

## Developing Confidence and Self-Esteem

Where does a child's courage come from? It comes from a belief in themselves: the belief that regardless of any particular outcome, they are a lovable, capable person who has a lot to contribute and a good chance to succeed. And even when they don't succeed, they know that they are much more than just their achievements—that there is something worthwhile about them just because they are themselves. This belief—high self-esteem—helps motivate them to continue to work hard for good grades even after they have received a low one. It gives them the confidence to say “no” to their friends when they invite them to goof off instead of studying, or even later in life when they pressure them to use drugs or engage in other destructive behavior. When self-esteem is high—when we think we have a reasonable chance to succeed, and we know that all is not lost if we don't—we have the confidence to tackle life's challenges. We have courage.

*High Self-esteem* ➡ *Courage*

Unfortunately, the opposite is also true. When we think badly of ourselves—that we are unlovable or not capable—our self-esteem drops. This low self-esteem produces discouragement and fear.

*Low Self-esteem* ➡ *Discouragement*

### *Can a child have too much self-esteem?*

Self-esteem sometimes gets a bad reputation from people who see parents heaping vast amounts of praise on their kids for every minor achievement. Some of these children and adults seem to have such overblown egos that they act as if they can do no wrong, or they are just plain self-centered and arrogant. Is this too much of a good thing, or too much of the wrong thing?

It can be argued that such people have too much of the wrong kind of self-esteem. When a person's self-esteem is based solely on achievements (especially if they are inflated achievements), praise from others, or a sense of entitlement, the self-esteem is built on sandy soil that will easily crumble when put under pressure. Self-esteem is much more enduring when it is based on one's character and behavior, on a feeling of community with others, on one's growth and development as a person, and one's contributions to the common good. It can take a hit and get back up, knowing that success and failure do not determine a person's full value.

### *To belong. To learn. To contribute.*

These three goals are the cornerstones of a foundation that will provide a real and lasting sense of self-esteem for a lifetime. If you have the mindset to add a spiritual element to this foundation, that too will increase its strength.

To learn more about how to encourage your children to be courageous and confident, visit the Active Parenting Online Video Library. These helpful videos are offered free of charge by the ACFC in partnership with Active Parenting. Guidance and help is available for parents of children of all ages, from toddler to teen. Having confidence in your parenting skills is the key to reducing power struggles, improving communication and raising responsible, confident children. To access the Online Video Library, go to the **ACFC website**, click on the Active Parenting tab, and follow the instructions on how to view the videos.



### FREE ONLINE COURSES THAT IMPROVE YOUR FAMILY LIFE

In these video-based, interactive classes—available 24/7—you'll learn a consistent, encouraging style of parenting that will benefit you and your children for a lifetime. As a self-study course, you have the option of when to participate, based on your own schedule and at your convenience. Gain additional insight from your online group leaders as they provide support and feedback.

#### Four available classes:

- **Active Parenting: First Five Years**—for parents of children from birth to age 5
- **Active Parenting 4th ED**—for parents of children ages 5 to 12
- **Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce**—for divorced and divorcing parents
- **Active Parenting of Teens**—for parents of preteens and teens

Continue your experience as an “active” parent by reviewing what you learn in the class in your accompanying parent guide. Each guide contains additional information, activities, and worksheets to help you practice what you learn.

Visit [ACFCcares.com](http://ACFCcares.com) for more information and to start your Active Parenting journey today.