

Self-esteem is an important factor in resilience and we need to promote children's resilience in these uncertain times. This issue presents some ideas and resources that may help in our understanding of self-esteem and how to promote positive self-esteem in children and young people.



Ethnic or racial identity (ERI), mental health and self-esteem

Research shows that many children and young people from different ERI backgrounds experience 'micro aggressions' daily. These are seemingly innocuous interactions. For example being ignored or being told 'you talk too loudly'. Such discriminatory experiences are associated with low self-esteem and depression, especially in adolescence. (Smith and Silva, 2011).

NHS

[Raising low self-esteem](#)

A site with lots of resources, especially on children and teenagers' mental health, including:

- What is self-esteem?
- What causes low self-esteem?
- How does low self-esteem affect us?
- How to have healthy self-esteem.

"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."
Helen Keller

[YoungMinds.org.uk](#)

Self-esteem is how we see ourselves. Having a low self-esteem sometimes is normal. So:

- Tackle negative thinking
- Challenge negative feelings
- Focus on the positives

Measuring Self-Esteem in Children and Young People

- The **Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale** is a very popular measure of global self-esteem and is free to [download](#). It is the most popular measure of global self-esteem. Indeed, it is the standard with which developers of other measures usually seek convergence. It is a uni-dimensional scale and is face valid. It contains only 10 Likert type items which contributes to its ease of administration, scoring and interpretation.
- Butler's Self-Image Profiles** are brief self report measures that tap the individual's theory of self. There are 2 forms; one for 7 to 11 year old and one for adolescents aged 12 to 16 years. The *SIP* also provides a measure of Self Esteem, which is calculated by the discrepancy between ratings of 'How I am' and 'How I would like to be'. It can prompt some productive discussions between the teacher and the young person.

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Next start date: September 2021

'Critical Lessons for Future Practice and Policy Concerning Exclusion from School'

9th November 2020, 17.00—18.00
Public Seminar—online with Microsoft Teams

Speakers: Prof. Harry Daniels
Assoc. Prof Ian Thompson

In this presentation Ian and Harry will discuss the ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic may transform practices of exclusion from school.

[Find out more](#)



Self-esteem

From "I am worth it" "I am of value" by Steve Russell

Self-esteem is one of the cornerstones of wellbeing. How a youngster feels about themselves has a powerful influence upon their behaviour, attitudes to learning and relationships. As the new school year starts, schools are very mindful of the importance of supporting pupil wellbeing, not least of all in the light of how Covid has impacted on children and young people.

One useful way to consider self-esteem is the concept of 'strokes'. Strokes are the ways in which we get noticed by others – a smile, a frown, a wave, the words spoken etc. If we think about pupils in our schools, they receive a diet of strokes throughout the school day, from being welcomed into the classroom through to receiving feedback on their work and their behaviour. All of these are ways in which the pupils' intrinsic hunger to be noticed is satisfied.

Strokes can be broken down into the following categories:

CONDITIONAL – pupil is noticed for what they do/don't do	UNCONDITIONAL – pupil is noticed for simply being
Positive: "Well done"; "Thank you for quietening down." Message: APPROVAL	Positive: "We missed you whilst you were off"; "How was your weekend?"; "Great haircut" Message: ACCEPTANCE
Negative: "How many times do I have to tell you to stop talking?" " <u>Stop running</u> " Message: DISAPPROVAL	Negative: "The classroom has been so much quieter while you've been off."

It might be helpful to consider what diet of strokes a particular pupil typically receives during an average day. What are the underlying messages they take away with them as they head home? Predominantly of being accepted and approved of? Or are the strokes skewed towards the negative? In what ways might you adjust the balance of strokes this pupil receives? In what ways could more positive strokes be offered, and fewer negative ones given?

Some practical ideas can be found in the booklet 'I am worth it' which can be accessed in the Resources section of the Members area when you are logged in at www.sebda.org.uk. You will also find more detailed information on self-esteem theory, including how to better understand and respond to those pupils who seem to seek out negative feedback/strokes.

Self-Esteem - Building self-confidence through competencies and life-skills

(Long, R., Hodgins, K. and Curtin-Maggs, S., 2019)

From the series: 'Helpful Handbooks for Parents, Carers and Professionals: Outside The Box Learning Resources.

Does school climate matter ?

Schools with a positive climate report better mental health, higher self-esteem and a stronger connectedness to school (Williams & Cornell, 2006). The more connected children feel towards school then the fewer externalising or internalising disorders are found.

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- Share good practice www.sebda.org
- Have a national voice
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- Receive quarterly issues of the international academic journal 'Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties'

AND.....

Currently SEBDA members can access 5 training videos by Creative Education, 3 of them presented by Dr Pooky Knightsmith. Topics include school avoidance in the context of COVID, grief and cognitive safety.



Useful Websites

Mind: [Self-esteem](#)

KidHealth: [How Can I Improve My Self-Esteem?](#)



The Attachment Research Community

Virtual Conference 24th November 2020

Leading the Attachment and Trauma Aware Setting
Keynotes by: Paul Dix, Professor Barry Carpenter & Kim Golding



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