

Helping a child experiencing low self-esteem

This leaflet has been created to help school staff support a child experiencing low self-esteem. Working alongside the school's ROAR or Mental Health First Aid Champion, staff will be able to decide on the appropriate action to take.

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is how someone thinks about themselves. Being confident means being comfortable with how they look and how they feel; it means feeling good about themselves, their abilities, and their thoughts.

Low self-esteem is when a child is lacking in confidence, and doubts their own decisions and abilities.

How might a child act?

Children with low self-esteem may have poor eye contact and defensive body-posture. They may be withdrawn and have poor levels of participation in class activities.



A child may engage in negative self-talk, such as, "I'm not good enough" or, "I can't do this".

A child may also frequently show signs of absorbing negative comments from care-givers, such as, "My parent says I'm stupid".

Seven ideas to support a child.

1. Validate the child by focusing on positives and find something to praise the child about, such as being kind or being good at sport, etc.
2. Encourage the child to do more enjoyable activities - things you know the child previously enjoyed.
3. Focus on 'small wins', don't chase big achievements. Do the little things and use them as a springboard. The child should be encouraged to feel proud of even small achievements.
4. Consider a buddy system or nurture group within the class, or the wider school.
5. Use the **Five Ways to Wellbeing** as a tool to support the child, maybe discuss this in the classroom setting and make some goals
6. Explore positive role models and discuss what makes the child feel good about unique differences.
7. Discuss and practise positive body language, encouraging good posture and eye-contact.

If the child is still giving you cause for concern, speak to your ROAR/MHFA member of staff for further advice.

Further information can be found at www.liverpoolcamhs.com/need-advice