

Counsellor's Corner

Hey there! Miss. S coming at you with this month's counselling topic. We hear it used often, but do we really know what self-esteem is? What about self-concept? Building self-esteem and confidence is important for child and teen development. It helps them become more emotionally resilient and cope better with stress and life challenges. The best way to help our kids develop confidence and self-esteem is to understand what it is! Self-concept is simply what we **think** about ourselves and our abilities in areas not limited to academics, sports, social skills etc. Self-esteem develops alongside self-concept. Self-esteem can range from high to low and it is how we **feel** about ourselves and our personal characteristics. Self-esteem is greatly influenced by the evaluation we make of the different characteristics we include in our self-concept. So if we think we are successful in an area like athletics, and feel that we are, and like this about ourselves, we have a high self-concept and high self-esteem about our athleticism. However, if we don't think we are very athletic, even if our skills demonstrate that we are, we might not feel very confident about our athleticism. Do you see where this gets a little sticky? The way we can help our kids develop self-esteem and a positive self-concept is through making them feel good and valued; providing opportunities for them to feel safe and happy; showing interest in topics and activities that interest them; and not labeling them for their behaviour, rather addressing the behaviour as wrong or bad, but not that they are bad kids. Make your kids feel competent by providing opportunities to experience success, provide praise for progress and achievements, enroll them in a new activity to develop their skill set. Provide your kids with age appropriate tasks and opportunities to make choices on activities to foster their independence. Explain to your kids how the real world works, how everyone has a range of emotions, strengths and weaknesses, that people make mistakes; including mom and dad, and how to learn from their mistakes. Help them understand how to catch and reframe negative thinking and self-talk that leads to low self-esteem. Walk your kids through how to problem solve and how to ask someone to stop treating them a certain way. Last but not least, help them develop time management and priority setting skills. While these might seem obvious to some, I would like to express how hard it is to be perfect at all of this all the time, and that the expectation isn't to be perfect, it is to work alongside your kids in developing a positive self-concept together because this is a continuous journey for both parents and kids alike. Here is a link to some awesome ideas and games to engage in self-esteem development for you and your kids.

<https://veryspecialtales.com/self-esteem-activities-for-kids/>

Good luck and all the best on your journey! I'm always here to help if you have any questions J

Warm Regards,

Miss S.

