




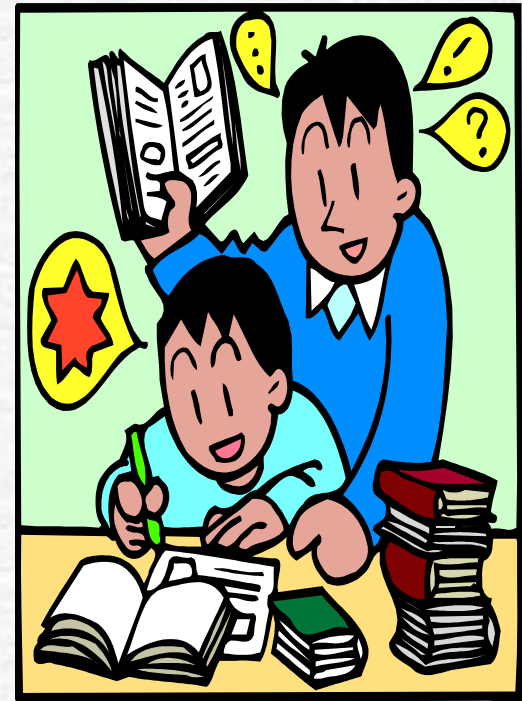
The Road to Independence: Tips for Parenting the Upper Elementary Student

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Goals of Presentation

- Understanding Changes in Your Child
- Fostering Independence
- Friendships
- Increasing Self Esteem



Self-Concept

- ✓ Shift from external characteristics to internal characteristics
 - "I am smart"
- ✓ Define self as part of a social group
 - "I am a Boy Scout"
- ✓ Compares self to others
 - "I can run faster than Sally"
- ✓ These shifts in self-concept helps one see themselves as an individual

Perspective Taking

- Begins at ages 8 to 10.
- Ability to understand another person's perspective, their thoughts, and their feelings
- Understand needs of their friends
- Improves communication with friends

Cognitive Changes

- Conservation and classification
- Long-term memory improves
- Scientific Reasoning improves
- More analytic and logical in approach to words and grammar.



Increase in Independence

- ☞ Choosing own clothes/style
- ☞ Increase time with friends
- ☞ Sports and outside activities
- ☞ Wanting to try new activities
- ☞ New responsibilities
 - Eager to try new tasks (cooking)



Friendships

- ☞ One of the most important missions of middle childhood
- ☞ Developmentally, school-age children are ready to form more complex relationships.
 - Increase ability to communicate
 - Understand other's perspectives
 - Comprehend the past, present, future



What are Friends For?

- Children learn the give and take of social behavior.
- They learn how to set up rules, how to weigh alternatives and make decisions when faced with dilemmas.
- Learn different ways of relating to others.



What are Friends For?

- Necessity for healthy psychological development
- Research shows that children with friends have a greater sense of well-being, better self-esteem and fewer social problems as adults
- Children with friendship problems are more likely to feel lonely, to be victimized by peers, to have problems adjusting to school, and to engage in deviant behaviors

Friendships

- ☛ Choose friends who are similar to themselves and who share their interests
- ☛ In the early elementary school years, friends are almost always of the same sex.
- ☛ During the latter years of middle childhood, however, girls and boys begin to spend a little more time together.
- ☛ Group-Oriented Play increases

Encouraging Friendships

- ✓ Let your child know that you feel friendships are important and worth the effort.
- ✓ Respect your child's social style.
- ✓ Find practical ways you can help your child make room for friendships.
 - Be flexible about family schedules so that your child can find time to be with friends.
 - You might also make arrangements for your family to spend time with another family that has a similar-age child.
 - You can invite somebody to go to the pool with us on Saturday?"

Arguments and Friends

- Listen and accept your child's feelings no matter what they may be.
- Examine your own feelings. Get more information about the conflict.
- Decide whether and to what degree you should get involved.
- Make plans and try out several solutions together



Helping a Shy Child

- ☛ Remind her/him there's no rush, that she/he has control over what she does or does not do.
- ☛ Don't push to interact before he/she's ready or compare her/him negatively to a more outgoing child.
- ☛ Do not belittle their fears.
- ☛ Try to not label as shy; this sets up expectations for behavior and the label may stick.



LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Self Esteem

- ✓ Self-esteem is the way in which an individual perceives themselves.
- ✓ Self-Esteem is shaped by
 - Child's perceptions and expectations
 - Perception and expectations of those close to the child
 - PARENTS
 - TEACHERS
 - FRIENDS
- ✓ The closer her perceived self is to her ideal self, the higher the self-esteem

Why is Self Esteem Important

- ☞ Child's motivation and achievements in many areas:
 - School
 - Athletics
 - Social
- ☞ Resiliency
- ☞ It influences chances of becoming involved in drug or alcohol abuse and vulnerability to unhealthy or negative peer pressure.

Self-Esteem Stats

- When elementary school boys were asked how often they felt "happy the way I am", 67% said always, by high school it fell to 46%.
- For girls the figures dropped from 60% to 29%.



Self Esteem & Body Image

- 42% of 1st-3rd grade girls want to be thinner
- 81% of 10 year olds are afraid of being fat
- 46% of 9-11 year-olds are “sometimes” or “very often” on diets

Helping Your Child's Self Esteem

- ✔ A sense of trust.
- ✔ A sense of responsibility. A sense of contribution.
- ✔ A sense of making real choices and decisions.
- ✔ A sense of self-discipline and self-control.
- ✔ A sense of accepting mistakes and failure.
- ✔ A sense of purpose.
- ✔ A sense of personal competence and pride
- ✔ A sense of encouragement, support and reward.



Questions????



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