



TEACHING KIDS TO HAVE CONFIDENCE

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Confidence is one aspect of personality that has to be taught as early as childhood. Children who are too shy or who refuse to interact with others may have future problems on acquiring social skills. It is therefore important as parents to teach our kids about the essence of having self-confidence, which will ultimately spell great social behavior as they grow older. To do this, we have to prepare them by giving them valuable inputs in their day-to-day interactions.

I've heard of and seen kids being too shy to participate at children's parties. They just stay in their seats watching all the action and never even try to join in at least once. However, pushing your kid to join in the fun can also be traumatic for the child. Remember that your child is unique, and he doesn't have to be compared to other kids who are more outgoing. What you could do is have him invite his friends over from school or your neighborhood to your home sometimes. Have them play parlor games where your child can be the game master. Parents often find that their kids are definitely more confident at home, in more familiar surroundings. Your child doesn't have to be the most popular kid, after all.

Have regular conversations with your child after school or at bedtime. Ask about the social activities they have at school. Encourage him to join school clubs or organizations where he can develop his potentials. Do not push him to join a group just because you know it's what is good for him. If he doesn't feel like joining the Math or Science club, ask him if he wants to join the Sports, Art or Glee club. Ask him which club he prefers, so that he will get the chance to interact with kids who have the same interests. Pushing him to join an organization which you had been into when you were his age will only put pressure on him. It's like molding him to be a miniature of your own self.

When your child tells you about his disappointments, never accuse him of not having done enough to succeed. Doing so would only open feelings of self-deficiency and self-distrust. Instead, tell him that failures are only steps that will ultimately lead to success. Tell him about a certain failure you have had, and how you overcame all odds to find success eventually. Or tell him about somebody who did just that. Having you or someone else as a role model may somehow inspire your child to work towards achievement and self-confidence.

Remember that having confidence in oneself is not something we already possess at birth. Our child deserves to be taught about self-confidence by us before he even learns it in school and among other people.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Do you remember being shy when you were a child? How did you overcome that shyness?
2. Why are kids often hesitant to participate in social activities?
3. Do you have some other suggestions for building self-confidence in children? What are they?
4. Why is self-confidence best to be learned first at home? How can the school help?
5. What happens when a parent constantly expresses disappointment in his child?