

How to raise confident children

You can help your child to become a more confident person by helping her see that nobody is perfect, and helping her feel that she is special and loved.

Parents are often consumed with all the responsibilities that go along with having children. They work hard every day to pay the bills and feed their families. Parents are typically concerned with their children's health, manners, and school work. While all of these things are important, parents have another responsibility that is simple to achieve but often overlooked. Parents need to help their children become confident young people.

How can you build confidence in your child? There isn't one magic answer. Building confidence is a daily practice that involves common activities. As your child becomes more confident in herself, she will become a happier person.

Because children don't have the day to day worries and responsibilities that adults do, we often think they lead stress-free lives. Although their worries aren't the same as adults, children do have problems they tend to focus on. Of course, the opinions of their peers are extremely important. They also want to please their parents, and many times they feel like failures when they make mistakes.

One of the first lessons parents need to teach their children is that everyone makes mistakes. While it is fine to tell your child this, it is even more beneficial if you model this concept for her. When you make a mistake, don't automatically hide it from your child. Let her know what you did, and try to show her that even though she might regret the mistake, it isn't the end of the world. The next time she makes a mistake, help her realize that she isn't a failure just because she isn't perfect.

Help your child realize that she is an important person in her family and in her community. It doesn't matter that she is young; she can still contribute in some way. Even the youngest child can benefit from having small responsibilities such as setting the table, cleaning her room, dusting the furniture, and helping put groceries away. As your child matures, give her more responsibilities, but be sure you praise her for a job well done.

Encourage your child to give back to the community by volunteering for projects yourself. You can bring her along to help. Maybe an organization in your town is taking up food and clothing for the homeless or the needy. Let your child look through some of the items she has outgrown or no longer wants. If they are in good condition, you and she can take them to a shelter. Maybe your area mall has an "angel tree" that is covered with the names of needy children. You and your child can adopt a needy child and buy him Christmas gifts.

If your child comes home from school after a rough day, spend some time talking to her

about what has happened. Often, children focus on the worst thirty minutes of the day and forget that the rest of the day was good. Once your child has told you about the problem she encountered, ask her to tell you some of the good things that happened to her. Eventually she will see that the problem isn't as large as it initially seemed.

Find reasons to compliment your child. Everyone wants to feel special, and children are no exceptions. If you have several children in your family, you may want to set aside special days for each child. You could designate a special chair at the table for her to sit in, and everyone has to go out of their way to say special things about that particular child on her "special day".

Try to make your child feel loved in little ways. If your child has a problem waking up in the morning, don't scold her. Instead, set her alarm a little earlier and find ways to wake her up that are fun. Once she has woken up, spend a few minutes talking to her about her dreams or what her plans are for the day.

If your child seems particularly stressed, help her to relax. You might take a walk around the neighborhood, or you play a little basketball together. Maybe you could sit in a porch swing and just relax for a few moments. Initiate a conversation about some good memories you and she share together. It could be about something funny that happened, or it could be about a great vacation you took.

Finally, many parents encourage their child to strengthen their faith in a higher being. Once she realizes that she shouldn't have to take on the world by herself, she should feel more comforted. You can discuss your spiritual beliefs with your child and answer any questions she might have.

You can help your child to become a more confident person. You just need to take the time to show her that nobody is perfect, and you need to let her know that she is special and loved.