

12 TIPS FOR RAISING CONFIDENT CHILDREN AND TEENS

HOW TO HELP CHILDREN FEEL THEY CAN HANDLE WHAT COMES THEIR WAY

DAUPHIN COUNTY MH/ID
OCTOBER 2016 RESOURCE SHARING

To thrive, children and teens need to trust in their own capabilities while, at the same time, knowing that they can handle it if they aren't successful at something. We all want our children to become resilient—able to overcome obstacles, persevere when problems arise and bounce back from adversity.

Here are 12 ways you can set children and teens up to feel capable:

1. **Model confidence yourself.** Even if you're not quite feeling it!
2. **Don't get upset about mistakes.** Help your child see that everyone makes mistakes and the important thing is to learn from them, not dwell on them.
3. **Encourage them to try new things.** Attaining new skills makes children and teens feel capable and confident that they can tackle whatever comes their way.
4. **Allow your child to fail.** It's natural to want to protect your child from failure, but trial and error is how children and teens learn, and falling short on a goal helps them find out that it's not fatal.
5. **Praise perseverance.** Learning not to give up at the first frustration or bail after one setback is an important life skill. Confidence isn't about succeeding at everything all the time, it's about being resilient enough to keep trying, and not being distressed if you're not the best.
6. **Help your child find their passion.** Exploring their own interests can help your child develop a sense of identity, which is essential to building confidence.
7. **Set goals.** Articulating goals, large and small, and achieving them makes children and teens feel strong.
8. **Celebrate effort.** Praising your child for their accomplishments is great, but it's also important to let them know you're proud of their efforts regardless of the outcome. Let your child know you value the work they're doing.
9. **Expect them to pitch in.** They might complain, but children and teens feel more connected and valued when they're counted on to do age-appropriate jobs.
10. **Embrace imperfection.** As grown-ups we know perfection is unrealistic, and it's important for your child to get that message as early as possible. The idea that others are always happy, successful, and perfectly dressed is a fantasy, and a destructive one. Instead, remind them that being less than perfect is human and totally okay.
11. **Set them up for success.** Challenges are good for children and teens, but they should also have opportunities where they can be sure to find success.
12. **Show your love.** Let your child know you love him no matter what. Even when you're mad at him. Making sure your child knows that you think he's great—and not just when he does great things—will help him see his worth even when he's not feeling good about himself.