

Self Esteem

Every parent wants a happy, healthy child with a strong sense of self-esteem and self-confidence. Self-esteem is how a person feels about themselves. Here are some ways parents can support and grow their child's self-esteem.

*Notice the effort that your child makes when they are doing a task. Give them positive encouragement for it-even if they make mistakes. Mistakes are how kids learn.

If you are constantly critical of your child they may not feel they can do anything right and so they stop trying. Constant critical comments could eventually cause your child to develop mental health issues.

On the other hand, don't just notice when they succeed. A child who is only noticed for his/her successes may end up being afraid of not being perfect and making mistakes. Kids gain self-esteem by struggling with a new task, and even falling short, but they keep at it until they have accomplished it.

*Go ahead and give your child specific feedback on how they did on that new activity or interaction, highlighting what they did well, and what they can improve on. Doing this in a respectful way helps a child to make improvement.

*Give your child responsibilities around the house, such as chores. By giving responsibilities your child will feel a sense of accomplishment as he/she completes them. It also helps them to know you trust them.

*Encourage your child's independence. When appropriate let your child make their own decisions and do things for him/herself. If you are doing everything for them how are they to learn how to do it?

By giving your child a little bit of independence at a time it helps them to learn how to handle that freedom a little bit at a time. Sometimes when given all at once they don't know how to handle the independence and then they end up not making good choices.

*Allow your child to become involved in sports activities, clubs and organizations. Being involved in those things can lead to feelings of accomplishment and success when they do things like learning how to do public speaking in 4-H, making the sports team, completing projects in other clubs/organizations.

*Also allow your child to become involved in activities such as volunteering for the good of others. Giving to others does make you feel good about yourself.

*Help your child give compliments to others. Helping others feel good also makes us feel good.

*Correct inaccurate beliefs that your child may have about an ability they have.

Ex "I am not good at doing..." Try to point out an aspect of that ability that they are good at.

*Most importantly model positive self-esteem and positive self-talk(I can do this. I am going to keep trying until I get this done the right way).

Books for kids:

Have you filled a Bucket Today?

By Carol McCloud

Beautiful Opps

By Barney Saltzberg

The little Engine that could

By Watty Piper

I'm Gonna Like Me

By Jamie Lee Curtis & Laura Cornell

How full is your bucket? for kids

By Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer

Spaghetti in a hotdog bun

By Maria Desmondly

Don't Feed the Monster's on Tuesday

by Adolph Moser