

SELF-ESTEEM

Students who have developed a low self-esteem are often unable to enjoy the school experience and achieve success. Counselors can assist staff in identifying these students and in developing personal/social interventions that assist student in improving self-esteem and in improving school success.

Low Self Esteem

Symptoms

1. Can't identify positive traits or personal talents
2. Refuses to take positive risks associated with new experiences
3. Excessively seeks to please or receive attention
4. Acts out in negative, attention-seeking ways
5. Avoids social contact with adults and peers

Possible Causes

1. Perfectionist – results in feeling inadequate and frustrated; goals not reached
2. Genetic – low self-esteem might run in family
3. Anger turned inward – won't directly express anger
4. Rarely experienced success – feels worthless because of many failures
5. Overprotected – haven't learned how to cope, doesn't feel respected
6. Neglected – results in feeling worthless
7. Autocratic or punishing environment – feels helpless and believes that the world is a bad place

Goals

1. Build a consistent positive self-image
2. Increase social interaction, assertiveness and social skills
3. Engaged in fun activities
4. Experience success

How to Help

1. Provide warmth, empathy and acceptance; encourage expression of feelings
2. Use puppets, art or role-plays to play out scenes such as starting conversations, taking positive risks, expressing feelings, or asking for something that she/he needs.
3. Focus on positives; model optimism
4. Foster self understanding, competency and independence

5. Find activities where individual will experience constructive endeavors and enjoyable activities
6. Identify instances where self-esteem has been damaged.
7. Practice accepting and acknowledging compliments
8. Ask the student to write one positive thing about him or herself daily. Have them realize that they have over 100 things about which to be proud.