

Self Confidence and Self-Esteem



Self-esteem means we have a positive view of ourselves and know we are of value. Self-esteem and confidence go hand in hand, giving us the belief that we can cope and helping us do our best. People with good self-esteem will take pride in their achievements and feel connected and liked by others. It helps children and young people feel confident to try new experiences and learn new skills. If they make mistakes or things don't go as well as they hoped, it will help them think through what happened and try again.

Why is my child experiencing low confidence and self-esteem?

Some children and young people need more support to believe in themselves than others. Life is easier when you think positively about yourself and it makes challenges and new experiences easier to cope with. As parents you can help your child grow in self-confidence and self-esteem.

Throughout our lives, even into adulthood, we can all work on and improve our feelings of self worth and self belief. This will make it easier for us to manage and cope with new experiences and challenges. It lets us achieve our full potential and helps us make the healthy friendships and relationships we deserve.

How can I help my child?

Throughout our lives we can all work on, and improve our feelings about ourselves. This will make it easier for us to manage new experiences and challenges. There are lots of ways that we can help ourselves and our children with this;

- ❑ Be a good example - be positive in what you say about yourself, your child, and other people.
- ❑ Keep trying when you find things hard – even if it doesn't always work out. You are showing your child that you can 'survive' things not going as you hoped.
- ❑ Notice and comment on the positives in your child's personality, behaviour and achievements – children know when praise is genuine and when they deserve it.
- ❑ Encourage your child to eat well and get regular exercise.
- ❑ Have conversations about social media and how it doesn't often show 'real life'.
- ❑ Get your child to set themselves a challenge - it could be reading a big book, or swimming more lengths – achieving a goal helps confidence and builds pride.
- ❑ If your child is worrying about new experiences, and how they will cope, remind them of things they have managed before and ask them to think how they coped then.
- ❑ Some people find big groups of friends hard. It's ok to have one or two good friends.
- ❑ Help them spend time with friends and family of all ages – chatting with the elderly or very young – can help to build a picture of themselves as being helpful and good company to others.

Praise

Self-esteem and confidence building begins in babyhood. Every time you praise a child for trying something or talking about the things you like about them, you are sending a clear message that they should be proud of themselves too.

When you praise a child try and praise the things they have control over, like trying hard or being kind rather than things they don't, like being beautiful! This praise will help your child understand their strengths and help build self confidence and esteem.

Your praise will feel more valuable if you are able to tell them exactly what you are praising. For example instead of saying 'well done' say;

'Well done you worked so hard to colour in the lines' or 'I could see you trying really hard to sit still in school assembly.'

Children know when praise is genuine and when they really deserve it and they can feel pride in their achievement. Having your efforts praised and your progress noticed is a good feeling and children will feel motivated to keep trying. This builds self-esteem.

Activities to Try

You can give your child some ideas of activities that might help them understand more about the importance of confidence and self-esteem. It can help them build some healthy habits and make talking about their feelings easier.

Positive Diary

Use a special note book or start a 'positive file' on the laptop.

Think of 3 positives that have happened that day. These can be small or big - making a friend laugh, watching their favourite TV show or doing something they felt proud of.

Get them to write it down / draw it.

Think about how it made them feel.

Doing this regularly they will build a habit of recognising strengths and feeling positive.