



Rifka Schonfeld **STRATEGIES**

THE NEWSLETTER FOR OPTIMUM SUCCESS

TIPS ON SOCIAL SKILLS FOR ADULTS & CHILDREN

FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF!

Dear Readers,

We can all use a self-esteem boost from time to time!

This week's newsletter includes a question and answer about helping to boost the self-esteem of those close to us.



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Rifka Schonfeld

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QUESTION:

Everywhere I look, I read about how

important it is for my children to have healthy self-esteem.

Overall, I think most of my children are pretty confident and comfortable in their own skin. I do have one daughter with dyslexia who always seems to feel stupid around her siblings. I try telling her that she is wonderful and smart, but she just brushes me off. IS THERE SOME WAY THAT I CAN HELP BOOST HER SELF-ESTEEM?

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ANSWER:

Research shows that children with learning disabilities (LD), like dyslexia, are more likely to suffer from low-self esteem than their peers. The Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities has compiled a list of ways that parents can help children with LD gain self-esteem:

- **Special Time.** Set aside designated time with your child to explore her interests. This time need not be daily, but if possible, should happen at the same time weekly. This special time will give her the message that you value her and enjoy your time together. In addition, you will be participating in an activity that she enjoys.
- **Develop Problem-Solving Skills.** Not everyone automatically knows what to do when they encounter a problem. If your child is having trouble with a friend or cannot figure out a math question, talk to her about the ways she can approach the problem. Ask her to suggest multiple paths to get to a plausible conclusion. This will give her confidence when she encounters a similar problem in the future.
- **Practice Empathy.** Raising children with different needs can sometimes be frustrating. You might find yourself telling your daughter, "Why don't you listen to me?" Or, "Just think about it! You'll understand." Chances are that most of the time, your daughter is trying her best to listen and understand. Instead, try to place yourself in her shoes and say, "I know you are trying to listen and that sometimes that is difficult. Let's try that again." When you practice empathy, she will be more likely to think kindly of herself.
- **Highlight Strengths.** While learning disabilities often come with multiple disadvantages, often they have some benefits too. Children with dyslexia are often more creative and artistic than their peers. Consider signing your daughter up for art or drama classes. Doing something that she is good at can boost her self-esteem tremendously and provide her with an opportunity to make like-minded friends.
- **Provide Opportunities for Your Child to Help.** When people help others, they automatically feel competent and confident. Provide your daughter with plenty of opportunities to help others. Volunteering outside of the home is just one avenue, but even helping siblings at home can be great encouragement. She can teach a younger sibling to tie his shoe or help an older sibling braid her hair. Alternatively, you can teach her to bake her favorite cake and then she can bake it for *shabbos*. Regardless of the task, if your daughter feels that she is making a contribution to society or the family, she will gain self-confidence.

The hard part about self-esteem is that it comes from within, but with a few small steps, your daughter can start to feel like the wonderful girl you already know she is.

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Rifka Schonfeld Presents

Dr. Ross Greene
Ph.D.

RETHINKING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

OF
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TUESDAY
NOV. 14. 2017
8:30AM-4:30PM