Self-Esteem and Behavior Management

The following suggestions and resources can help you build your child’s self-esteem. If you have other questions or concerns about your child’s behavior, please contact Child and Family Services at 651-229-3855.

Building Self-Esteem

• Be positive! Everyone functions better in a positive atmosphere.

• Focus on and help children recognize their strengths.

• Be honest. Tell children what you like or don’t like. For example, “I like it when you pick up your clothes.”

• Talk to your child about positive or negative consequences of behavior. “If you do __, then __ will happen.”

• Encourage children to take responsibility for their actions. Doing so teaches them that they have some control over what happens to them.

• Children need to understand what’s happening to their bodies. Discuss their condition with them and other family members.

• Encourage children to try new things and develop new interests.

• When children do something wrong, reassure them that you like them but that you dislike the behavior.

• Say “I love you” — a lot!

Behavior Management

• Focus on changing one behavior at a time. Reward the behaviors you want your child to continue with verbal praise, charting, stickers or small rewards.

• Reward or punish soon after the behavior has occurred.

• Be consistent and follow through with rewards and punishment.

• Limit the number of rules and be sure children understand what’s expected of them.

• To change negative behavior, try ignoring it. When you ignore behavior, you remove the child’s audience so that the behavior loses its effectiveness.

• That said, never ignore destructive or aggressive behavior that could be harmful or may indicate a serious problem.

• Select punishment carefully. Physical punishment or yelling provides negative reinforcement and may encourage children to continue the behavior.

• When enforcing time outs, age is a good guide. Three minutes is enough time for a three-year-old. Eight minutes for an eight-year-old.
• Be realistic and remember that behavior changes slowly. If you don’t see a change in about two weeks, try a new approach.

• If behaviors severely disrupt the family, seek professional help. A social worker or psychologist from Gillette can help you find helpful resources in your community.

**Bibliography**

**Self-Esteem**


MACLD, Building a Child’s Self Image. For more information write 1821 University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104 or call (612) 646-6136.


**Behavior Management**


**Children’s Books**


Make An Appointment
651-290-8707
Refer a Patient
651-325-2200