

# **ROADS to SUCCESS**

Grade 7

Grow Your Intelligence

Family Newsletter

## Get Smart

**Roads to Success** is a new program designed to help middle and high school students prepare for their futures. This newsletter will keep you posted on what we're doing in school, and how families can follow through at home.

For more information about Roads to Success, please visit our website: [www.roadstosuccess.org](http://www.roadstosuccess.org)

**Did you know?** Scientists at the University of Regensburg (Germany) saw changes in the brains of people who'd been taught to juggle just three months after the jugglers began practicing!

Are people born smart, or do they get smart through hard work and practice? What kids believe can make a big difference in school performance.

The idea that intelligence cannot be changed can get in the way of learning. It's easy to see how this applies to kids who believe they're not smart. "I'm dumb, so why should I try? It won't make any difference."

Surprisingly, "smart" kids also suffer from this kind of thinking. Kids who've been told they're smart may quit at the first sign of difficulty rather than show what they don't know.

### What Research Shows

Research shows that it's possible to grow your intelligence. The same brain scans used in hospital tests (MRIs, PET scans) can



be used to measure what happens when someone learns something new. Experiments show that learning actually changes your brain. And that's a message kids need to hear.

### How Parents Can Help

Here are some tips to help your child develop the "growing brain" mindset:

- Teach kids to think of the brain as a muscle that gets stronger with use.
- Try not to use labels like "smart" or "dumb," which make kids think they're stuck in one place.
- Praise hard work and good thinking rather than being "smart."
- Remind kids that a challenge is fun, and that mistakes are a part of learning.

## Grade by Grade

In Grade 7, Roads to Success students study what it really takes to succeed – hard work! They'll hear the story of Michael Jordan's rise to basketball fame. (He didn't make the team in high school, and arrived at the gym at 7:00 each morning to polish his skills.) They'll learn about the amazing accomplishments of the math students of Garfield High School. (The movie "Stand and Deliver" is based on their story.) And they'll learn that no matter who you are or where you're from – success is within your reach.