


What Is Self-Esteem

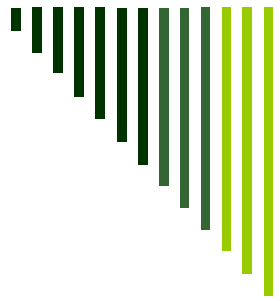




What Is Self-Esteem

- Self-esteem is the collection of beliefs or feelings we have about ourselves, our "self-perceptions."
- How we define ourselves influences our motivations, attitudes, and behaviors and affects our emotional adjustment.

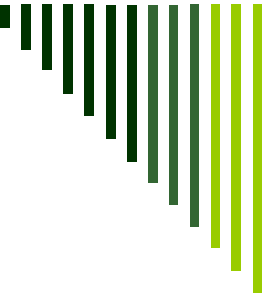




The concept of success following persistence starts early.

- As kids try, fail, try again, fail again, and then finally succeed, they develop ideas about their own capabilities.
- At the same time, they're creating a self-concept based on interactions with other people.
- This is why parental involvement is key to helping kids form accurate, healthy self-perceptions.



-
- 
- **Esteem** is a fancy word for thinking that someone or something is important or valuing that person or thing
 - And **self** means, well, yourself! So put the two words together and it's easier to see what self-esteem is. It's how much you value yourself and how important you think you are.





- Self-esteem isn't about how great you are. It's more like quietly knowing that you're worth a lot (priceless, in fact!).
- It's not about thinking you're perfect — because nobody is — but knowing that you're worthy of being loved and accepted.





Why Self-Esteem Is Important

A kid needs to have self-esteem.

- Good self-esteem is important because it helps you to hold your head high and feel proud of yourself and what you can do
- It gives you the courage to try new things and the power to believe in yourself.
- It lets you respect yourself, even when you make mistakes. And when you respect yourself, adults and other kids usually respect you, too.

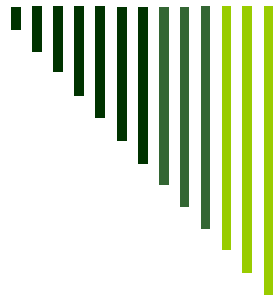




Having good self-esteem

- is also the ticket to making good choices about your mind and body.
- If you think you're important, you'll be less likely to follow the crowd if your friends are doing something dumb or dangerous.
- If you have good self-esteem, you know that you're smart enough to make your own decisions.
- You value your safety, your feelings, your health — your whole self! Good self-esteem helps you know that every part of you is worth caring for and protecting.





How Kids Get Self-Esteem

Babies don't see themselves in a good or bad way.

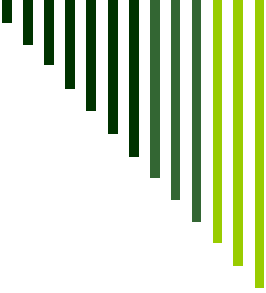
Instead, people around a baby help him or her develop self-esteem.

How? By encouraging the baby when he or she learns to crawl, walk, or talk.

They often say, "Good job. Good for you!" When people take good care of a baby, that also helps him or her feel lovable and valuable.



- As kids gets older, they can have a bigger role in developing their self-esteem.
 - Achievements — like getting a good grade on a test or making the All-Star soccer team — are things kids can be proud of.
 - So are having a good sense of humor or being a good friend.
-

-
- 
- It's all part of kids learning to see themselves in a positive way, to feel proud of what they've done,
 - and to be confident that there's a lot more they can do.



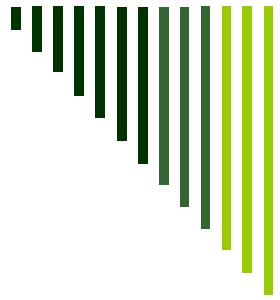


A Little on Low Self-Esteem

- Maybe you know kids with low self-esteem who don't think very highly of themselves or seem to criticize themselves too much.
 - Or maybe you have low self-esteem and don't always feel very good about yourself or think you're important.
-

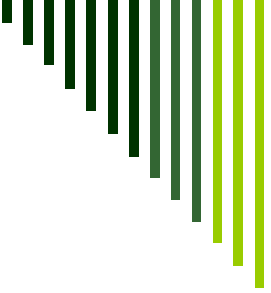


- Sometimes a kid will have low self-esteem if his mother or father doesn't encourage him enough or if there is a lot of yelling at home.
 - Other times, a kid's self-esteem can be hurt in the classroom. A teacher may make a kid feel dumb or perhaps there is a bully who says hurtful things.
-



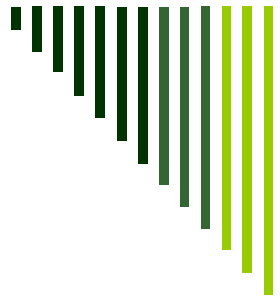
A few things that you can try to increase your self-esteem:

- **Make a list of the stuff you're good at.** If you're having trouble with your list, ask your mom or dad to help you with it.
 - Then add a few things to the list that you'd like to be good at. Your mom or dad can help you plan a way to work on those skills or talents.
-



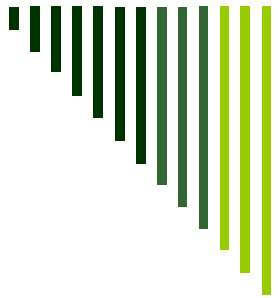
Give yourself three compliments every day.

