

ParentBrief



Baking the cake of confidence

This blog is about teaching our kids' confidence. "Oh no", I hear you say, "...I am not sure you can teach a child to be confident - wither she is or is not." Well, OK then, how about if I said that building confidence in your child is a bit like baking a cake (savoury of course!). Yes, you read correctly. Confidence building and cake baking have a lot in common. Cake baking requires a number of ingredients and they're not all the same and probably won't be added simultaneously or in equal quantity. The rising process is going to take a while (could sink a bit in the middle depending on the heat of the life oven) but it will rise again and at the end of the day you will have a prize-winning cake, the sum of all its parts.

Like cake baking, confidence building requires different ingredients (conversations, ways to think, examples and acknowledgment), and they're all needed to unlock a child's potential and get them to rise above anything life can deliver...

What is confidence?

Confidence is essentially feeling good in your own skin. It's about not being overly concerned with what others think if you make a mistake. Confidence shows itself when kids are not afraid to fail and are happy to meet someone new. Confidence involves kids having trust in themselves and believing that they will probably be successful in the end. Confident kids stand up straight, look people in the eye, and speak clearly and with a firm tone of voice.

Confidence is also a also a way of thinking that involves being optimistic, not being afraid to make mistakes, not worrying too much what others think of you when your work isn't perfect and, most importantly, accepting yourself when you haven't achieved what you've set out to learn.

Teaching confidence

As parents, we are best placed to teach our kids what it means to be confident, behaviours they can practise, thinking strategies they can employ and acknowledging when they show confident behaviour.

Have conversations with kids about what it means to be confident:

- Don't be afraid to make mistakes.
- Don't worry too much about what people are thinking about you when you have a go. Be positive. That will help you to be confident.
- Confidence means believing in yourself.
- Remember to stand up straight, look people in the eye, use a clear voice.

Describe examples of confident behaviours to practise

- Putting your hand up when your teacher asks a question and you think you know the answer.
- Trying hard work first without asking your teacher for help.
- Asking your teacher for help when you are having difficulty.
- Trying different things that are hard to do like playing a musical instrument or trying out for a team.
- Talking to someone new.
- Sharing ideas with your family, friends or in class.
- Starting a conversation.

Discuss ways to think that will help a child to be confident

- Remember, you are not a 'D' person when you get a 'D.'
- Don't put yourself down because someone wasn't nice to you. You still have many good points. (Accepting Myself Thinking)
- Making mistakes is a natural part of learning. (Taking Risks Thinking)
- While it's nice to be liked by others, it's not the worst thing in the world if someone does not want to spend time with you or is mean to you. (Being Independent Thinking)
- It's important that you be yourself and make your own decisions. If people do not approve, it's not the end of the world. (Being Independent Thinking)
- Have a positive attitude and think, "I can do this. I'm more likely to be successful than to fail." (I Can Do It Thinking)

Say and acknowledge a child's confidence

- That took confidence.
- That wasn't easy to do but you did it.
- You are not afraid to take risks.
- You had a confident voice when you spoke.
- You confidently stood up for what you believed.
- You were not afraid to make a mistake.
- Predicting success helps you to be successful.
- You have a confident approach to your work.
- You did not get too upset with yourself for not achieving a good result.
- You looked confident.

The right ingredients make the best cakes. Kids love being in the kitchen so make the most of baking together.