

Guidelines for using the worksheets on Self-Esteem

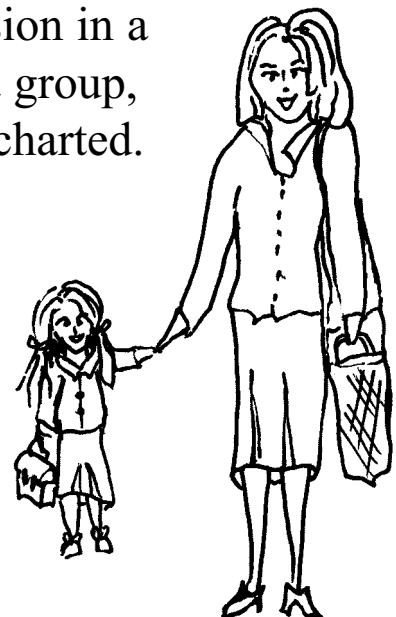
The worksheets on self-esteem, five in total, explain how self-esteem levels can affect people's learning. The first worksheet gives an example of a child with low self-esteem and shows how this affects the child's learning. The second worksheet explains why low self-esteem affects people.

The third worksheet explains how to build a child's self-esteem and uses the image of a three-legged stool to explain the vital elements of self-esteem. The fourth worksheet gives tips for parents. The last worksheet explains about the importance of praising children in the right manner.

Parents play a crucial role in building a child's self-esteem. These worksheets are suitable for parents with children of all ages including teenagers. The teenage years can often be a time when self-esteem levels can take a battering.

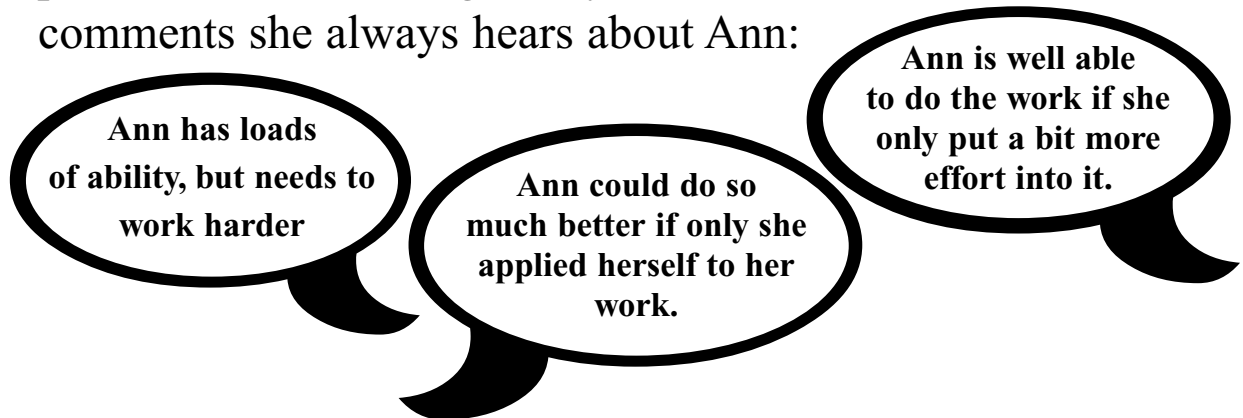
Individual parents or a group of parents working together can use these worksheets. The questions at the end of the worksheets can be used for discussion in a group setting. If a tutor is working with a group, then the answers to the questions can be charted.

These worksheets can be used as part of a course on parenting skills. Where there are activities suggested, parents can be asked if they tried these activities and what were the outcomes.



Helping children to be confident

Ann is 10 years old. Her mother Mary has just been to a parent-teacher meeting. Mary has heard the same comments she always hears about Ann:



Mary cannot understand why Ann isn't putting effort into her schoolwork.

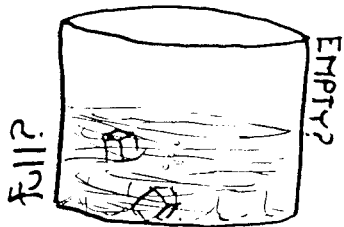
Why is Ann behaving like this?

It is very probable that Ann is lacking in self-esteem.

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is the way we *feel and think about ourselves*.

How we feel about ourselves affects our whole world.



Look at the picture of the glass. What do you see?
Do you see: A glass half **full** or a glass half **empty**?

People with high self-esteem have a **positive** image of themselves and see the world in a **positive** light.

They focus on what they **have**. They see the glass as half full.

People with poor self-esteem have a negative image of themselves. They focus on what they **don't have**. They see the glass as half empty.

