

# PARENT TIP SHEET: HELPING YOUR CHILD TO DEVELOP SELF-RESPECT

## Introduction

**Self-esteem** is a child's evaluation of their 'worth' as a person and often reflects self-beliefs that are not based on facts or evidence. Research studies over the last 35 years<sup>1</sup> have not been able to demonstrate that trying to enhance a child's self-esteem leads to significant improvements in their academic achievement, confidence or social behaviour. In fact, many studies have linked high self-esteem with unrealistic aspirations, narcissism, a sense of entitlement, low empathy and a lack of respect towards others.

On the other hand **self-respect** is a child's well-grounded self-acceptance and approval for their own character and conduct. This tip sheet complements the information Life Education shares with your children in their school program and offers simple ideas to help them develop self respect.

Encourage your child to develop 'self-respect' and they are more likely to:

- manage their own behaviour well
- treat other people well
- self-protect
- demonstrate self-knowledge & self-confidence
- demonstrate self-trust

<sup>1</sup> Baumeister, R. F., Campbell, J. D., Krueger, J. I., & Vohs, K. D. (2005). Exploding the Self-Esteem Myth, *Scientific American*, 292, 84-92.

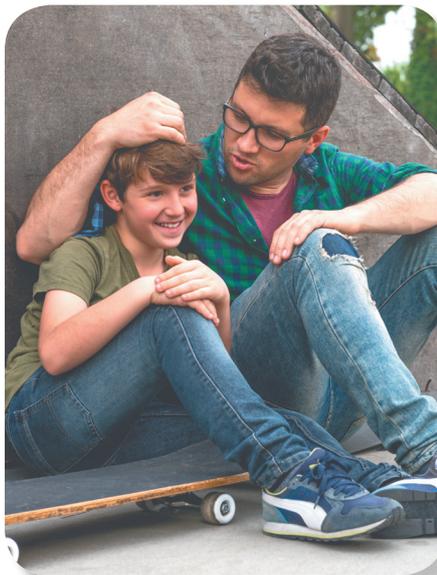
## Self-management

Teach and encourage your child:

- to respond to challenges and difficult times with dignity, courage and resilience
- to adopt a positive approach to life by focusing more on what goes well
- to understand that no-one is perfect and that everyone makes mistakes
- to feel satisfied with their achievements whilst balancing pride with humility.

## Treating other people well

Teach and encourage your child to behave with respect, kindness, compassion and support towards others.



## Self-knowledge & self-confidence

Teach and encourage your child:

- to focus more on their strengths than their limitations
- not to over-focus on comparing themselves with others
- that 'it's ok to be different' and that they are neither inferior nor superior to others
- to identify their strengths by looking for evidence of what they are good at rather than just using 'wishful thinking'
- to adopt a confident approach when they take on a challenge by putting in the effort required & using positive self-talk [e.g. I can do this if I try hard].

## Self-protection

Teach and encourage your child:

- to not put themselves down
- to act in ways that protect their safety and reputation
- to stand up for their right to be treated respectfully by others

## Self-trust

Teach and encourage your child:

- to consider other people's views but not be automatically swayed by them
- to trust their own judgment and have faith in their own views

## Remember to:

Focus on helping your child to develop self-respect to help them to become successful young people who behave well towards others and respect themselves