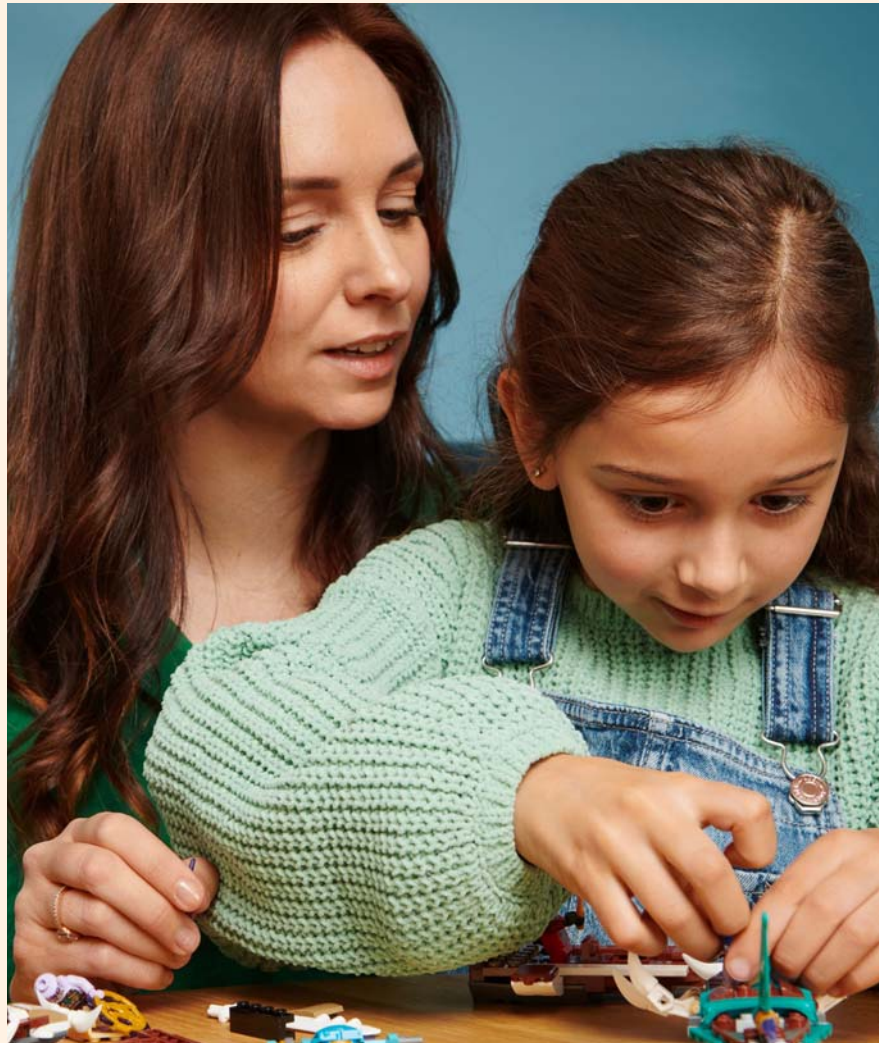
"You're really trying your best, and that's what matters."

Praise progress

"It's okay to make mistakes; that's how we learn. I see you're really improving."

Praise persistence

"Learning new things takes time, you're doing great – keep going."



Spotting perfectionistic pitfalls

How does your child react when something doesn't go as planned?

If a child tends to be really hard on themselves over small slip-ups, it's important to recognise and validate their feelings of disappointment or frustration. Let them know it's okay to feel upset sometimes. Take the time to really listen to them and show empathy and understanding. Then, help them develop healthy coping strategies for dealing with disappointment and setbacks, such as engaging in a calming activity like as drawing or listening to music.

Does your child shy away from challenges?

Children with an intense fear of making mistakes may avoid trying new things or taking risks for fear of not being able to meet their own impossibly high standards or for fear of judgment. Encourage your child to take on small, manageable challenges that are slightly outside their comfort zone. Celebrate their efforts and successes, no matter how small, to build their confidence and willingness to tackle even tougher challenges.

Does your child ask for help when they're struggling?

Subtle cues, such as an adult stepping in to help on a challenging project without being asked, can contribute to a child's self-doubt, unintentionally signalling a lack of faith in their abilities.



7

Consider Play Your Superpower!



