



## Promoting self-esteem in children

Self-esteem is how we feel about our abilities and strengths, including our ability to overcome challenges. Use these tips to help your child maintain their self-esteem through the difficulties of a medical illness.

### SUPPORT YOUR CHILD IN BUILDING AN IDENTITY

*Your child can build their self-esteem and confidence by trying out new activities, developing new skills and overcoming challenges.*

#### Help your child by:



helping them set goals (not too easy and not too hard) that match their strengths and abilities



reminding them that it is normal to struggle at times



teaching them that persevering when things are tough will help them

- develop new skills
- deal with challenges in the future



encouraging them to try a variety of appropriate activities of their choice



giving them a say in some minor decisions about their medical care, if appropriate

### PRAISE YOUR CHILD'S EFFORT AND GROWTH

*Help your child maintain their self-esteem by showing your child that you love them regardless of their struggles.*

#### Give effective praise by:



focusing on your child's efforts rather than their personal traits



giving praise that is well deserved



making sure your praise is sincere and meaningful

**Did you know?** This is one of a several tip sheets on handling illness during childhood.

Visit [www.aboutkidshealth.ca/PREVNet](http://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/PREVNet) to find tips on easing transitions through medically-related absences from school and other related topics.



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### MODEL GOOD COPING SKILLS

*Parents are important role models. Your child observes what you do and learns from it.*

#### Help your child develop good coping skills by:



showing that you persist and stay positive in the face of your own setbacks



taking time for yourself or seeking help from a mental health-care professional, if needed

### PROMOTE HEALTHY FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

*Healthy relationships in the family help build a child's self-esteem.*

#### Maintain healthy relationships by:



treating each of your children as fairly as possible



being sensitive to the limits imposed by your child's illness



spending one-on-one time with each of your children



making time for enjoyable family activities

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