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## South Maple Elementary Mrs. Somerville's News, School Social Worker

### Ways to Build Your Child's Self-Esteem

Having self-esteem means feeling good about yourself. It lets children be enthusiastic, show interest in others, and feel confident and capable about things they do well. Self-esteem is an important ingredient of success at home and at school, and of a happy, productive life. Here are ways you can help build your child's self-esteem.

#### 1. MY FAVORITE SHIRT

Young children gain pride and self-respect when they are trusted to make real choices that affect their lives. Consider allowing your child to choose clothes to wear each day.

#### 2. GOOD JOB!

Give your child chores to do all alone, such as setting the table or watering plants. Let him or her know these are important tasks. Praise all efforts made at home and school. Avoid correcting less-than-perfect results.

#### 3. TIME FOR GOODBYES

When saying goodbye, children like to know what to expect—it helps them feel confident and in control. Try creating special goodbye traditions or rituals together. Maybe you give a hug and wave at each other

through a window, or do a secret handshake. What you do isn't as important as the special feelings it brings to both of you.

#### 4. KEEP IN TOUCH

There are many ways to let your child know you think of him or her during the day. Visit the school on a special occasion or volunteer to help in the classroom. Surprise your child with a special lunch date. Or send a special love note in their backpack or lunch box.

#### 5. BUILDING INTERESTS

Talk to your child's teachers about what he or she is doing at school. Ask about friends, activities, and experiences that make him or her proud. Then support your child's interests at home. You might say "Your teacher tells me you have a friend you play with at school, would you like to invite him/her over to play?" Or, "Your teacher tells me you are really enjoying your science class, would you like to go to the science museum this weekend?"

#### 6. LET'S PLAY!

Join your child in playing and exploring the world. Get down on the floor and let him or her determine what and how you'll

play. Expand his or her thinking by asking open-ended questions such as "What do you think will happen if I put this block on top?" When possible, involve your child in your activities. Perhaps he or she can exercise with you. Or read a book when you are reading the paper or paying bills.

#### 7. MATCHING RHYTHMS

Watch your child carefully to discover his or her pace. If he or she walks slowly, try to reduce your own speed. If he/she gets hungry often, bring a few snacks when you go out for the day.

#### 8. DINNER FOR TWO

Plan a dinner date for just the two (or three) of you, without brothers or sisters. Together, choose a restaurant to visit or a recipe to cook, and put on your favorite outfits. During dinner, ask questions and listen as your child talks about what's on his or her mind. Be sure to let your child know how much you value your special time together.

#### 9. STORYTELLING

Once in a while, put down the book and share one of your childhood memories with your child. It's fun and comforting for your child to imagine you at his or her age, with the same hopes and fears he or she may be experiencing.

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#### Special points of interest:

© Mrs. Somerville's lessons this month will focus on family and responsibility.

To put the world right in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order we must first put the family in order; to put the family in order we must first cultivate our personal life; we must first set our hearts right.

~Confucius