- Don't just say, "I'm so great." Be specific about something good about yourself, like, "I was a good friend to Jill today" or "I did better on that test than I thought I would."
 - " While you're at it, before you go to bed every night, list three things in your day that really made you happy."
-



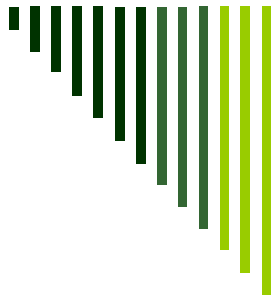
Remember that your body is your own

- No matter what shape, size, or color it is.** If you are worried about your weight or size, you can check with your doctor to make sure that things are OK.
 - Remind yourself of things about your body that are cool, like, "My legs are strong and I can skate really well."**
-



Remember that there are things about yourself you can't change

- You should accept and love these things — such as skin color and shoe size — because they are part of you.
 - **When you hear negative comments in your head, tell yourself to stop.** When you do this, you take the power away from the voice inside that discourages you.
-



Focusing on the good things

- By focusing on the good things you do and all your great qualities, you learn to love and accept yourself — the main ingredients for strong self-esteem!
 - Even if you've got room for improvement (and who doesn't?), realizing that you're valuable and important helps your self-esteem to shine.
-



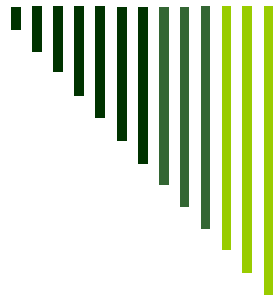
Healthy self-esteem

- is a child's armor against the challenges of the world.
 - Kids who feel good about themselves seem to have an easier time handling conflicts and resisting negative pressures.
 - They tend to smile more readily and enjoy life. These kids are realistic and generally optimistic.
-



Low self-esteem

- kids with low self-esteem can find challenges to be sources of major anxiety and frustration.
 - Those who think poorly of themselves have a hard time finding solutions to problems.
 - given to self-critical thoughts such as "I'm no good" or "I can't do anything right," they may become passive, withdrawn, or depressed.
 - Faced with a new challenge, their immediate response is "I can't."
-



Signs of Unhealthy and Healthy Self-Esteem

- Kids with low self-esteem may not want to try new things, and may frequently speak negatively about themselves: "I'm stupid," "I'll never learn how to do this," or "What's the point?"
 - "Nobody cares about me anyway." They may exhibit a low tolerance for frustration, giving up easily or waiting for somebody else to take over.
 - They tend to be overly critical of and easily disappointed in themselves. Kids with low self-esteem see temporary setbacks as permanent, intolerable conditions, and a sense of pessimism predominates.
-



Kids with healthy self-esteem

- ...tend to enjoy interacting with others.
 - They're comfortable in social settings and enjoys group activities as well as independent pursuits.
 - When challenges arise, they can work toward finding solutions and voice discontent without belittling themselves or others.
 - For example, rather than saying, "I'm an idiot," a child with healthy self-esteem says, "I don't understand this." They know their strengths and weaknesses, and accept them. A sense of optimism prevails.
-



How Parents Can Help

- **Watch what you say.** Kids are very sensitive to parents' words. Remember to praise your child not only for a job well done, but also for effort. But be truthful. For example, if your child doesn't make the soccer team, avoid saying something like, "Well, next time you'll work harder and make it." Instead, try "Well, you didn't make the team, but I'm really proud of the effort you put into it." Reward effort and completion instead of outcome.
-



Be a positive role model

- If you're 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.
-



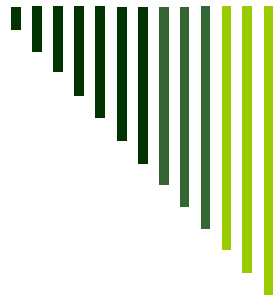
Identify and redirect your child's inaccurate beliefs.

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



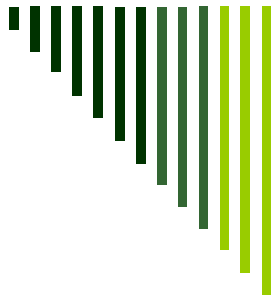
Perceptions of self

- Inaccurate perceptions of self can take root and become reality to kids. For example, a child who does very well in school but struggles with math may say, "I can't do math. I'm a bad student."
 - " Not only is this a false generalization, it's also a belief that will set the child up for failure. Encourage kids to see a situation in its true light.
 - A helpful response might be: "You are a good student. You do great in school. Math is just a subject that you need to spend more time on. We'll work on it together."
-



Be spontaneous and affectionate.

- Your love will go a long way to boost your child's self-esteem.
 - Give hugs and tell kids you're proud of them.
-

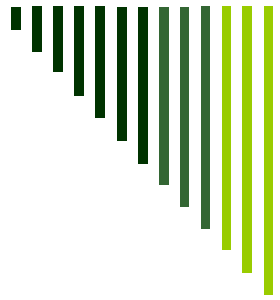


- **Give positive, accurate feedback.** Comments like "You always work yourself up into such a frenzy!" will make kids feel like they have no control over their outbursts.
 - A better statement is, "You were really mad at your brother. But I appreciate that you didn't yell at him or hit him."
 - This acknowledges a child's feelings, rewards the choice made, and encourages the child to make the right choice again next time.
-



Create a safe, loving home environment.

- Kids who don't feel safe or are abused at home will suffer immensely from low self-esteem.
 - A child who is exposed to parents who fight and argue repeatedly may become depressed and withdrawn.
 - Also watch for signs of abuse by others, problems in school, trouble with peers, and other factors that may affect kids' self-esteem. Deal with these issues sensitively but swiftly. And always remember to respect your kids.
-



Help kids 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 kids.
-