

Raising a child with Healthy Self-Esteem

How can a parent help their child develop healthy self-esteem?

Here are a few tips that can make a big difference:

Watch what you say.

Children listen very carefully to parents' words. Remember to praise your child not only for a job well done, but also for effort. Reward effort and completion instead of outcome.

Be a positive role model.

If you are excessively harsh on yourself, pessimistic, or unrealistic about your abilities and limitations, your child, may eventually mirror you. Nurture your own self-esteem, and your child will have a great role model.

Identify your child's inaccurate beliefs.

It's important for parents to identify kids' irrational beliefs about themselves, weather they are about perfection, attractiveness, ability, or anything else. Helping your child set more accurate standards and be more realistic in evaluating him or herself will help your child have a more healthy self-concept.

Be spontaneous and affectionate with your child.

Your love will go a long way to boost your child's self-esteem. Give praise frequently and honestly, without over-doing it. Kids can tell whether or not it comes from the heart.

Give positive, accurate feedback.

Acknowledge your child's feelings and choices. Reward your child with praise for making the right choice and encourage your child to make the right choice again next time.

Help your child become involved in constructive experiences.

Activities that encourage cooperation rather than competition are especially helpful in fostering self-esteem. For example, mentoring programs in which an older child helps a younger one learn to read can do wonders for both children.