

Promoting Your Child's Self Esteem

Self-esteem affects every aspect of our lives. It determines our confidence level, as well as whether or not we see ourselves as valuable. The following is a list of guidelines to assist you to enhance your child's growing self-esteem.

1. Each day, acknowledge at least one thing your child says or does that you appreciate.
2. Be specific when giving your child feedback. Tell her / him what it is that you are pleased with. For example, "You shared your toys with your sister."
3. Be aware of what you say to or about your child. Avoid speaking negatively about your child in her / his presence. What your child hears may influence his or her perception of self.
4. Provide opportunities for your child to make choices, and respect the choices that are made. Remember to only offer choices that you believe to be suitable.
5. Encourage your child to do her / his best and emphasize effort rather than success. For example, "You've worked very hard on your picture." Love your child regardless of his / her accomplishments.
6. Encourage your child's initiative rather than criticize her / his attempts. For example, "I see that you put your shirt on all by yourself", rather than "You put your shirt on backwards. Now we'll have to fix it."
7. Provide realistic expectations for your child. Understanding the developmental ability of your child at each age will help you to determine if your expectations are appropriate and enable your child to feel success.
8. Identify your child's abilities. For example, if your child says I can't put my shoes on, "It is really hard for you to put on your shoes, but look at what you have done. You put your jacket on and zipped it up all by yourself."
9. Acknowledge your child's feelings as important and valuable. This will enhance her / his feelings of self-worth.

*This article was developed by
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