Parents!

- What advice would you give Mary to help Ann?

Self-Esteem and learning

Parents often wonder why children who are well able to learn don't seem to want to learn.

Children with low self-esteem have lost the excitement of learning.

Learning for the child means risking failure and making mistakes.

Success and failure in themselves have no effect on a child's motivation. It is the **reaction** of the parents and teachers, which has a major effect on the children's belief in themselves as well as on their future behaviour.

Children with high self-esteem

- Are curious about things.
- Are eager to learn.
- Love a challenge.
- Are able to focus on the here and now.
- See failure and mistakes as an opportunities to learn.
- Are able to accept criticism.
- Know their strengths and weaknesses.
- Compete with **themselves** not with others.



Children with low self-esteem

- Are not curious.
- Fear failure and mistakes.
- Avoid challenges.
- Avoid doing things.
- Talk about failure "I'm no good at/hopeless/useless at"
- Can be very loud /destructive.
- Do not like criticism.
- Get over-involved in activities.
- Couldn't care less or are very competitive.



Parents!

- **Think about an experience when you were successful/failed.**
- **How did you feel when you succeeded/failed?**
- **Did anyone comment on your success/failure?**
- **How did that make you feel?**

Developing self-esteem

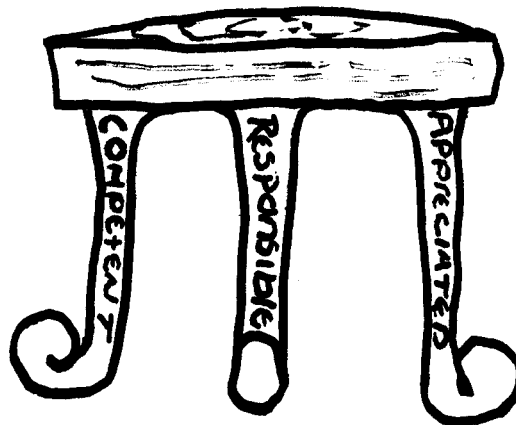
Building up a child's self-esteem is a daily on-going process.

There are three main ways in which parents can help their children:

- Help them to be **competent** i.e. encourage them to do things for themselves and to do the best they can.
- Help them to be **responsible** i.e. make each child responsible for chores in the house. Help them to take responsibility for their actions. Help them to see that there are consequences for every action .
- Show **appreciation** for the work that they do.

Let us think of self-esteem as a three –legged stool.

If one of the legs is missing then the stool will not function. In the same way if one of the elements of self-esteem is missing then the child cannot function as well he/she should.



Parents!

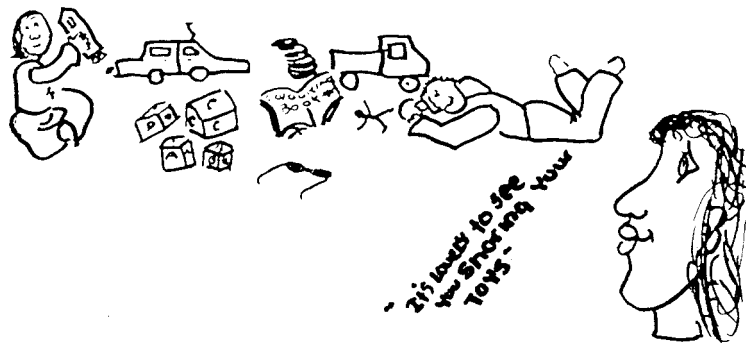
- **Look for your child being competent and praise him/her.**
- **Catch your child acting responsibly and praise him/her.**

Praising children

The more praise **you** give your children the more effort they will make to get more.



Praise your children when you see them doing something you really want them to do. **If you want your child to share then praise them when you see them sharing.**



What you say is very important. Don't make a long speech. Tell them exactly what you are praising them for.



Tips for parents

1. Give love **unconditionally**. Words like “be good/clever/successful/quiet/ like your brother” can often make children feel that love is conditional.
2. Look for **effort** rather than **performance**. Look for small efforts rather than success.
3. Be happy with small **improvements** rather than major achievements.
4. Don't do for your children what they can do for themselves.
5. Look for **positive** behaviour. Don't point out mistakes.
6. Give children clear guidelines about rules.
7. Spend **time** with **each** of your children and give them your undivided attention.
8. **Thank** your children for doing things for you.
9. Have **mutual** respect. Parents often feel that they are always right and the child wrong. Say **sorry** when in the wrong.

Parents!

- Which of the tips appeal to you?
- Try them out during the week.