

# What is self-esteem?

17

Time \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (15 mins)

- Equipment needed**
- Parent Handbook
  - PowerPoint slides 2.3 to 2.5

## Talk about

Self-esteem is the way we feel about ourselves deep inside.

The self-esteem of children with special needs is fragile and easily damaged.

It's important to keep in mind that they are children first, and their special needs come second.

They need at least one person to believe in them and give them encouragement.

**Children who feel LOVED and COMPETENT are more likely to achieve their full potential than those who don't.**

Self-esteem is an important issue for adults too. If we feel OK about ourselves – accepting both our strengths and our weaknesses – we can cope better with life's challenges.

## Boosting your child's self-esteem

What can you do to boost your child's self-esteem?

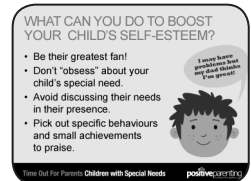
Write suggestions down on a flip chart.

If parents are struggling to come up with ideas, ask them to turn to page 18 of their handbook.

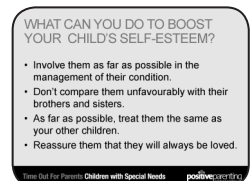
- Be their greatest fan!
- Don't "obsess" about your child's special need, always going on about it.
- Avoid discussing their needs in their presence.
- Pick out specific behaviours and small achievements to praise.
- Involve them as far as possible in the management of their condition.
- Don't compare them unfavourably with their brothers and sisters.
- As far as possible, treat them the same as your other children.
- Reassure them that they will always be loved.



Slide 2.3



Slide 2.4



Slide 2.5

# Handling other people's comments



Time \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (15 mins)

**Equipment needed**

- Parent Handbook
- PowerPoint slides 3.6a to 3.8
- Film clip 3.1 – Living with disabled children



Slide 3.6a

Play film clip 3.1 – Living with disabled children



**Note:** This clip also includes subject matter covered in later sessions. This video clip has been used with the permission of Parentchannel TV and can only be used in conjunction with the Time Out for Parents – Children with Special Needs. Any other use is prohibited without prior permission from Parentchannel TV.

## Talk about

Sometimes people make unhelpful comments like, “What that child needs is a jolly good ...” or they might stare and look embarrassed.

One mum said she was staggered by the things people said, like “Oh well, at least he isn’t Downs” or “There are people much worse off than you!”

How do you cope with people’s comments about your child or their behaviour?

Develop some “stock phrases” to use in difficult situations, such as:

“My son has a condition which makes it hard for him to sit still for long.”

“Michael was born with a cleft palate and he’s just had an operation. How are things with you?”

In a shop you might say, “My child has special needs. Can we do this (e.g. choosing new shoes) quickly please?”



Slide 3.6b