

Building Self-Esteem

It is important to be able to recognize the signs and behaviors of students possessing high and low self-esteem. The following list and activities may be helpful in recognizing and working to improve a student's self-esteem.

High Self-Esteem Students

1. Active, curious about surroundings, makes wide variety of contacts.
2. Makes friends easily, talks and laughs.
3. Has a sense of humor, is a good sport, can laugh at themselves.
4. Asks questions, defines problems.
5. Willing to take risks in the classroom. Contributes to a discussions and is able to stand for what they think.
6. Takes modest pride in own contributions, is not overbearing, and does not cheat.
7. Works and plays well with others.
8. Usually happy, confident, does not complain for what cannot be had.

Low Self-Esteem Students

1. Mildly passive, tends to avoid new experiences, has limited contacts.
2. Shy, bashful, quiet and withdrawn.
3. Tends to be overly serious, hyper-sensitive, afraid to be laughed at.
4. Avoids getting to the problem.
5. Unsure, backs down easily, often asks: "Do you think this is right?"
6. Aggressively asserts own ability and contributions, finds it difficult to share.
7. Overly competitive.
8. Usually gloomy and fearful, worries as a matter of course, complains a lot.

Activities to Build Self-Esteem

- Never do for a student what he/she can do for himself.
- Be aware of appropriate expectations at various age levels.
- Demonstrate the willingness to accept mistakes in self and others.
- Use encouraging language – focus on improvements more than accomplishments.
- Realize that self-confidence varies within the individual's areas of life.
- Demonstrate self-confidence.
- Provide opportunities for success.
- Use positive self-talk.
- Share stories about times when someone gave each of you confidence.
- Think of a way you and your mentee could work together and help another person feel more capable.
- Each of you share what you think is your best characteristic and why.
- Share stories with your mentee about times when an adult made you feel special. How did it affect you?