



Understanding and Dealing with low self-esteem

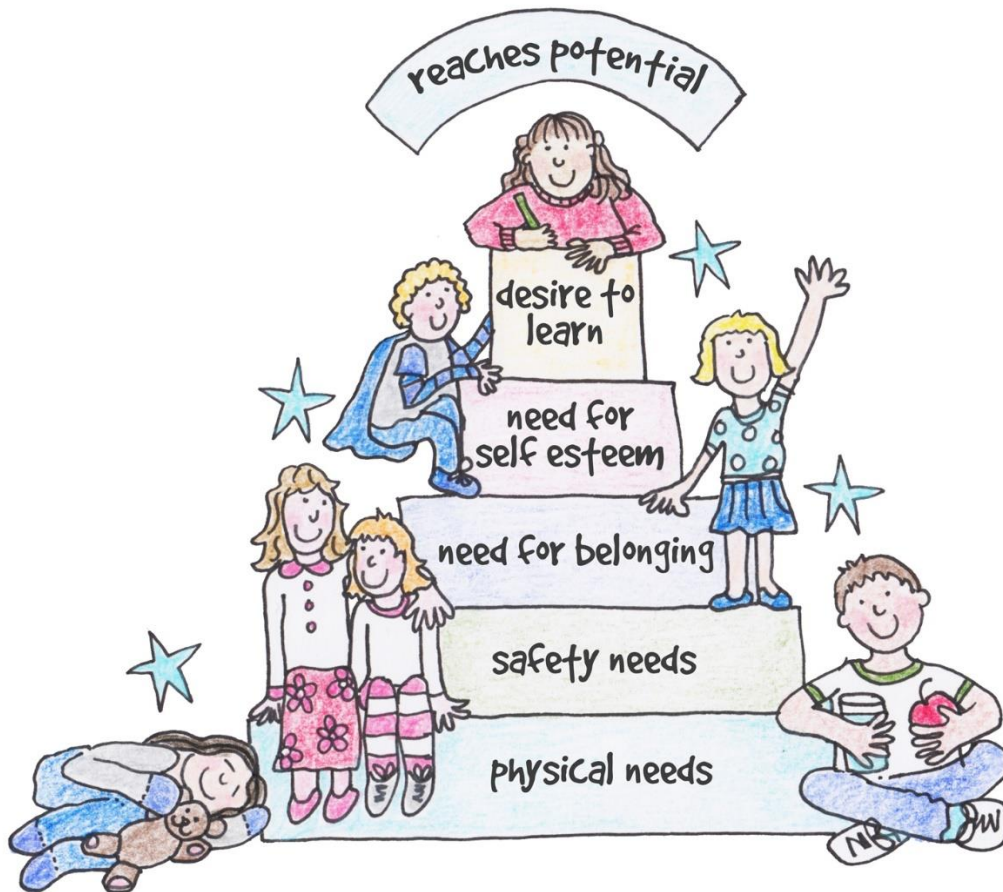
Understanding Low Self-esteem

Self-esteem is the degree to which we believe we are lovable and capable. Parents, teachers and friends have an important impact on a child's self-esteem as the child develops. Low self-esteem may manifest itself in different ways. Some children may become quiet and withdrawn some may feel the need to prove themselves by being loud and possibly disruptive. Some may become perfectionists in order to gain approval and acceptance of those around them.

Positive self-esteem is an essential foundation for happiness and therefore something we all want to help our children achieve. With **positive self-esteem** children know their inherent value in the world. It is not defined by behaviour or material possessions, it is innate. They can be confident in their own abilities and take pride in them. Furthermore, they have self-respect, they know what they deserve out of life and what they shouldn't put up with.

Dealing with Low Self-esteem.

As a parent - The first rule is to be patient!



1. The first thing that a child needs, on the way, to reaching their potential, is their **physical needs**, to be met i.e. a home, food, water, sleep.
2. They have to also feel **safe**, in their environment, home, school playground etc.
3. A **sense of belonging** in the home, school and friendships is very important.
4. A **need for self-esteem** to feel 'good enough' and accepted will follow and will lead to a child's:
5. **Desire to learn.**

Strategies to help raise your child's self-esteem.

- Praise, praise, praise and more praise. This may feel over the top and unnatural to start with but it is good to praise even the mundane simple tasks
E.g. "you were really quick at tidying, well done" "I liked the way you played with your sister today, she had a great time."
- Actively listen to your child, get down to their level, nod, question etc.
- Talk about their interests, show you are interested.
- When they come out of school, be ready to greet them, not looking at your phone or chatting.
- Ask what went well at school **not** what didn't. They will bring worries up naturally, if they are asked it will make them focus on negative things and use these to get your attention rather than the good things.
- Give each child your one to one attention. Just 10 – 15 minutes a day with no distractions will develop their self-worth.
- Coach rather than control. Encourage them to have a go and to choose for themselves. (This will give your child confidence in their own ability).
- Try not to rescue but encourage them to problem solve.
- Have realistic and attainable goals. Unreasonable goals will set them up for failure.
- Praise efforts not results.
- Praise them, in their earshot, to other family members or teachers etc.
- Don't minimise feelings. We may see the problem as trivial, sometimes, but to them it could be a big problem.
- Talk about all of their achievements so far, eg reading, writing, riding a bike, swimming, making friends etc.
- Don't criticise or be sarcastic if things go wrong.
- Don't compare them to siblings or friends.
- Give them an age related responsibilities or chores.
- Point out who in school, they should seek help from and encourage them to speak to the adults in school rather than bottling things up until they get home.

Suggested Reading for parents.

The Incredible Years – Carolyn Webster-Stratton

The Book You Wish Your Parents Had Read (and Your Children Will Be Glad That You Did)

by [Philippa Perry](#)

My Hidden Chimp: The new book from the author of The Chimp Paradox

by [Professor Steve Peters](#)

Raising Happy Confident Kids

by [Nadim Saad](#)

Books to share with your child

You Are Awesome: Find Your Confidence and Dare to be Brilliant at (Almost) Anything

by [Matthew Syed](#)