10 Steps to Fostering Creative Confidence
7— Consider Play Your Superpower!

Creative confidence is like a muscle: the more we exercise it, the stronger it grows. Like any skill, it develops over time. Help your child push their creative boundaries through playful experimentation.

Playtime offers one of the best channels to really get to know your child with nine in ten children saying this is...

“The best way for me to feel like I can be 100% myself”



Builds stronger family bonds
Facilitates better communication
Helps them get to know their child better
Builds family memories that will impact their children throughout life

91%
of parents say it...

Here are some ways you can gain a deeper understanding of your child's interests through play:

Observe

Notice the types of play activities your child naturally gravitates towards. Whether it's imaginative play, building, drawing, or sports, observing what they love to do provides insights into their interests and passions.

Experiment with letting go

Join your child in their imaginative worlds, form a band, build a new LEGO® creation, or get involved in arts and crafts projects. Let go of all control and put your child in the driving seat. This not only strengthens your bond and builds fun memories, but also allows you to experience their interests first-hand and encourages their creative expression.

Ask open-ended questions

Use playtime as an opportunity to ask open-ended questions that encourage your child to share more about themselves. For example, during a pretend play session, you might ask, “Tell me about the story you’re creating” or “What do you like most about this game?”

Offer a window into your childhood

Introduce your child to games or activities from your own childhood. Whether it's a classic board game, a retired console game, a favorite outdoor activity, or a creative craft, sharing these experiences allows you to connect on a deeper level.



Bond with your child over LEGO® play by asking them thought-provoking questions

(and, if you dare, have your child ask you the same questions back!)

1. Can you think of a game we could make from LEGO bricks?
2. Can you write me a message in LEGO bricks?
3. Can you build a family photo out of LEGO bricks and characters?
4. Are there any specific LEGO pieces or colours you always try to include in your builds?
5. If you could bring one of your LEGO creations to life, which one would it be?
6. How do you come up with ideas for your LEGO builds?
7. What's your favorite LEGO set that you've ever built, and why?
8. What's the most unusual or unique thing you've ever built with LEGO bricks?
9. What's the silliest LEGO creation you can think of?
10. Do you have any tips or tricks for someone who wants to improve their LEGO building skills?

Consider a monthly parent-child challenge to build a LEGO installation, such as a vase, an animal, or an abstract art piece. Let your imagination run wild and display your build proudly in your home!

Add a
twist

What children say about benefits of play:





8

Introduce Inspiring Role Models

Capable Play Unst





Creative role models can introduce children to new fields, interests, and possibilities they might not have considered, fostering their own creative growth, and offering children:

10 Steps to Fostering Creative Confidence
8— Introduce Inspiring Role Models



Bringing inspiration

Aspirations and goals can be shaped by seeing the achievements of others. Talk with children about how the achievements of others inspire you - whether that's a friend, a family member, or someone you admire from afar.

Diverse perspectives

Being around a variety of role models helps kids see the world in a bigger way. It teaches them to understand and appreciate different cultures, and to be more open and accepting of others. They realise there are lots of ways to live, think, and be, which makes them more curious and open-minded about the world around them.

Limiting potential

By seeing individuals from various backgrounds excelling in creative fields, children learn that creativity knows no boundaries, whether that be gender, ethnicity or socio-economic status. It shows them that their background or identity does not have to limit their creative potential and encourages them to embrace their unique talents and perspectives and those of others.

Encouraging individuality

Exposure to a range of creative role models inspires children to embrace their own unique interests and talents. It encourages them to forge their own identity and creative expression based on their passions and values, rather than trying to fit into predetermined molds.

Expanding their toolkit

Children can learn all sorts of cool techniques and styles by checking out the work of different creators. It's like building up a stash of inspiration they can dip into whenever they're working on their own projects. Encourage them to think about what they like in other people's work and how they could use those ideas in their own stuff. This way, they're weaving together a colourful mix of influences that'll make their own creativity shine even brighter.

