

Building Self- Confidence with ADHD

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Overview

- Causes of low self-confidence in ADHD
- Signs of low self-confidence
- Impacts of low self-confidence
- Ways to improve self-confidence
 - Changing mindset
 - Recognizing and channeling strengths
 - Shift from problem-focused to solution-focused approach
 - Strategies for building positivity

Causes of Low Self-Confidence

- School often does not play to their strengths and emphasizes their weaknesses
- Kids with ADHD tend to receive more negative feedback than their peers
- They may experience social rejection
- They may feel embarrassed or frustrated with themselves

Signs of Low Self-Confidence

- Negative self-talk
- Overly sensitive to criticism
- Minimizing accomplishments/not accepting praise
- Negative comparisons to others
- Avoidign responsibility/shifting blame
- Apathy or disinterest in activities
- Acting out

Impacts of Low Self-Confidence

- Leads to
 - Negative beliefs about their ability to be successful
 - Procrastination
 - Avoiding trying new things
 - Poor effort
 - Fixed mindset

Fixed Mindset vs. Growth Mindset

Fixed Mindset

- Mistakes mean “I’m not smart/not good at something”
- Avoids challenges
- Gives up quickly
- Shuts down when receives criticism or constructive feedback

Growth Mindset

- Mistakes are an opportunity to grow and learn
- Challenges mean “I’m getting better at something”
- Persists when things are difficult
- Constructive feedback helps me learn

How to Change: Fixed Mindset to Growth Mindset

- You and your child **both** have to believe that change is possible – problems or weaknesses are not set in stone.
- Add the word “yet.” (e.g., “I’m not good at this **yet.**” “I can’t do this **yet.**”)
- Praise effort, not outcome

How to Shift from Fixed to Growth Mindset

Change...

- I can't do anything right
- I'm a bad kid
- I'm stupid
- I'll never get this
- This is too hard



To...

- Everyone makes mistakes
- I made a poor choice
- I'm still learning how to do this
- If I keep trying, I'll figure it out
- This is hard, but I can keep working until I get it.

Recognize & Harness Your Child's Strengths

- While the symptoms of ADHD can cause problems for you and your child, they can also be reframed as strengths.
 - Daydreaming, distractible = Imaginative, creative
 - Non-linear thinking = Flexibility
 - Hyperactive = Energetic
 - Impatient = Fast-moving brain
 - Impulsive = Intuitive

Recognizing Your Child's Strengths

- Kids with ADHD are able to focus well when they are interested and stimulated
- They learn best by engaging their senses and being active in their learning
- Helping your child ask for help, use available tools, and advocate for themselves

From Problem- to a Solution- Focused Approach

- Allow failures and mistakes – don't overprotect
 - Protecting kids from failure or mistakes deprives them of the opportunity to learn and solve a problem on their own
 - It also indirectly gives kids the message that you don't think they are capable of handling things on their own
- Don't rush in to fix a problem for them
 - Allow them the opportunity to correct it on their own

From Problem- to a Solution- Focused Approach (cont.)

- Shift your view from correcting a problem to working towards a goal
- Help the child to recognize benefits to change that area of value to them
- Rather than criticizing, correcting and punishing (problem-focuses), help your child identify solutions
 - Look at situations in which they were more successful and determine what is different
 - Acknowledge what is working well
 - Help them think about how they can use their strengths to help them improve a weakness or fix a problem
 - Help them identify one small change they can make that moves them in the direction of the goal

Parenting Strategies

- To build positivity and encourage growth mindset:
 - Listen to your child's perspective on their problem
 - Help your child identify goals rather than imposing your own
 - Identify and be aware of your own triggers
 - Be aware of your own emotions
 - Reframe your thinking
 - Avoid labels
- Use scaffolding to set your kids up for success
 - Make sure expectations are realistic
 - Make sure you are meeting them where they actually are, not where you expect them to be
 - Start where they are and stretch them to the next step

Parenting Strategies (cont.)

- To build positivity and encourage growth mindset:
 - Be proactive about noticing and pointing out the positive (and the absence of the negative!)
 - Be specific rather than vague
 - Help your child notice what was different about the times that worked
 - Set aside time for connection and engaging with your child in areas of interest/strengths

“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.

-Albert Einstein