



## **Self-Esteem**

We hear about self-esteem and how important it is for students to have healthy self-esteem. But what exactly is self-esteem and why does it play such a vital role in our children's lives? *Self-esteem refers to how someone values and admires one's self.* Self-esteem is an important and basic component of our lives. Having good or healthy self-esteem can bring confidence and happiness to one's life. Children who suffer with low self-esteem (feeling unwanted, unloved, and unaccepted) tend to view themselves in a negative light and often perform poorly in school. Children with low self-esteem can also sometimes experience sadness, and in some cases experiment with drugs.

### **Signs of low self-esteem**

- Being excessively critical of self.
- Hesitant to try new things.
- Gets overwhelmed and gives up quickly
- Easily disappointed in self.
- Pessimistic.
- Distrustful of others.
- Speaks negatively of self.
- Insecure about self.
- Unable to make or maintain friendships.

Here are four categories that play a vital role in building healthy self-esteem. Keep in mind that all four categories are intertwined with one another. For example, a child who is extremely intelligent academically may still suffer with low self-esteem because he or she struggles in the social category and is unable to make or keep friendships. That is why it is necessary to help children in all four categories to have an overall sense of personal success, this in turn leads to positive self-esteem.

#### **Physical:**

This is an important category. Being physically healthy is not only good for the mind, but it is also good for your body. Parents can help children make choices in:

- Choosing to eat healthy food and snacks instead of eating junk food.
- Taking a shower daily.
- Brushing teeth twice a day and using deodorant.
- Wearing clean washed clothes.
  - One does not have to wear brand name expensive clothes in order to feel good. Wearing clean clothes and taking care of oneself is sufficient.

#### **Emotional:**

Emotions play a huge role in maintaining healthy self-esteem. Children need to be aware of their feelings.

- Children should be able to express themselves appropriately. If your child is having a rough day, give them some space, but then also spend some time talking about how they are feeling.
- Be able to recognize one's feelings and those of others.
- Work through a problem.
- Ask for help from adults or peers if they need to resolve an issue.

### **Intellectual:**

Being intellectual doesn't just mean that you earn high grades in school. It means that you are able to:

- Attempt difficult tasks.
- Express inquisitiveness.
- Observe details.
- Do things based on intrinsic values.
- Finish what you started.
  - Completing a job gives a sense of accomplishment. It is imperative that children follow through with what they start no matter how big or small a job it is.

### **Social:**

Being sociable brings on a sense of confidence that is crucial for healthy self-esteem. Children should be able to:

- Make sensible and reasonable choices.
- Be caring and loving.
- Trust others.
- Become a leader as well as a follower.
- Exhibit a sense of humor.
- Be honest.

Parents are the key and they play an important role in helping to develop a healthy self-esteem in their children. Here are some tips to promote a positive self-esteem:

### **Tips to Promote Positive Self-Esteem**

- Value each child as an individual with unique strengths, needs, interests, and skills.
- Focus on the child's strengths and help them feel special and appreciated.
- Establish realistic, achievable goals for your child.
- Avoid comparing one child to another.
- Look for opportunities to offer your child to allow practicing problem solving and decision-making skills.
- Communicate your confidence in the child and his/her future.
- Provide a nurturing home environment.
- Avoid being judgmental and listen to your child.
- Treat your child with respect and offer lots of praise.
- Express your love frequently.
- Be an empathetic parent.
- Provide choices.
- Reward your child for their accomplishments and their efforts.
- Be a positive role model.

### **Resources**

[www.education.com](http://www.education.com)

[www.life.familyeducation.com](http://www.life.familyeducation.com)

[www.deebest.com](http://www.deebest.com)

[www.byparents-forparents.com](http://www.byparents-forparents.com)

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)