

BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

16 Ways to Help Children Like Themselves

1. ***Take your children seriously*** - Don't belittle their ideas, feelings and emotions. Listen to them. Ask them for their opinions. Respect them as people.
2. ***Have reasonable expectations*** - Help your children set reachable goals so they can achieve success.
3. ***Define limits and rules clearly and enforce them*** - But allow your children some negotiation space within these limits.
4. ***Be a good role model*** - Let your children see that you feel good about yourself. Let them see that you may make mistakes and that you can learn from them.
5. ***Give your children responsibility*** - They will feel useful and valued.
6. ***Express your values*** - Describe experiences that formed your values, reasons behind your feelings, and decisions that you made to accept certain beliefs.
7. ***Praise your children*** - Reward them with recognition, a special privilege or increased responsibility for a job well done.
8. ***Be available*** - Give support when children need it.
9. ***Show children that what they do is important to you*** - Talk with them about their interests and activities. Go to "Back to School Night," go to games and drama presentations, and attend award assemblies.
10. ***Spend time together*** - Share favorite activities. Do special things with children individually. Play together as a family. Keep the line of communication open.
11. ***Don't place blame when problems arise*** - If children know that there is a problem but do not feel attacked, they are more likely to look for a solution.

12. ***Help children develop tolerance toward others*** - Teach children tolerance toward those who come from different backgrounds or have different values. Point out people's strengths and similarities.
13. ***Teach children now to deal with time and money*** - Teach them to budget time and spend money wisely. Encourage healthy, creative activities. Sports and clubs are positive activities with long-lasting, positive effects.
14. ***Use self-esteem building phrases*** - Use phrases such as, "Thank you for helping" or "What an excellent idea." Avoid phrases that hurt self-esteem such as, "How many times have I told you?"
15. ***Respect your children's privacy*** - The need for privacy is a sign of growing independence.
16. ***Show your children how much you care about them*** - Hug your children. Tell them how terrific they are. Tell them that you love them.