Cultivating curiosity

Exposure to a broad variety of creative role models encourages children to ask questions and seek answers about the world around them. They may wonder how a particular artist creates their paintings, what inspired a musician to write a song, or how a scientist makes groundbreaking discoveries. This curiosity fuels their desire for a lifelong love for learning and exploration.

ePlayUnst



9 Challenge Your Own Comfort Zone



10 Steps to Fostering Creative Confidence
9— Challenge Your Own Comfort Zone

46

However frightening it can sound, children benefit most from seeing the grown-ups in their lives display creative courage by breaking out of their comfort zones and trying new things. When the adults in their lives take creative risks, children learn that trying new things is a positive and valuable behavior, despite the growing pains it can bring.

Demonstrate growth mindset in action

Try a new skill in front of your child. A willingness to try new things, despite potential challenges teaches children that abilities can be developed through effort and learning. Ever wanted to give watercolours a try? Watch an online tutorial together and model growth mindset language, such as saying, "I'm not good at this, yet." Or take up roller skating again even though you might not have done it in what seems like forever. Show your vulnerability, learn along the way and have fun with it!

Ask your child for a challenge

Ask your child to come up with different creative challenges for you to explore. This could include a LEGO® "Build & Guess" game or a back-to-back game where your child directs you to make the same build as them (recommend limiting the number of bricks, unless you want to push your frustration tolerance level a little extra). Once you've come up with a list of challenges, work together to set the rules and parameters for each challenge. For example, your child might specify a time limit for completing the challenge or impose certain restrictions on the types of LEGO® elements you can use. This adds an extra layer of excitement and challenge to the activity. Ask them to really push you!

Imperfectly perfect

Adults breaking out of their comfort zones and not excelling immediately sends the message that imperfection can be beautiful, adding uniqueness and depth. This helps children accept and embrace their own mistakes. Children observe how adults respond to setbacks, whether it's trying again, seeking help, or adapting their approach. This modeling of resilience teaches children the importance of perseverance in overcoming obstacles, promoting a growth mindset. Build, unbuild, rebuild.

Strengthens connection

Trying new things together can strengthen the bond between adults and children. Stepping into the unknown together and relying on each other to navigate new experiences builds trust – and fun memories! Trust and play are fundamental elements in building strong adult-child bonds and will nurture a child's creative confidence.



Want more ideas?

[Click here for inspiration](#)



10 Check Your Progress

Capable Play Unst





Demonstrate growth mindset in action

Acknowledge progress over perfection



- Praise effort, persistence, and strategies rather than focusing on the outcome.
- Encourage your child to embrace challenges as opportunities to learn.

Foster a growth mindset



- Teach your child that new skills can be developed through effort and learning.
- Model language like “yet” to convey that improvement is an ongoing process.

Normalise mistakes



- Emphasise that making mistakes is a natural part of learning and any creative process.
- Share stories of your own mistakes, what you learned from them, and how you coped.

Gradually advance creative challenges



- Encourage creative goal-setting that is “just right”, so challenging yet achievable.
- Help your child break down larger tasks into manageable steps and help them learn to love the process by celebrating small wins along the way.

Encouraging language



- Use language that focuses on the process, such as “I see how intensively you’re focusing”.
- Opt for growth mindset praise over fixed mindset praise: So instead of saying, “You are an excellent artist” try saying, “Your approach is so clever.”

Inspire endless worlds to create



- Provide opportunities for open-ended creative activities and find peace with creative chaos. Children don’t see mess. They see an endless world of creative opportunities.
- Instead of commenting directly on creative projects, ask open-ended questions linked to choice of colour, style and material.

The importance of experimenting



- Encourage experimentation through play – it’s not only fun and a safe space to explore, it’s also the best way for children to learn!
- Make space for curious minds and fresh ideas, whether that’s inventing new games from existing toys, or using LEGO® elements in different builds.

Encourage exploration of interests



- Introduce your children to a diverse pool of creative role models across a variety of activities.
- Foster a sense of curiosity by exposing them to different hobbies and pursuits.

Be mindful of gendered language



- When responding to creative work, consider mixing up descriptive words like “sweet”, “pretty”, “cute” and “beautiful”, with “brave”, “genius” and “innovative” to ensure no words are limited to one gender.
- When speaking, be mindful of job titles and roles, such as using terms like “firefighter” instead of “fireman” or “police officer” instead of “policeman” to be inclusive and inspire children to explore and envision themselves succeeding in a wide range of career fields.

Modeling creative confidence



- Demonstrate a positive response to challenges and a willingness to break out of our own comfort zone.
- Show children that, as adults, we have creative confidence.