

PROMOTING SELF-ESTEEM IN TEENS

By: The National Parenting Association



I AM
WORTHY

Having a positive self-esteem or self-image means feeling valuable and worth loving. Since teens spend so much time with their friends, a large portion of a teen's self-image comes from their peers. However, it's important that you also regularly praise your child and help him or her develop a positive self-esteem.

The way teens perceive themselves directly affects how they act and behave. Teens with a positive self-image tend to feel more competent, have more friends and do better in school.

Try these suggestions for fostering self-esteem in your teen:

- 1. PAY CLOSE ATTENTION, BUT RESPECT YOUR TEEN'S PRIVACY.**

Being involved shows your child that you care. Know what courses and extracurricular activities your child is involved in and who his or her friends are. Little things, like remembering the names of your child's friends and occasionally asking how they are doing sends the message. At the same time, try to respect your child's privacy and don't pry into insignificant details that your child may not want to share.

- 1. Compliment your child often, and make sure the praise is genuine.** Your child may shrug off your praise, but underneath, he or she is likely to be glowing with pride.
- 2. Get involve in school events.** Your schedule may prevent you from going to every game or recital, but make an effort to be there for the most important ones.
- 3. Respect your child's concerns.** Don't belittle your child by dismissing his or her worries when he or she is upset.
- 4. Never criticize your child.** If you disapprove of a behavior, make it clear that you dislike the behavior—not your child. If you must comment on your teen's activities, behaviors, music or fashions, try to be positive rather than hurtful. For example, say, "I really like the sweater you wore last week. It's more flattering than the tank top you have on today."
- 5. Encourage your child to explore a variety of activities** and find areas of expertise. Succeeding at one or more activities will help your teen gain confidence. Additionally, those who succeed in one area of life tend to have successes in many areas of life.
- 6. Avoid teasing your child.** Many teens are so sensitive that even good-natured teasing can hurt their feelings.

