

Self-Esteem Building in Adolescents

Tips for Parents



Did you know?

- “75% of girls with low self-esteem reported in engaging in negative activities like cutting, bullying, smoking, drinking or disordered eating. This compares to about 25% of girls with high self-esteem.
- About 20% of teens will experience depression before they reach adulthood.
- The top wish among all teen girls is for their parents to communicate better with them. This includes more frequent and more open conversations.” (www.dosomething.org)



Adolescents who have low self-esteem, compared to higher self-esteem, are more likely to struggle in adulthood with:

- mental and physical health problems
- antisocial behavior
- educational, occupational, and monetary problems*



A number of studies suggest that self-esteem is *directly related* to the quality of the parent-child relationship.*

4 Components of Self-Esteem

1. **Self-Confidence**—feeling of security, that we are loved, and our needs are being met.
2. **Identity**—the knowledge that we have about ourselves, through experimenting, learning and the feedback we receive from the people around us.
3. **Feeling of belonging**—groups we fit into, relationships we have with other people, and our experiences within these groups.
4. **Feeling of competence**—experiences in which we succeed and fail in order to learn new things, motivated by trials we face, feeling of efficacy and pride that help us to accept new challenges.

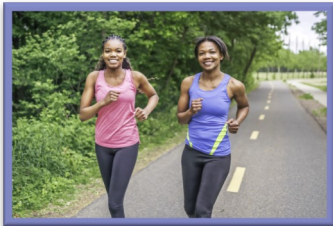
*Harris, M.A., Gruenenfelder-Steiger, A.E., Ferrer, E., Donnellan, M.B., Allemand, M., Fend, H., Conger, R.D. and Trzesniewski, K.H. (2015), Do Parents Foster Self-Esteem? Testing the Prospective Impact of Parent Closeness on Adolescent Self-Esteem. *Child Dev*, 86: 995-1013. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12356>



What can parents do to help build their teen's self-esteem?

1 Encourage independence...

...by treating your teenager as a capable individual. Help them learn to develop skills by giving them ways to help with tasks as simple as cooking a meal or helping to fix things around the house. Build their confidence by challenging them as they grow.



2 Be a positive role model for your teenager.

Your teenager will learn by watching what you value and will redirect those values like a mirror.

3 Give your teenager compassionate attention.

In doing this, you will teach them to be compassionate to themselves and others. Receiving your attention helps them to feel that they are worthy of your time.



4 Praise your teenager...

...by telling them not just that they did a good job, but *how* they did a good job. This encourages your teen to see what values and priorities went into their task, even when it didn't turn out how they hoped. Teenagers should see that it is okay not to be perfect and allow them to see the value in all their efforts.



5 Show your teenager love.

It may seem like a logical suggestion to tell our teenager that we love them, but we must also *show* them. Be a model for accepting love from others which allows us to love ourselves. Share with your teen what you love about yourself, as well as mistakes that you have made, reminding your teen that regardless of their missteps, that they are worthy of your love.



Source: www.americanspcc.org