

Character Essentials: We Are Proud

As children grow, they encounter new experiences every day. This makes it essential to help them build confidence. Throughout the month of July, our Character Essentials® theme is We Are Proud. This theme encourages children to take pride in their achievements both big and small, and to use these successes as building blocks for increasing their confidence.

In honor of the theme, we have provided suggestions on how to help your child become more confident in themselves and their abilities:

- Offer Meaningful and Consistent Compliments. It's incredibly important for young children to receive encouragement and feedback, and it's equally important to compliment your child's character. Tell them how brave, kind, and helpful they are. This helps them build self-worth and shows them how to pass along that kindness. Something as small as brushing their teeth without being told can be complimented with a simple phrase such as, "Look at how responsible you are!" Words of encouragement motivate children and give them the confidence to try new things.
- Encourage Critical Thinkers and Problem-Solvers. It is important to give children the autonomy they need to learn from their mistakes. While it is natural to want to protect your child from getting hurt or making mistakes, it is equally important to allow them the opportunity to face challenges and learn how to navigate and overcome them.
- Practice Model Behavior. As a parent, you are your child's first teacher. By modeling positive behaviors, you can demonstrate how to respond to situations in a healthy manner. There will be times when you or your child are upset or frustrated. It is important to show that it is okay to experience these feelings and how to respond to them appropriately. Model positive methods for self-soothing when you are frustrated, such as taking a deep breath or going on a walk. Children are observant and will look to you when figuring out how to react to certain situations. If you respond positively, they are likely to do the same.

Some books that can help you teach your child about pride and confidence include:

- "I Like Me!" by Nancy Carlson
- "I Like Myself" by Karen Beaumont
- "Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon" by Patty Lovell

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