

## Boosting Self Esteem in Schools



Research shows- It is a balance to boost self esteem with praising and guidelines and discipline. As society changes for teacher and students, we still need to inspire confidence and build self esteem...and never ever give up.

Schools sometimes spend more time with children than parents themselves...and although it is a shared responsibility there are ideas that can simulate and boost self esteem at school. Help is available in some of the fabulous programmes available, provided by Life Education Trust for schools and Tough Love for parents and sponsorships have provided extras to schools as well.

One of the fabulous ideas for self awareness on the Life Education Trust is where children can create their self image by using the graphics on the website. Although a time consuming exercise for the class...it can be shared over a few months for Friday afternoon treats.

Their fabulous quote is:

*There never was, is, nor or ever will be again, another you,  
You are unique and special.*

One sponsorship programme tackling child poverty by giving raincoats to children at low-decile schools has done more than simply keep kids dry – it has boosted their self-esteem, pride in their school and attendance in the process. Associate Professor Mike O'Brien, who teaches and researches social policy at Massey's School of Social and Cultural Studies, has just evaluated the charitable trust KidsCan's free raincoat scheme – believed to be unique internationally. A concurrent scheme provides free muesli bars and fruit for a quick nutrition boost to children in poorer areas' O'Brien found that many children were so proud of their quality black Adidas rain jackets adorned with the All Black silver fern logo that they wore them rain or shine.

However, many students have their teacher to thank for steering them onto a positive course in their life, when they could have chosen otherwise....so although your words of wisdom may sometimes go un-noticed, feel warmth in your heart.

One such lady I've had the pleasure to meet is Faye Stockill who many years ago created a set of cards called Positive Choices for Children. Many schools have these in their libraries and offer a great resource to use with the children in classrooms. Teachers have been using these to share positive ideas on peace, health, energy, love, fun, joy and confidence with their students.

Teaching children goal setting can teach them the steps that lead to success. Created a few years ago, a one free page Success Journal is available to download from my website (school page) or create one yourself with a smiley face logo and using these words or something similar:

- I am great because
- This week I achieved
- I felt good because
- Next time I will try
- I want to
- My goals is

One of the easiest ways to help boost self esteem is free. Many employees are looking for confident employees to promote and manage their teams. The greatest fear of many adults is speaking in public or in front of a group. Lack of it leads to low self esteem and lack of confidence as adults. If this fear can be overcome as a child many employment opportunities are open to their future.

There will always be the children whose personality and natural ability find this an easy task. However, you can overcome this by a joint activity. Have a group of children standing in front of the class together and each student read one line or sentence from a short story or poem. Set the public speaking guidelines of listening and respecting and gradually help overcome this world wide adult fear. Change the groups...by selecting them alphabetically, then birthday, or hobbies or sports...so you are constantly creating different groups they interact in. As children progress, extend the time and audience and even extend it to share their weekly successes and you are building a confident student whose self esteem is on the increase.

Working across all areas of personal development and as the founder of International Self Esteem Day I witness challenges in different arenas. Consequently, I have started an annual awareness day and would like to invite you to join and create a day of celebration and awareness on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June. It's called Selfday – a day to share and educate about the importance of self esteem. In the middle of winter when days can become cold and dismal, it's a perfect opportunity to have your students plan activities for the classroom.

The afternoon spend mind mapping their goals, creating a treasure map of their future, Performing a skit in the classroom, creating cards for home or classmates, dancing to songs by Glenn Capelli, are all steps to boosting self esteem.

*Buckminster Fuller quoted: All children are born geniuses.....*

Somewhere we have forgotten this and with all their outside influences it's a juggle to streamline them to success.

In his book *The Learning Revolution* Gordon Dryden states that: *children will be teaching parents technology*. I endorse and extend that as schools are starting online classrooms and sending parents and grandparents to websites to read their stories. The children can encourage their older family members...and flip the encouragement with words like 'well done' for some first timers on computers.

Lifelong learning becomes a win/win when communication skills across all avenues and ages are shared to teach and create the 'feel good' factor and boost self esteem.

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