

Parenting Tips
from
6a Penrith Place
BALGA WA 6061
Phone: 9440 0011
Opening times : Monday to Friday 12 PM to 4 PM

Developing Self-esteem

Children's feelings of self-worth or self-esteem influence their happiness, success at school and the way they relate with others. Their self-esteem is influenced by their experiences of success and the messages they receive from those around them.

Children with a healthy level of self-esteem usually extend themselves more, as they have a realistic view of mistakes. Failure doesn't reflect on them personally, they are still OK and they won't fall apart when things don't go their way. Children with a healthy self-esteem tend to be more resilient and cope better with problems and any changes that may occur.

Parents can influence children's self-esteem by helping them experience success, no matter how small and by sending positive, realistic messages about them and their abilities.

Bright Ideas

- Allow children to do things for themselves as soon as they are able. This sends a powerful message that you think that they are capable and able to take some control over their world.

- Celebrate children's efforts and achievements in an enjoyable way. Have a display space at home for schoolwork, art and awards they have received. Change the display frequently and make sure that each child's efforts are represented.

- Value your children's ideas, thoughts and opinions. Listen to them and help them to express their feelings and thoughts. Accept rather than reject their ideas even though you may disagree with them.

- Teach children to establish realistic goals. For instance, if they wish to learn to cook they may set out to learn ten recipes in a year. Help them make up a plan of action to achieve their goals.

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