



Counselor Connection

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Raising Confident Children

Concern for children's happiness and self-esteem is fairly new. Today, it is one of the biggest concerns parents have about their child. In fact, Google finds over 7 million sites addressing children and self-esteem! A child feeling accepted, loved, and worthwhile is important. However, children naturally feel good about themselves. Although self-esteem can be eroded, I think it is actually a child's lack of confidence in their ability that underlies most emotional and behavioral problems.

If children are unsure of their ability to manage their feelings and solve their own problems, they will have a hard time regulating themselves without a parent's presence. *"Children are likely to live up to what we believe of them"* (Lady Bird Johnson). Parents aren't to blame for a child's lack of self-confidence, yet parents can interfere with its growth and development. How do parents coach their children, so they can grow to be more confident?

Decide who owns the problem. Is it something your child has responsibility for changing? Each person is responsible for their own thoughts, feelings, and actions when relating to others.

Coach them in problem solving. When your child comes to you with a problem they are struggling with, restrain yourself from fixing it for them. As long as your child is safe, this can be a great coaching opportunity. What does your child think the solution is? What have they tried?

Don't overuse advice giving. When a child says, "I don't know," it may mean they are unsure. Kids will become sure when they have lots of opportunities to try solving their problems. Giving your kids advice doesn't help them solve their own problems. It's ok to give kids ideas and suggestions, yet use them sparingly.

Praise effort not outcome. Kids may not always succeed as they try their solutions. Teach them that the outcome doesn't matter as much as their effort and hard work. It may take multiple attempts to learn something new.

Kids need their parents to be present and available while they try to solve their own problems and learn to better regulate their feelings. Learning to be present without making it all better for your child is hard but worth it.

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Newsletter Spotlight:

1. Raising Confident Children
2. Back-to-School Ideas
3. Website Updates

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Back to School Ideas:

1. *First Day of School Photos:* After taking a photo of your child on the first day of school, place it in a photo album. Add a quote from your child each year including the following, "What I want to be when I grow up..." (from Once Upon a Family, www.shopouaf.com)
2. *Mom Dollars & Morning Routines:* Try this program, if you are tired of stressful mornings and frequent reminders to get your kids ready for the day. You can personalize dollar bills with parent photo at www.festisite.com/money. Kids can earn these play dollars for doing their morning routine (hygiene, chores, etc) by a certain time. Then, they can buy items in the mommy store each day or save for big items (sleepover, extra computer time, or other activity your child would enjoy). Have fun and hover less! (from Family Fun, September 2009, "A Fistful of Dad Dollars" by Shannon Popkins)
3. *Sorting School Papers:* Check out *House that Cleans Itself* by Mindy Starns Clark (<http://www.mindystarnsclark.com/house.php>) for ideas on how to do the Paper Two Step (Quick & Long Sort) as well as dealing with clutter and dirt.

Website Updated...



1. **E-Newsletter Archive:** I have started to post past newsletters on my website at: <http://www.marcipayne.com/testimonials.html>. I've included a brief web poll, so you can continue giving feedback on which topics are most useful to you. More newsletters will be added as space allows.
2. **Small Business Coaching:** I'm offering a new service for helping professionals wanting to grow their business. Coaching, consulting, and workshop details can be seen at: <http://www.marcipayne.com/Professional-Services.html>
3. **Private Practice Connection Blog:** I've started a blog for those interested in small business and/or mental health field. You can view the RSS feed from my website or become follow it on Blogger at: <http://privatepracticeconnection.blogspot.com/> (If you are new to this site, you will need to create a username and password to get updates directly.)

