

香港資優教育學院
The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education

Factsheet

WAYS TO RAISE SELF ESTEEM

Summary

Children like to feel good about themselves and gifted and talented children are no exception. In fact the emotion of the gifted and talented child is possibly more complex than others. Inevitably their social and emotional well being can affect the way they behave and can impact their learning. Improving the self esteem will strengthen a person's believe in themselves and their self worth.

It is important that we pay attention to what we say to children and how we use our language. We need to choose our words carefully so they are not perceived as negative by the child. A child will live up or down to what we expect of them and the importance we attach to learning and their learning environment.

Give praise and attention to all the successes your child has, no matter how small and give positive attention to behaviours you want them to repeat. Giving attention to negative behaviour indicates to a child that they can get attention regardless of how they behave, albeit negative attention. Children can very quickly believe that they are “no good” at anything if we don't regularly point out the good and extraordinary things they frequently achieve. A positive comment needs a lot of re-enforcement to be believed; a negative comment only has to be said once and will be remembered!

7 Ways to build self-esteem

Praise

Find things to praise your child for as often as possible. Think about a 4:1 ratio – four positive comments for every negative one.

Avoid Negative Labels

Don't call your child stupid or naughty. It is so much better to focus on the behaviour and not the child. It is important to know that your child is accepted and loved by you as a person and it is only their behaviour that you disapprove of.

Avoid Comparisons

Try not to compare your child to other children, even brothers and sisters. We are all unique, so focus on the child achieving their personal best.

Assist with Understanding

Teach your child that making mistakes is an essential part of the learning process and we all make mistakes even adults. We should learn from our mistakes and avoid making them in future.

Tasks into Chunks

Help your child to break down tasks and learning into smaller and more manageable chunks, this can make learning much less daunting.

Celebrate Success

At every opportunity remind your child of all the things they can do and what they have achieved. Devise a praise and reward system appropriate for your child and family.

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Positive Thinking

Help your child to think positively and have a positive attitude to their learning. Teach your child how to turn “I can’t” thoughts into “I can!”

Children look to adults as positive role models and to help them form positive images about themselves. If you expect your child to find learning difficult or boring or you think your child is not very clever, unfortunately 9 times out of 10 they will believe YOU.

If children have a positive self-image as a learner then usually they will behave in a positive manner. This will in turn raise their confidence.

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Pane.L.M. (1994). <i>Just Because I Am: A Child's Book of Affirmation</i> . Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing Inc.	A book to encourage self esteem and value emotions.
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Cohen.C(2000). <i>Raise Your Child's Social IQ</i> . Silver Spring, MD: Advantage Books.	Useful book for assessing and promoting children's social skills
Understanding Childhood- www.understandingchildhood.net	Website that has information and downloadable leaflets on child development.
Committee for Children www.cfchildren.org.uk	Organisation working towards helping children in their social and emotional development.

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