

The Amazing Race for Self-Esteem

Parents are the mirrors in which *children look into, to measure up to their own self-esteem*. How we communicate to our kids is a reflection of how kids see themselves.

The ABC's of Self-Esteem

Acceptance: Children long for your *approval*. A child has a way of living up to expectations, so be considerate of what you set for them. Catch your children doing the right thing and affirm them.

Belonging: Everyone will belong somewhere. You want your child to identify belonging with home, *YOUR home*. Establish your home as a place where they belong, where you discuss issues, where you collaborate, and where you seek their opinion and ask for their input in decision making.

Competence: Every kid will find a place of competence somewhere around the time they're in the fifth to eighth grade. All kids are different. Some kids will gravitate toward the arts, other kids toward sports. Whatever it is, *you need to encourage it*. You think about the people who really make a difference in your life, and that is what matters.

Action Plan

- When your kids look into the mirror of your eyes, make sure what they see is an *attitude* that says, "I accept you for who you are and for who you can become."
- When your kids walk into the house, it doesn't matter what their ages are, whether they're little or big, they need a big welcome sign that shouts, "Hey, you're welcome here, this is your house."
- Look for opportunities for your kids to *contribute* to your home. You know what? *Competence* doesn't happen by you doing things for kids, the kids can do for themselves.
- Make sure your words are *consistent* with your *actions*.
- Have a checkered flag ready to wave as kids come screaming across the finish line in a race for self-esteem. *The winner circle is waiting for 'em!*