



SELF ESTEEM

DEVELOPING A POSITIVE SELF IMAGE REQUIRES A PARENT'S HELP

Take all feelings seriously. Don't say "It's dumb to feel that way, don't let it bother you." Instead, say "I hear you, you're really disappointed, aren't you?"

Don't dismiss fears as "silly." It is natural for children to have fears. Listen to your child's fears. Tell him "It is ok to have fears; I'm here to take care of you. What can we do to make you feel better?"

Praise each child for her uniqueness. Do not make comparisons between children; it will only lead to competitiveness and fighting.

Let your child overhear you say something positive about him. "Adam swam the whole length of the pool by himself."

Put your child in situations so she can see herself differently. "Molly can you get a screwdriver and tighten this wheel on my bike?"

Find opportunities for your child to experience success. Let him make a batch of cookies or build a model or grow a plant in the garden.

Give choices, set the available options. "Do you want to wear jeans or sweats to school?" If she says "Shorts" say "That's not a choice, it's too cold; the choices are jeans or sweats."

Give your child a chance to figure out the answer to his questions. Instead of quickly answering, say "That's a good question, Ryan - what do you think?"

Encourage your child to use resources. "Maybe the librarian can help us get information" or your grandmother might know how to do that, why don't you give her a call?"

Encourage your child's dreams and aspirations; do not take away hope: "You want to try for the swimming team? That will be a great experience." If she does not make it, say "I bet you're disappointed, aren't you? Let's decide we're going to practice some more and try again."

