



## ELSA Newsletter 10: Self Esteem

Self-esteem means how a person feels about himself or herself. A child with healthy self-esteem is more likely to have the confidence to try new things and to be resilient if they face a challenge or failure. Children with low self-esteem lack confidence in themselves and are more likely to give up on a challenge quickly or not try at all, as they are scared of failure.

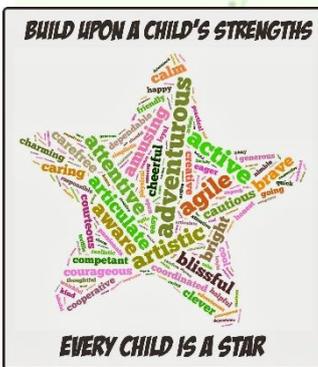
As carers, there are things we can do that will improve our children’s self-esteem.

### Lead by example

Your children will notice how you talk about yourself. If you are very self-critical or negative, they are likely to copy that, but by being resilient in the face of a challenge, or not criticising your own flaws (as you see them!) you will be providing them with a good role model.



### Strengths



Help your child discover their strengths and talents; whether they are academic, creative, sporting, or interpersonal skills like kindness or generosity. Clubs and activities are great for developing these, but during lockdown, you can still spot and encourage the things that your child shines at. If they are struggling with self-esteem and cannot see the positives in themselves, help them with an activity to identify their strengths.

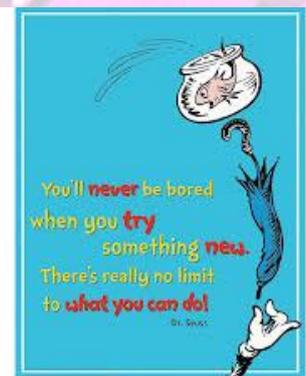
[I'm great because...](#)

[Something about me...](#)

Taking time regularly to think about what they like about themselves, or what went well that day, will help a child to feel positive about themselves. You could try a [self-esteem diary such as this one](#) or just decorate a special notebook or diary to be a “wow” book for things they are proud of each day. You may need to help them out initially if they cannot think of anything they are proud of!

### Try new things

Encourage your child to try new things and develop new skills. Attempting something that scares them a little bit will build their resilience and teach them that they can face a challenge; break it into manageable steps if necessary. Mastering a new skill gives a great sense of achievement and is a boost to well-being. Celebrate milestones to success and help your child recognise what they are proud of.



### Set goals

Help your child plan for things they would like to achieve and set goals. Having a goal and working towards it promotes responsibility and self-motivation, and meeting that goal will be a big boost to self-esteem and confidence. Remember the power of “yet” (Mrs Farrow’s favourite word!) - If your child says they cannot do something, help them rephrase it, as they cannot do it YET!

Try some of these goal-setting activities: <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/5-fun-goal-setting-activities-children>

## Use praise effectively

Children thrive on praise, but make sure it is specific and focused on their effort rather than the result. Rather than just saying “Good boy” or “Great picture”, say things like “Well done, I can tell you worked really hard on getting those colours right” or “It was really kind of you to check Daddy was OK when he bumped his head.” This way they learn that reward comes from effort, not ability. Praising the end-result, such as a good mark or winning a race, (“Wow, you got 90% - you must be good at maths!”) may make a child scared of failure and therefore afraid to try, in case they don’t measure up next time, and can also imply that it is their ability, rather than effort, that is important. Do not overpraise, as this can seem insincere and may give a child the idea they can do nothing wrong. Keep to “the 3 S’s” of praise or compliments -be **Spontaneous, Specific and Sincere**.



## Individual attention

Making time to give your child your undivided attention makes them feel valued and lets them know you enjoy their company. Ask your child what they would like to do, or if you are both stuck for ideas, Young Minds has a list of [20 things to do for 20 minutes with your child](#).

## Help them make decisions

Letting your child make age-appropriate decisions and choices makes them feel competent. Decide what you are happy for them to have control over and let them know! Taking turns as a family to choose meals, activities or films lets them know that their opinion matters and will be listened to.



## No one is perfect

Let your child know that nobody is good at everything and that making mistakes is a part of life. Share with them times when you make mistakes, and let them see you handle them in a constructive way. It might help to show them examples of “famous failures” who did not give up!

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/10-famous-failures-that-will-inspire-you-success.html>



## 15 ways to promote and support

# Your Self Esteem

1. Know your strengths and talents
2. Use affirmations daily
3. Help others whenever you can
4. Look for the positives in yourself and be grateful
5. Learn new things every day
6. Exercise each day
7. Ask for help if you need it
8. Talk about your feelings
9. Set goals for yourself
10. Stand up for yourself and be assertive
11. Celebrate your successes and be proud of yourself
12. Connect with friends and family
13. Be mindful
14. Learn from mistakes and move on
15. Have the courage to try new things



<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Self-esteem-15-ways.pdf>

### Useful links:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-self-esteem/>

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/mental-health-advice-for-children-and-young-people/self-esteem>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/self-esteem.html>

<https://www.mindmoose.co.uk/2016/11/05/developing-healthy-self-esteem-children-young-people/>

<https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/child-confidence>