

## **BUILDING A HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM**



Excerpted from *Discipline Without Distress: 135 tools for raising caring, responsible children without time-out, spanking, punishment or bribery*, by Judy Arnall

A healthy self-esteem is not measured in quantity of high or low. It's basically about a child feeling that they have as much value as everyone else in the world. Here are some ways to build your child's healthy self-esteem:

- Love and accept them for who they are.
- Spend time alone with each child.
- Avoid labels and criticism.
- Give positive affirmations every day: "I love you."
- Give duties and responsibilities and acknowledge effort, not just the finished product.
- Teach that mistakes are for learning and growing and are okay!
- Let them make age-appropriate decisions.
- Be involved, watch, attend, and cheer loudly!
- Celebrate successes with them and others.
- Watch them when they want you to.
- Introduce them and include them in your adult social conversations.
- Seek out their opinion and listen with full attention, even if you disagree.
- Watch your language. Instead of: "You will spill it." "I'm too busy." "Sometimes I wish I never had children." "Why can't you be like your brother?"  
Try:
- "You can be careful." "Sure, I have a minute." "I love being a parent." "I'm glad you are you."
- Play with them and take them places.

- Be proud. Display their talent. Place netting over a wall and attach artwork,
- crafts and writing with clothespins. Laminate art for placemats or use a clear
- plastic tablecloth for displaying artwork underneath the table.
- Hang and display art everywhere – shows you value the child's efforts.
- Give time and attention, not material things. Children know what you consider important.

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