

HOW TO BUILD SELF-ESTEEM



Self-esteem is a feeling of self-worth and how positive or negative someone feels about themselves. More than 60% of young people who have experienced bullying behaviour in the last 12-months say it had a moderate to extreme impact on their self-esteem (Ditch the Label, 2019). No young person deserves to feel that they are not important. If you have experienced bullying behaviour and this has had a lasting effect on how you feel about yourself, we want you

to know that there are ways to re-build your self-esteem and move beyond this experience. You can and will begin to feel more positive as time passes and you can use practical tools to improve your self-esteem and show yourself more respect. If you are an Anti-Bullying Ambassador, you can also do lots of great work to help other students who have experienced bullying behaviour to develop their self-esteem.

TOP TIPS FOR BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

AVOID COMPARISONS_

Social media helps us to stay connected to others and can be an amazing tool for us. However, sometimes it can also be a place of negativity. A lot of people choose to exhibit cyberbullying behaviour like trolling, catfishing or spreading gossip on social media. Other people post heavily edited images of themselves that can make us feel bad about our perceived 'flaws'. People also typically use social media to post the highlights of their lives. So don't compare yourself to images on social media. Lots of images are edited or purposefully chosen to show our best bits, meaning it's not a valid comparison. Unfollow or mute accounts that make you feel bad and instead make sure you follow accounts that make you happy, spread positivity and are inclusive of everyone. Our 'Digital Wellbeing: Pressure for Perfection' and 'Digital Wellbeing: Keep Calm and Stay in Control' resources on our Resource Centre are great starting places for running activities for your peers that focus on self-esteem and screen time.

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES_

Know that we all fail at times and no-one should make you feel bad about trying. Failing or making a mistake is an opportunity to learn and if you start to take note of these moments and don't dwell on any negative feelings, you will begin to learn from them. It might be helpful to talk to someone you trust about how you're feeling and how to move on from the negative feelings. If you don't achieve a grade you were hoping to or you don't perform well in a sport you usually succeed at, it doesn't affect your worth.

Remember that things like this happen to help you learn from them and you are building your resilience each time you manage to move past these negative feelings and choose not to give up.

CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESSES _

It can be easy to notice and fixate on the times when things go wrong, when we make mistakes and when we feel like we've let ourselves down. But if you begin to pay attention to your own successes, you will find that you have lots of successes, big or small, each and every day. Maybe you spoke up in a class where you usually don't feel confident enough to speak or you handed in a piece of homework that took ages. Or maybe you made your friend smile when they were having a bad day or you told a Year 7 how to find the room they couldn't find and made them feel supported in school. It might be difficult to train your brain to notice and celebrate these small, positive moments each day, so one way to recognise these is to sit down at the end of each day and write a list of 5 or 10 small successes.

SEEK WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY _

It might feel scary at times but don't feel afraid to seek out activities or friendships that make you feel happy. Continue to follow your heart and pursue the things that you know make you feel good. Don't let fear or low self-esteem stand in your way because you deserve to feel happy. You may well find that immersing yourself in an activity and community that makes you feel happy helps to boost your self-respect.

Self-esteem is closely linked to our happiness and it's important to take on positive habits that help us to develop our self-respect. This will help you to feel more confident about taking on new opportunities and seeking out the things that make you happy in life. We hope you will find some of these ideas useful.

If you feel like building up your self-esteem is a challenge you need support for, remember to reach out and talk to a friend, teacher or family member. The people in your life will be glad that you have asked for their help.

More resources

[Raising Low Self-Esteem](#), NHS.
[Self-esteem](#), Mind.
[Self-esteem](#), The Children's Society.
[Digital Wellbeing: Keep Calm & Stay in Control](#), The Diana Award.
[Digital Wellbeing: The Pressure for Perfection](#), The Diana Award.

References

[Ditch the Label \(2019\): The Anti-Bullying Survey](#)

We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives, 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours.

We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit diana-award.org.uk/donate

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