

10 ways of promoting girls' self-esteem and self-confidence



1. TAKE THE TIME TO UNDERSTAND THE GIRL'S CURRENT PROBLEMS AND NEEDS.

These problems may change. Talk to her about them, without judging, comparing and imposing your vision of femininity and how "it should be". Let no topics, even difficult ones, become taboo.

2. FOCUS ON THE GIRL'S INTELLECT AND SKILLS.

Suggest activities and classes in which she will learn new things, will have the opportunity to demonstrate courage and self-sufficiency, will be responsible for the whole and appreciated for the effort.

3. GIVE HER SIGNALS THAT YOU BELIEVE IN HER AND THAT SHE'LL MANAGE.

The road to achieving a goal isn't always easy and simple. It is filled with various challenges. Your support, but not doing their work for them, can be extremely helpful in maintaining motivation to carry on.

4. APPRECIATE THE SUCCESSES AND ACCOMPANY CALMLY IN FAILURES.

Teach the girl that difficulties and failures are part of learning and the way to success, and that it's worth being persistent in carrying out your plan.

5. GIVE THE GIRL A CHOICE AND SPACE TO EXPRESS HER OPINION.

Let her voice and decisions be carefully heard and respected. Encourage the girl to share her views and knowledge, present her own perspective and come up with her own solutions. Ask for her opinions. Believe what she says.

6. DON'T CRITICISE GIRLS OR WOMEN FOR THEIR APPEARANCE.

And don't talk about yourself and/or your body in an offensive way.

7. SUPPORT, SUGGEST AND ACCOMPANY THE GIRL IN VARIOUS FORMS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

Teach her how to take care of her health and fitness. Don't treat her body as a project, though.

8. ENCOURAGE CRITICAL SCRUTINY OF THE PATTERNS THAT CULTURE OFFERS GIRLS AND WOMEN.

Talk about the consequences of following fashion as well as unhealthy, risky and destructive behaviours related to adapting to patterns.

9. HELP THE GIRL UNDERSTAND WHAT BOUNDARIES ARE, BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL.

Teach her how to create safe boundaries for herself, how to recognise and react assertively in the event of violations of boundaries, and seek help when she experiences harm. Convince her that safety and a life without violence are her rights. Be attentive and alert to all signs of sexual harassment – do not underestimate any signals, believe what the girl says, be on her side, act decisively.

10. SHOW POSITIVE PATTERNS.

Offer girls books, films, meetings with women who are successful in various areas of life, including those that are considered stereotypically "masculine". Give special support to the girl when her interests, activities or behaviour don't fit into the traditional, socially expected gender patterns.

Let her be herself!