

Boosting self-esteem with encouragement

Encouragement is the greatest tool available to adults to boost children's self-esteem. It is through encouragement that we lead others to achieve greater things than they thought possible. The great psychologist Rudolph Dreikers once said, "Like a plant needs water children need encouragement."

Encouragement literally means to 'give heart'. If you are unsure how to encourage your child then think back to how you encouraged him when he was trying to walk. In all likelihood you encouraged and urged your child so hard that you nearly pulled him up with your will. You didn't criticise him because he fell over. You urged him to get up and have another try and you communicated through your behaviour that you knew that he could do it.

Are you still an encourager to your child? Do you focus your positive language on your child's efforts, point out

his improvement, show your appreciation for his contribution and show your confidence in his abilities?

Do you encourage your child three times a day?

Encouragement is powerful and has a snowball effect on children's self-esteem. You may know this, but do you do it? You need to say the right words and show your child through your treatment of him that you believe he is capable and able to achieve. Oddly enough, it is often easier to encourage other people's children than our own. The emotional intensity gets in the way.

Every child needs someone in his life who says, "I know you can do this."



Quick Parenting Quiz

- A child asks for a dollar to buy an ice-cream. Which response places responsibility on to the child?*
 - A dollar!! That's too much. I'll give you fifty cents.
 - Go and ask your mother/father?
 - Your pocket-money covers those sorts of purchases
 - If you are good I'll buy you an ice cream.
- Girls begin puberty:*
 - At the same time as boys
 - About eighteen months earlier than boys
 - When their mothers tell them
 - Twelve months before boys

Answers: 1c) 2b)

Vitamins for parents

Four types of encouraging language to use every day:

- Focus on effort - It is great to see you trying to....**
- Focus on improvement**
- You have improved in....
- Shows appreciation**
- Thanks for helping me....
- Displays confidence**
- I know you can do this....

Bright idea



Double-up to develop a new habit

If you are not a very encouraging person then link your encouragement to an activity you already do. Develop the habit of making a positive remark when you say goodbye in the morning and at night.

Wise & Witty Words

"If evolution really works how come mothers only have two hands."

Ed Dussault

"Children have never been very good at listening to adults but they have never failed to imitate them."

James Baldwin