



# A WAY OF BEING WITH CHILDREN

## Building Confidence & Self-Esteem

Tips to Promote Child Well-Being and Resilience

**Confidence** is the trust we build in our own abilities and judgement, the belief that we are capable of completing tasks and succeeding at activities. Confidence is not arrogance, however, or an overblown sense of our own worth compared to others. **Self-esteem** is the degree to which we believe our attributes and qualities are positive. This is a reflection of our self image and how we feel about ourselves physically and in terms of our values and how we're living up to them.



### Benefits of Confidence and Self-Esteem

- Confidence and self-esteem ready us for life experiences!
- They can determine our success later in life.
- These qualities may ebb and flow based on circumstances.
- They enhance our belief in our own abilities and skills.
- They improve communication and the quality of relationships.
- They boost our overall satisfaction with life.
- They increase our use of positive risks in pursuit of success.
- Confidence and self-esteem boost self-respect.
- They improve personal awareness and our ability to remain grounded/mindful and empowered.
- They help with stress management.
- They reduce levels of anxiety and depression.
- They help us stay motivated in pursuit of our goals.
- They buffer adversity and help build resilience.

## Tips to Build Confidence and Self Esteem

- As an adult, the more you work on your own confidence and self-esteem, the more you can help others -- especially children!
- Reframe your negative thoughts; view setbacks as a chance to learn and behave differently next time.
- Practice healthy, assertive skills that benefit you.
- Develop self-acceptance and self-compassion.
- Use positive affirmations and self-talk; be kind to yourself and speak to yourself as you would to a precious friend.
- Use goals and incentives to motivate you. As you reach them, acknowledge your success and celebrate it in large and small ways.
- Seek counseling and mental health support when you need it; destigmatizing the need for mental health services is good for you and for society as a whole!



# Ways to Support Children

Self-esteem and confidence are not innate (naturally occurring since birth) -- they must be encouraged and practiced. Children often need adult guidance to fully develop these skills. Since children rely on adults to identify and manage their feelings and help them meet challenges, they will look to you to provide the model for their own positive self-image.



## Ways to Help Your Children Grow in Confidence

- **Be encouraging:** Children need to know that you believe in them.
- **Model confidence:** You provide the example for them to follow.
- **Allow mistakes:** Don't get upset when failures or setbacks occur they are a part of life and help develop resilience!
- **Acknowledge perseverance:** Focus on effort rather than perfection.
- **Discuss imperfection:** Humans are flawed; we make mistakes. We cannot be expected to get everything right every time.
- **Avoid using labels:** Don't value activities or creative endeavors as 'good' or 'bad'.
- **Listen to and validate emotions:** help your children identify their feelings and why they are feeling them.
- **Set clear and attainable expectations:** Consider your children's ages and abilities.
- **Provide opportunities for control and choice:** Your child will feel empowered and confident.
- **Accept unpleasant feelings and model coping skills:** Things don't always work out the way we expect; coping with disappointment and bouncing back from it is character building.
- **Encourage team-work & cooperation:** Children need to practice being both leaders and followers.
- **Explore interests and talents to build a strong identify:** Everyone is unique, special, and precious.
- **Ask for children's thoughts and opinions:** Value your children's input; reinforce that what they think and feel is important and should be considered.
- **Practice self-acceptance:** Since children model the behavior of the adults in their lives, acknowledging your own flaws and faults will show children they can do the same.
- **Teach the importance of asking for help:** Everybody needs help sometimes; this is not a failing.
- **Challenge black and white thinking:** Discourage statements like: "I can't do this!"
- **Encourage opportunities for service to others:** Doing good for others definitely makes us feel good!
- **Build excitement for new things:** Focus on the challenge of tasks, not the possibly of failing at it.
- **Guide goal-setting for small tasks:** Small successes help build the confidence to aim higher.
- **Encourage differences/being unique:** Help build confidence in the unique person your child is.
- **Celebrate the accomplishments of others:** Generosity of spirit is a winning quality!

## Talking to Children About Confidence and Self-Esteem

- Start a conversation about experiences and their associated feelings.
- Help your children believe in themselves and that they are capable.
- Teach your children to believe in their own courage/bravery.
- Communicate that trying your best is always enough.
- Always focus on learning from mistakes and trying again.
- Tell your children that they are perfect just the way they are!



Get more resources at: [www.centerforchildcounseling.org/awayofbeing](http://www.centerforchildcounseling.org/awayofbeing)