

## 23 Ways to Improve Self Esteem

1. Reward children. Give praise, recognition, a special privilege or increased responsibility for a job well done.

2. Take their ideas, emotions, and feelings seriously. Don't belittle them by saying, "You'll grow out of it," or, "It's not as bad as you think."

Define limits and rules clearly, and enforce them. But do allow leeway for your children within these limits.

4. Be a good role model. Let your children know that you feel good about yourself. Also let them see that you too can make mistakes and can learn from them.

5. Teach your children how to deal with time and money. Help them spend time wisely and budget their money carefully.

6. Have reasonable expectations for your children. Help them to set reachable goals so they can achieve success.

7. Help your children develop tolerance toward those with different values, background and norms. Point out other people's strengths.

8. Give your children responsibility. They will feel useful, and valued.

9. Be available. Give support when children need it.

10. Show them that what they do is important to you. Talk with them about their activities and interests. GO to their games, parents' day at school, drama presentations, awards ceremonies.

11. Express your values, but go beyond, "Do this," or, "I want you to do that." Describe the experiences that determined your values, the decisions you made to accept certain beliefs, the reasons behind your feelings.

12. Spend time together. Share favorite activities.

13. Discuss problems without placing blame or commenting on a child's character. If children know that there is a problem but don't feel attacked, they are more likely to help look for a solution.

14. Use phrases that build self-esteem such as, "Thank you for helping," or, "That was an excellent idea!" Avoid phrases that hurt self-esteem: "Why are you so stupid"; "How many times have I told you?"

15. Show how much you care about them. Hug them. Tell them they are terrific and that you love them.

16. Make sure your children know that they are worthy just because they exist. Make it clear that whether they are competent or outstanding in other ways makes no difference in your love for

them.

17. Be alert to evidence of low self-esteem. Remember that healthy self-esteem is not the same as conceit, nor is it the same as pride. IT is just an honest acceptance of who one is. A child who needs to revel in his or her accomplishments probably has low self-esteem.

18. Help your child build an honest self-image. Ignoring your child's weakness is not helpful, but don't judge them. Children must learn to accept their shortcomings but also to value their strengths.

19. Help your child discover his or her unique talents. No two children are alike. Each has something special to contribute to life. Giving your child the opportunity to explore many activities and interests can uncover abilities and gifts that you never thought about.

20. Provide an atmosphere of trust in your home. Children who can trust their emotions to the intimacy of the family and talk about love, disappointment, accomplishments, or failures are rich indeed. They will have few problems with self-esteem.

21. Make sure that the image you mirror back to your child is not distorted by your own desires or disappointments. Remember that to a large extent children see themselves through the 'mirror' of how their parents see them. IT is easy to give the message that your child doesn't measure up to your standards. Polish those mirrors. Make sure they are not distorted by your own agenda.

22. Cherish everything about your child, not just the special or outstanding things. Emphasize the positive values of every little inadequacy- and lavish praise for your child's strengths.

23. Make it safe for your child to be whoever he or she is. You do this by showing love and forgiveness- no matter what your child does. By all means discipline your child, but never use discipline as a form of revenge. Children are remarkably fair-minded, and they know when you are being unjust. Don't abuse their trust.