



Toolkit for Parenting Teenagers
Tip Sheet #2: Improving Your Teens Self-Esteem

As a teen going through many changes, it can be difficult to maintain a positive self- concept or healthy self-esteem. Your teen’s self-esteem is how they feel about themselves and can impact their behavior that will reflect those feelings. Parents can strengthen their teen’s self-esteem every day, without even realizing it, through their words and actions. Below are some tips on how to help promote your teen’s self-esteem:

1. **Don’t hesitate to give praise.** When you are happy or proud about something your teen has done, let them know they have done well. It can be easy for parents to express negative feelings more quickly than positive ones. Children remember positive statements that are given and can use them as sources of encouragement.
2. **Criticize when necessary, but avoid ridicule or shame.** Sometimes it’s necessary to criticize your teen’s actions but saying it in a hurtful or demeaning manner can feel like ridicule or cultivate feelings of shame. Try to use “I” statements rather than “You” statements when giving criticism.
3. **Seek your teen’s opinion.** Your teen has many beliefs and outlooks on life that they are ready and willing to share. Include them in every day family decisions and implement some of their suggestions.
4. **Teach your teen to make positive self-statements.** Self-talk is important and positive self-talk can help against feelings of anxiety or depression. Help your teen develop statements that focus on their character or personality traits. Thinking positive thoughts will help them feel positive and help them when faced with obstacles or difficult situations.
5. **Encourage developments of personal interests and talents.** Let your teen follow their passion and create their own goals and dreams. Even if it’s an interest you don’t agree with, try to provide opportunities for safe explorations of these interests. Teen’s search for a sense of identity and their place in the community.