

Self-Worth of Children

Many parents wonder how they should interact with their children. Questions come up such as “do my words and actions have an impact on my child?”

The first few years of life set the foundation for your child’s future. What kind of adult do you want your child to be? Kind, confident, and secure? Or rude, self-doubting, and insecure? How you interact with your child now, has an impact on these growing personality traits.

A baby isn’t born with self-worth. The way we think and feel about ourselves is developed over time. For a child, the biggest people that impact their self-worth are parents. It’s vitally important for your child to have a strong and positive self-worth. This will cause them to be happy, kind to others, and more successful in school and their future career.

Self-Worth is broken down into two areas: self-concept and self-esteem.

Self-Concept: The way your child thinks about themselves.

Self-Esteem: The way your child feels about themselves.

What a child is told by their parents, becomes their self-concept (the thoughts they have about themselves). If a child is always told at home by their parent “you’re dumb, you can’t do anything right”. Those words will come back to them. When they are sitting at school having a hard time on a math test, their self-concept will say “you’re dumb, you can’t do anything right”. On the other hand, if a child is always told at home by their parent “you’re so smart, you can do anything!” Those words will come back to them. When they are sitting at school having a hard time on a math test, their self-concept will say “you’re so smart, you can do anything!”

The words you say to your children have a lot of power!

How to Improve Your Child’s Self-Worth

- Put children in situations where they can succeed.
- Expect children to succeed and not fail at small tasks.
- When children don’t succeed at tasks, find out why.
- Use praise for doing and praise for being.
- Share your children’s accomplishments and efforts in the presence of others.
- Be a good role model and praise yourself for your accomplishments and efforts.
- Avoid negative labels for your children, and use only positive labels.
- Show respect for your children’s feelings and opinions (even when you don’t agree, show empathy)
- Use terms like “thanks for cooperating” or “I appreciate your help” to let children know that you are pleased with their behavior.