



Habits for Life: Building Self-Esteem

This factsheet shares some top tips on how you can help your child build positive self-esteem and feel good about themselves.

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is how we value and perceive ourselves. It's based on our opinions and beliefs about ourselves. It's about how we and others recognise our positive qualities and is important because it impacts on our life.

Your self-esteem can affect whether you like and value yourself as a person, are able to make decisions and assert yourself, recognise your strengths and positives and show kindness towards yourself.

A good self-esteem can give you the confidence to try new things and help you cope with mistakes and try again even when you fail at first. If you have a positive self-esteem you are more likely to do better at school, at home and with friends.

Top tips for promoting a positive self-esteem

Tip 1: Show your child lots of love - be positive about them as a person, tell them what makes them special to you.



Tip 2: Focus on strengths rather than weaknesses - focus on your child's strengths and get them to pay attention to what they enjoy and do well in. Create opportunities to develop these strengths.

Tip 3: Acknowledge their feelings and get them to express these in words - For example, you could encourage them to say, "I'm upset because..." or "I feel happy when..."

Tip 4: Encourage them to voice their own ideas and opinions - let them know that it's okay when people disagree that we can all see things differently.

Tip 5: Help them to create a positive image of themselves - no matter how low your child might feel try to get them to find one thing that they like about themselves, you can encourage this by telling them what you like about them. It could be their sense of humour, their kindness, their taste in music, their football skills or school work. Once you've made that start, get them to think of more things to create a positive image of themselves.



Tip 6: Encourage positive thinking - take the time to notice when things are going well. Encourage your child to recognise their achievements and acknowledge if they are being too hard on themselves. Realising when you're being too hard on yourself can improve your self-esteem and make you feel better. Ask them to tell you about three good things that went well during their day.

Tip 7: Remember we all make mistakes - let them know you value effort rather than perfection. Take a 'next time you can' approach to making mistakes; finding solutions to mistakes and overcoming obstacles can help build self-esteem. Problem solving and getting your child to think about what they can do differently next time will increase their chances of success. Children can miss out on so much if they don't try because they are too worried about not 'succeeding'. Reassure them it's okay to make mistakes and that it's all part of life. Let them know that getting it wrong is not the end of the world - it happens to everyone and it is how we learn.

Tip 8: Learn to do new things - encourage your child to take on new challenges, but remember help them to set realistic goals, don't make new challenges too hard or too easy. Phrases like "Well done, that was hard, and you managed it," are good. Make the steps small at first, then increase the challenges.

Tip 9: Role model - set an example by being kind to yourself when things don't go the way you wanted - and show them that you can have a positive attitude when faced with challenges.



Tip 10: Encourage kindness - helping others can make you feel appreciated and valued. Self-esteem grows when you see what you do matters to others. Helping and kind acts build self-esteem and other positive feelings. You could get involved in your community or school activities together.

Tip 11: Look after their physical health - eating healthily and doing exercise can make a big difference to their self-esteem. Reduce processed food like crisps, chocolate and ready meals. Instead choose fresh fruit and vegetables and drink plenty of water. This helps to make you feel better physically and have more energy.

Tip 12: Talk to your child about relationships - encourage them to nurture constructive positive relationships and ditch the negative ones. Spend quality time together doing things they enjoy and encourage them to spend time with people they like and love.



If you feel your child has low self-esteem, if it is impacting on their everyday activities and stopping them making the most out of life then you should speak to someone. This could be your GP, school or you could make an appointment with the E-school nurse clinic (you can telephone for an appointment 01228 603973); they will listen and help you seek the support you need.

Sources

Young Minds-

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/a-z-guide/self-esteem/#HowcanIhelpmychildwiththeirsselfesteem>

Mind: Self-Esteem-

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/self-esteem/about-self-esteem/

VISIT THESE USEFUL WEBSITES

Childline- www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/feelings-emotions/building-confidence-selfesteem/

Information on building confidence and self-esteem

Young Minds- www.youngminds.org.uk Information for young people and parents on all aspects of mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Kooth- www.kooth.com Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people aged 11-18.

The Children's Society- www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/resources Information on children and young people's mental health