

Parent Guide:

Small Ways to Improve Children's Self-Esteem

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is an evaluation we make of ourselves and how we feel about who we are. It can sit anywhere on a spectrum, from feeling worthless to feeling confident and valued. Our self-esteem is closely connected to our self-concept, which develops as we reflect on our abilities, personality and how we manage different areas of our lives. In simple terms, self-concept is what we think about ourselves.



How can I build my child's self-esteem?

1. Make Them Feel Valued

- Give them opportunities to feel good and happy and ensure that they're around people who make them feel safe and positive.
- Tell them you love them. Even if you're not happy with their behaviour, make it clear that while you don't like this behaviour you love them regardless.
- Show an interest in what they're interested in, such as topics and activities. Make an effort to watch and support their sports or take them to places where they can explore their specific interests.
- Encourage them to share their views on different topics, such as TV series, new decorations and dinner plans. If you disagree, search for compromise rather than shouting down their ideas.
- Spend 1:1 screen-free, special time with each of your children where they can have your undivided attention during that time.
- Label their behaviour rather than labelling them. For example, say "it wasn't OK to behave like that" instead of "you were bad."

2. Make Them Feel Competent

- Provide them with opportunities to experience some success. Don't do everything for them and encourage them to complete tasks independently - just be on hand to help if they need it.
- Praise their achievements, efforts and progress no matter how small.
- Encourage them in learning new skills.
- Let them show you how things work and 'teach' you things they've learnt at school.

3. Encourage Their Independence

- Give them ability/age-appropriate responsibilities around the home.
- Provide them with opportunities to make choices when completing activities, for example choosing the materials or method that they use without questioning or correcting it.



4. Build Their Resilience for the World Around Them

- Help them to understand everybody has happy and unhappy times, things that they achieve and things that they fail at.
- Emphasise that all people have strengths and weaknesses. Be open to sharing yours and showing what you do to overcome difficulties.
- Share mistakes that you make and model how to handle them in a positive way.
- Help them to understand how we learn from mistakes and discuss how they could do something differently when they make a mistake. Allow them to try a new method rather than doing it for them.
- Demonstrate that hard work helps us to achieve goals and objectives. Model how to create a goal and work through it.

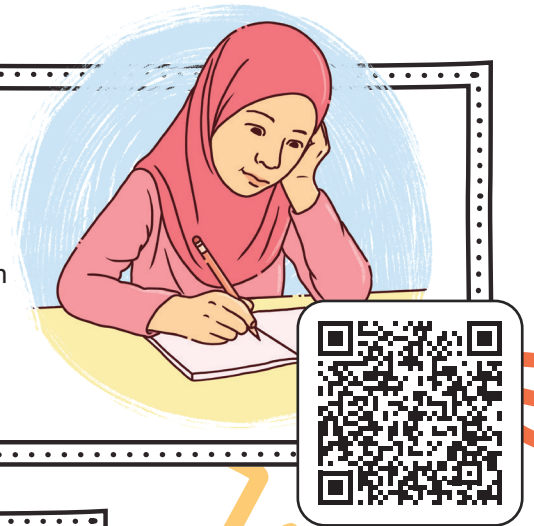
5. Make Them Feel Competent

- Teach them polite assertiveness so that they can ask someone to stop a behaviour they're not comfortable with.
- Teach them to be able to problem-solve in social situations, such as resolving conflicts.
- Teach them to be able to hold conversations with people of different ages, in different roles and parts of different communities. Show them the importance of looking someone in the eye and responding to what they say rather than following their own thoughts.

Self-Esteem Activities for Children

1) Journaling

Either use journaling to record gratitude or focus on self-esteem journaling prompts. Gratitude journaling focuses children's attention on all the positive things in their lives. It can help children to feel the importance of love and connection, identify their strengths and weaknesses and learn from their mistakes.

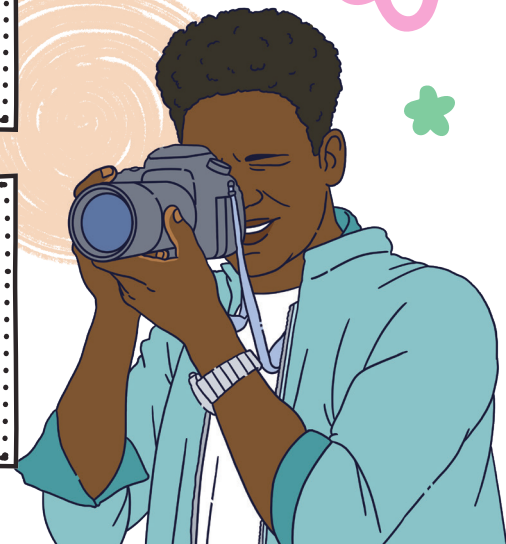


2) Create an Achievement Wall

This can include pieces of your children's work, and photos of happy memories and successes. Encourage your child to select things that they're proud of to put up on the wall so that they can learn to recognise their own accomplishments.

3) Make Photo Books of their Passions

If your child has a particular passion, interest or hobby, create a memory book of their achievements over the year with certificates, photos and mementoes.



4) Practise Positive Affirmations

Affirmations can help children to focus on the positive and instil a feeling of confidence in times of difficulty.

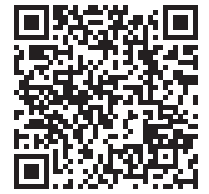
5) Achievements Diary

Create a diary for your child that lists all the things they achieved during the past year. You could give it to them on New Year's Eve, or encourage them to create their own during the year.



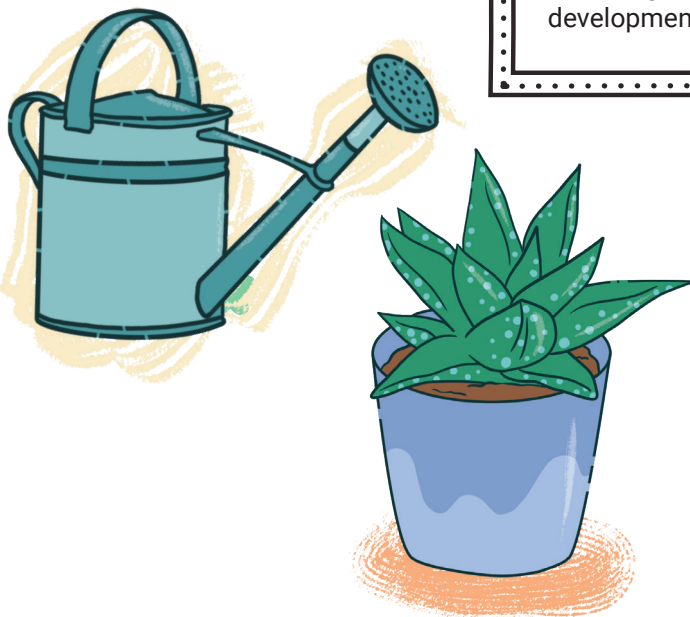
6) Set Realistic and Achievable Goals

Help your child learn how to set goals effectively and how to plan to achieve them. Follow the QR code for more help with this.



7) Chores

Encourage children to be responsible for their own developmentally-appropriate household chores.



8) Rephrase Negative Language

Practise turning negative and unhelpful thoughts into positive ones. For example, if your child says: "I can't do this," help them to rephrase this to: "Mistakes are how I learn. Now that I know how not to do it, I can try to find out how to do it."

9) Role-Play Conversation Starters

Practising conversations is a great way to boost children's confidence. It can help them when they interact with other people and can be especially helpful if they're starting a new school or club. Follow the QR code for more ideas around this.

