

Low Self Esteem in Kids

Low self-esteem can occur at any age. Unfortunately, the leading cause of low self-esteem in adults actually occurs during the formative childhood years.

Children need as much positive reinforcement as possible. This helps them to develop into confident, productive adults. When parents and other adults encourage children in their efforts and guide them in a loving manner, these children will naturally develop a healthy self-esteem. This doesn't mean that kids should necessarily be lavished in compliments, but they need to be treated as individuals who are worthy of receiving your high regard.

It's important that the compliments given are from the heart. Children know when they're being handed a plate of baloney, and if you child thinks you're telling a lie, your efforts can be twisted and result in negative self-esteem. Lying to children makes them feel as though they're not worthy of the truth. Just be honest. Praise your children when they try something new, and encourage them to build their own self-esteem by taking on new challenges. Whether they succeed or fail in their efforts, kids need to know that they are good people who deserve good things.

Children who grow up thinking that others are smarter, prettier, more talented or simply better are destined to develop low self-esteem. To develop a healthy sense of self-worth, kids must hear that they have unique talents that no one else has. More importantly, they need to believe it.

Find your child's strengths and bring them to light. Your son may be a good student in science, but not in math. Don't bother telling him he's lousy at math. He already knows that. Rather, give him positive reinforcement for succeeding in science, and offer a pat on the back for his efforts in math. In doing so, your child will know that while he may not be perfect at everything, he does have definite talents. It will also reinforce the fact that he should continue to work hard to develop his weaker areas.

What children hear when they're young will echo throughout their adult lives. Childhood positive or negative reinforcement determines low or high self-esteem. Encourage and love your children when they're young. Praise their accomplishments and forgive their mistakes. Encourage them to improve and above all, be honest.

With a strong basis of healthy self-esteem, your child will grow and flourish to become a confident and successful adult.