



A PARENTS GUIDE SELF ESTEEM

The information in this brochure is provided as an education resource for parents by Schneider Children's Hospital and Kohl's Cares for Kids. Additional information is available on our website:

www.schneiderchildrenshospital.org

Schneider Children's Hospital and Kohl's Cares for Kids



Working together to make a difference for the kids in our communities.



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Setting New Standards In Children's Healthcare
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Self esteem refers to how we see ourselves. Each of us is comprised of many parts. Intellect, humor, emotion and reason define our personalities. Self esteem reflects our confidence, pride and self respect. It affects our satisfaction with ourselves, how we act and react to others and how the world views us. A high level of self esteem enables us to meet new challenges, interact socially and move about in the world with our heads held high. In contrast, low self esteem can lead to poor school performance, problems relating to others, delinquency, drug abuse, eating disorders and even depression. It can possibly lead to anti-social behavior or illness.

THE BUILDERS AND THE WRECKING BALLS

A child's self esteem starts at birth. Parents have the strongest effect on the self esteem of their child. Their words and actions will either build up or tear down a child's self esteem every single day. Hugging, kissing and praise will make children feel good about themselves, and build a protective layer for when the words or actions of others might be hurtful.

Rejection, disrespect, abuse, neglect, unrealistically high or low expectations and a lack of attention or praise are the wrecking balls that will tear down your child's self esteem. Unfortunately, even if you are doing a terrific job building, there are many outside influences including other children who can do the tearing down. This is why you must be not only the builder of your child's self esteem, but a guardian as well.

WHERE TO BEGIN BUILDING

When should you begin bolstering your child's self esteem? The answer is **NOW**. Whether you have a newborn or a teenager, it is never too late to raise the level of self esteem because it can be positively or negatively affected throughout our lives. If a strong foundation is built early in life, chances are the building of self esteem will remain standing even after difficult circumstances.

CHECKING THE STRUCTURE

Although it is vital to continue building your child's self esteem every day, it is just as important that you check the soundness of the structure you are building. The lists below should help you recognize if your child has high or low esteem. If your child exhibits a profound change in any of these behaviors, there is a good possibility that something is having a negative impact on the level of self esteem.

HIGH SELF ESTEEM

- ♦ Friendly
- ♦ Generous
- ♦ Open-minded
- ♦ Loving
- ♦ Happy
- ♦ Confident
- ♦ Successful
- ♦ Confident
- ♦ Successful
- ♦ Able to express emotions (Feelings, frustrations, etc.)
- ♦ Able to admit mistakes
- ♦ Responsible
- ♦ Reasonably
- ♦ Sociable

LOW SELF ESTEEM

- ♦ Fearful
- ♦ Poor educational performance
- ♦ Delinquency or truant behavior
- ♦ Sleeping problems
- ♦ Insecure
- ♦ Emotional outbursts
- ♦ Acting out for attention
- ♦ Unsociable
- ♦ Sullen
- ♦ Moody
- ♦ Less confident
- ♦ Drug abuse
- ♦ Bad behavior

TOOLS AND TIPS

There will be constant changes in your child's self esteem through varying stages in development. That is why your positive impact must be constant. It is never too late to help your child. Love, respect and security are the input your child needs to nourish and build self esteem. The following tips will help you raise a competent, *confident* and successful adult: remember you are your child's best role model, and a confident parent has the best chance of raising a *confident* child.

- ♦ Be involved, consistent, interested and loving.
- ♦ Supply realistic goals and help your child meet them.
- ♦ Offer realistic praise; focus on the positive.
- ♦ Set a good example; be honest.
- ♦ Ask questions and listen to the answers
- ♦ Recognize your child's individuality.
- ♦ Encourage new activities and self-proclaimed goals.
- ♦ Maintain an emotionally secure and stable environment.
- ♦ Be generous each day with hugs, kisses and smiles.
- ♦ When something goes wrong, criticize the act, not the child.