



Tips on

How to Make Every Child Feel Valued

Here are some things you can do to help children develop self-confidence, social and problem solving skills and an appreciation for diversity.

★ Self Confidence

Nothing builds children's sense of pride more than hearing good things about themselves from you on a regular basis. It is important to praise and encourage children and let them know how special and loved they are.

- **Talk to children about the origin of their names**, and help them learn about their culture and heritage. Ask family members to explain why they chose each child's name and what it means to them. Encourage families to talk about their family name and its connection to the family's history and traditions.
- **Make a list with each child of the things they can do**, such as writing their name, getting dressed by themselves or tying their shoes. Display this list and add to it as children master new skills.
- **Help children create family albums using photos** and/or drawings of family members. With the help of family members, add stories and some special facts about each person. Let children share their albums with one another and take home their albums to share with family members and friends.

★ Appreciating Differences

Help your children appreciate others by giving them positive messages about the differences between us. Let your children know that people are different in many ways (age, size, gender, culture, religion, families, physical abilities, personalities) and also share many things in common (eyes, ears, arms, legs, feelings, etc.).

- **Borrow and read books to children about the different foods** people eat. Take children to the supermarket and look for foods that are from other cultures. Make a special meal together that includes some of the new foods you found during your supermarket visit.
- **Take children to events that celebrate the traditions**, music, dance art and/or food of diverse cultures. Check your newspaper for listings.

★ Social Skills

One of the greatest gifts you can give to your children is to help them develop the social skills they will need to get along with others. Children need these skills to help them feel accepted, confident, and valued.

- **Play follow-the-leader**. You can be the leader first and then switch roles. Talk about the different roles of a leader and follower and why it is important to take turns.
- **Talk with children about different kinds of feelings**. Share what makes each of you happy, sad, etc. You could also encourage children to draw or cut pictures out of a magazine that show different emotions. Take turns acting them out for each other.
- **Encourage children to play their favorite board games** with friends and family members.

★ Problem Solving and Decision Making

We often make decisions and solve problems for our children to prevent them from making mistakes. But an important part of helping children make good decisions is letting them make reasonable choices during your daily routine.

- **Give children opportunities to make choices**. For example, ask your children if they would like juice or milk with their meal, or whether during free play they would like to play in the block area or the book area.
- **Ask children to help you decide what items you will need** to prepare a meal and to set the table.
- **Place several familiar objects** (crayon, block, spoon, orange, etc.) in a bag. Ask children to close their eyes and reach for one of the objects. Can they guess what it is? How do they know?

To learn more, watch *A Place of Our Own* on your local public television stations and visit the website at www.aplaceofourown.org.



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