

10. Children need space to fail and struggle so they can learn to persist and try again.

Advocacy Strategies

**potential for DEY mini-grant funding*

1. Promote a Growth Mindset Culture

- **Strategy:** Advocate for environments that celebrate effort, perseverance, and progress—not just outcomes or “correct” answers.
- **Suggestions:** Share language that promotes a growth mindset (“You worked hard on that!”) with staff and families. Encourage recognition systems that reward effort and resilience.

2. Educate About the Value of Productive Struggle

- **Strategy:** *Share research showing how challenge builds brain connections and independence.
- **Suggestions:** Document and share real-life examples of how children grow from difficult tasks.

3. Encourage Risk-Taking and Open-Ended Challenges

- **Strategy:** Support curriculum and classroom practices that include hands-on, open-ended experiences where children face and work through difficulties.
- **Suggestions:** Advocate for loose parts play, STEM problem-solving, and art projects with no “right” answer. Push back on overly scripted or outcome-focused lessons.

4. Support Emotion Coaching and Co-Regulation

- **Strategy:** Promote emotional support strategies that help children manage frustration and stay engaged with challenges.
- **Suggestions:** Train educators and families in co-regulation techniques. Encourage responses like “It’s okay to feel frustrated—let’s figure this out together.”

5. Protect Time for Deep Engagement and Independent Effort

- **Strategy:** Advocate for schedules and environments that allow children time to engage deeply with tasks—even when they struggle.
- **Suggestions:** Push for longer learning blocks and less rushed transitions. Recommend fewer interruptions so children can stay focused and work through challenges at their own pace.