

Ways to Help Children Like Themselves

1. Be a good role model. Let your children see that you feel good about yourself.
2. Give affirmations every day, both verbal and nonverbal: smile, display their artwork, etc.
3. Emphasize the positive things children do each day, not the negative.
4. Praise effort by giving plenty of encouragement. Believe in your children.
5. Give each child some one-on-one time each day; a story, a back rub before bed, time to listen to their day, etc.
6. Take children's feelings and thoughts seriously; never belittle them. Listen and empathize.
7. Help children understand their own feelings and acknowledge that we do not all have the same feelings.
8. Assign meaningful and appropriate tasks to do. This helps children feel capable and develops a sense of accomplishment.
9. Help create situations in which your child can experience success.
10. Recognize the uniqueness of each child, expressing your love and acceptance "just for being you".
11. Have reasonable expectations for your children and help them to set reasonable goals for themselves.
12. Set limits and give boundaries: this helps children feel safe and make sense out of their world. Define rules clearly and enforce them consistently.
13. Spend time together; participate in shared activities together.
14. Treat your children with respect.
15. Show children how much you care for them by giving hugs, winks, smiles and telling them how much you love them.
16. Discuss problems with your children without using judgment or blame.
17. Talk to your children about their activities and what is important to them. Show them you are interested by attending their games, social events, award ceremonies, etc.
18. Be available. Be someone your children can count on for support when they need it.
19. Use humor in a note to remind your children of a chore, etc. "The health inspector will inspect your room at 4 p.m. today." "These clothes do not have legs and feet and I don't expect them to grow any in 24 hours. Please help them out by putting them in the drawers."
20. Give some undivided attention to your children's play. This might be the only setting in which some children feel confident. Parents can play a part in creating opportunities for children to do their best. "I really enjoy coloring with you." "The fort you made is a great place to hide."