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## Introduction

Children's self esteem reflects the views of the significant figures in their lives—their parents and teachers. As they treat children with respect and allow them to succeed and master skills, the children learn to respect themselves and see themselves as competent, able people. In turn, the children are able to treat others with respect.

Children with good self concepts are able to reach out to the world and interact with it as they grow. Children with high self esteem enjoy life and look forward to success in school and in the future. These secure children have “can do” attitudes and are willing to attempt new, difficult tasks. Children with low self esteem, on the other hand, see themselves as inept and anticipate failure in learning new tasks. These children do not anticipate success in school and in fact are at risk of dropping out.

Children with low self esteem do not obtain gratification from mastering new activities and from healthy interactions but may turn to other substances to bolster their sense of self. The development of self esteem, therefore, is as crucial as the development of basic skills, and is the first section of this book.

The activities in this area encourage children to learn through exploration and direct experience. Encouraged to be independent, the children also will feel the support of teachers and parents working together to help them grow and develop.

Through the activities in this book, children will learn who they are as people, with strengths and weaknesses and likes and dislikes. They will become aware of their feelings and needs, and appropriate ways of expressing them. They will learn to clarify values and make appropriate choices. They will learn to choose alternative courses of action by weighing the consequences of each decision.

The goal of these activities is to prepare children to deal with developmental conflicts in a way that uses their natural creativity and problem solving abilities. Young children need to learn how to realistically assess their strengths and weaknesses, become able to ask for help when it is needed, and act independently when that is the appropriate course of action. Children need to become aware of their emotions and to develop the ability to communicate them. They need to be able to make mistakes and use them as learning experiences.

The achievement of high self esteem depends upon self discovery, self-acceptance, and effective communication with others. Working together, parents and teachers can effectively develop the self esteem of preschool children.

# Self Esteem

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## Activity I: Teacher

**Goal:** To develop the children's self awareness.

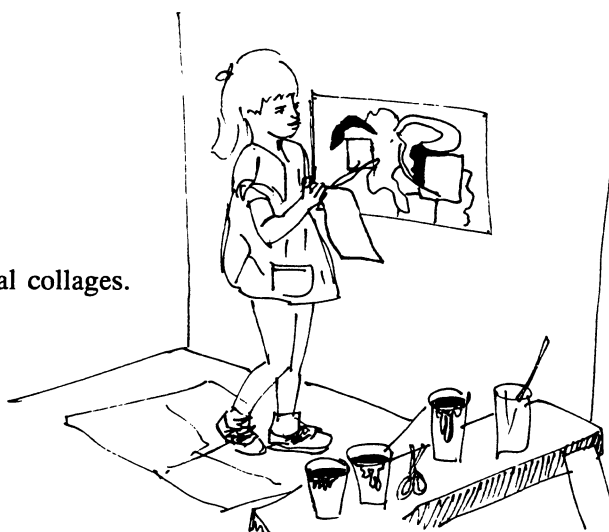
**A. Skills Reinforced:**

1. Observation
2. Critical thinking
3. Vocabulary
4. Verbal expression
5. Organizational skills

**B. Activity:** The children will prepare personal collages.

**C. Materials Needed:**

1. Construction paper
2. Scissors
3. Paste
4. Magazines



**D. Steps:**

1. Ask the children to think about who they are by answering questions about what they like to eat, wear, watch on T.V. etc.
2. Give them scissors and magazines and have them cut out pictures that represent them.
3. Label their posters with their names and post them.
4. Ask each child to explain the poster and why the items on it were selected.
5. Have the children look for things on the posters that are the same for several children and some things that only one child selected.

**E. Follow-up:**

1. Make a collage of your own and share it with the class so that they become aware of the teacher as a person.
2. Using the poster material, make up riddles for the children to solve i.e. "I am the only child who has a snake as a pet. Who am I?"
3. At the end of the day, call the children into a circle and ask them to tell the group the best thing they did in school that day.

## Activity 1: Parent

**Goal:** To increase the child's self awareness.

**A. Skills Reinforced:**

1. Observation
2. Concepts of shape
3. Color names
4. Concepts of size
5. Fine motor skills

**B. Activity:** The child will make and dress a paper doll figure to look like him/herself.

**C. Materials Needed:**

1. Cardboard
2. Crayons
3. Scissors
4. Mirror
5. Construction paper

**D. Steps:**

1. Draw the outline of a large figure and cut it out, helping the child to follow the outline.
2. Place the child in front of a full length mirror and identify the color of his/her eyes, hair, etc.
3. Use the crayons to color the model's facial features to match those of the child.
4. Let the child draw shirts, pants, etc. on the paper.
5. Have the child cut out the different items and use them to dress the figure to look like him/herself.

**E. Follow-up:**

1. Make a "Grow Chart" on which you measure and record the child's height each month.
2. Have the child identify ways in which he/she looks like the other members of the family
3. Have the child identify ways in which he/she looks unlike the other members of the family.

