

10 Ways to Increase Your Child's Self Confidence

<http://www.centreforconfidence.co.uk/projects>

1. *Give your children lots of unqualified love and affection.* Don't let them think that your love is conditional on how they perform or how successful they are.
2. *Don't think you need to go over the top with praise.* It is often better to show encouragement and interest than give praise. For example, instead of saying "what a brilliant drawing" say "I really like this colour of blue" or "tell me about your picture". When giving praise it is better to focus on effort, concentration and how hard the child is trying rather giving them praise for any particular talent or skill. Excessive praise can make children anxious. They may fret over whether they will be able to play as well next time and so disappoint you. What's more a youngster can try harder but find it difficult to perform an activity more skillfully.
3. *Don't eliminate criticism but go easy with it and use constructively.* Don't say anything critical unless you can also say what they need to do differently to improve. Avoid using words like 'always' and 'never' as this will sound as if they can't change what they're doing.
4. *Keep their optimism and confidence high by teaching them how to see any problems as temporary or restricted* to one or two factors which they can change. Instill the belief that their ability can get better, that they'll progress if they work or try harder and that there are many ways to succeed.
5. *Don't skimp on giving children important lessons on what life is really like:* eg, let them know that everyone can't be winners; and that sad though it may be, life is often tough and unfair.
6. *Encourage your child to understand that they are only likely to reach their goals if they put in real effort and hard work.* Dreams are fine but the reality is they must work hard to fulfill them.
7. *Don't try to protect your children from bad feelings* that result from failure, for example. Bad feelings help them grow and develop resilience. Failure is an essential part of learning.
8. *Encourage children to develop empathy and relationship skills.* They are not the centre of the universe and the most important thing in life is not how they feel about themselves.
9. *Teach your child the skills of doing well and self-control.* For example, persevering with a frustrating task, doing their homework before playing and not giving in to immediate gratification.
10. *Give your child an understanding of 'Global Giving'.* Winning and coming out on top can feel good but let your child know that good feelings that last and give meaning and purpose in life are more likely to come from doing good in the world.