How To Build Self Esteem In Your Child Through Martial Arts

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Self-esteem is the way we feel and think about ourselves. Webster’s dictionary defines it as “a confidant and satisfaction in oneself... belief in oneself (and) self respect”. Self Esteem affects everything we do in our lives. Healthy self-esteem promotes a positive “Yes I Can” attitude as opposed to defeatist attitude of “No I Can’t”. Nowhere is this concept more important than in life of a young child. Children begin life helpless and dependent on their caregivers. In order to grow up to be happy and productive, they cannot not stay that way. They must learn that they have a degree of control over their environment, and eventually, that they have more and more control over their lives. They have to learn to have an attitude conducive to successful interaction with everything and everyone around them. They must learn to believe in their own abilities and to perceive the world in a positive light. Unfortunately, too many children today worry about failure. They doubt their strengths, feel insecure, unfocused, are overly critical of themselves, and often don’t believe that they can achieve the best in life if they put themselves to the task. Poor Self-esteem ends up negatively affecting everything they think, say, or do. One the other hand, children who feel good about them produce positive results. Helping your children grow up with strong character and self-esteem is arguably the most important task of parenthood. The child with good self esteem has the best chance of becoming a successful and happy adult. Fortunately, self-esteem can dramatically improve in a child who, with the guidance and encouragement of his parents, commits themselves to the task of personal development.

Respected Role Models
Self-esteem is the armor that helps protect kids from the demons of life: alcohol, gangs, drugs, and destructive behavior. There are several things parents can do to instill and nurture a sense of self-esteem in their child. First, the parents themselves need to feel good about themselves, for children pick up on subtle messages about their own self worth from your body language and the way you talk about yourself. If you are often openly self critical in front of a child, they will learn to be self-critical. Because parents have preeminent importance in a child’s life, and children model after their parents. By clearly demonstrating your own self worth, children will respect you and will
learn to respect themselves.

**Giving the Child Attention**

An important way you can teach your child their own value is by listening to them. When you listen to someone and give them your full attention, you in effect are telling them that you value them and what they have to say, and that they are important to you. Allow your child to express how they feel, and let your child finish what they are saying before offering your point of view. The child will learn by example to listen to others the same way you listen to them.

**Discipline**

Another important factor contributing to a child’s self esteem is discipline. Discipline can be described as any instruction or training that corrects or molds a person’s mental faculties and moral character. Children raised without discipline have lower self-esteem and tend to be more dependent, achieve less, and feel that they have less control over their world. Proper discipline can be the means of creating a safe, supportive environment where learning can take place. Discipline begins with a good relationship between the parent and child, in which the child knows exactly what is expected of him, and knows that the consequences of misbehaving are reasonable and predictable. Children need and want to know what is expected of them. They thrive on the image of themselves achieving that expectation. They anticipate the approval they will receive. It is this expectation and approval that motivates a child to learn to read or to learn multiplication tables. And not only does approval motivate a child, it also gives him something to take along with him: A sense of being worthy.

**Responsibility**

Responsibility is the next key ingredient to healthy self-esteem. It is a great boot to self esteem to feel that a person can contribute, that and the contribution is important. Added responsibility increases the confidence a child has in their ability to make it in the world. Responsibility requires goal setting, and sets the foundation for the achievement of goals, which feels good.

**Recognition**

Parents should note their child’s abilities, talents, skills, interests, and find occasion to frequently praise your child. Give your child the opportunity to show their ability. Display the work your child has done, such as paintings, stories, and trophies. Doing this will reinforce your child’s positive behavior. Make sure that the praise is honest. For example, if your child did well recently on a math test, but usually in the middle of the grade curve, don’t tell him he is the best math student in their class; do tell him how proud you are of how well their did on the test. Kids are more perceptive than we adults sometimes give them credit for. In giving your child honest praise, they will learn to value their talents and see themselves as a capable person. By seeing your child in a
positive way, they will also learn to see themselves in a positive way. Even when a child is struggling with one or more areas in life, if they have confidence in themselves, they can still feel OK in spite of the difficulty. They know they have talents and that they should take pride in these and gain strength from them.

Promoting Feelings of Success

Finally, promote feelings of confidence and success. When a child learns something new or faces a challenge and succeeds, their self-esteem grows. Provide the conditions that will encourage your child to try new experiences. Make sure your child knows what to expect out of the experience. Let them practice skills that will help them in the endeavor. Have patience with them, and allow them to proceed at their own pace in anything new. Pressure to perform before a child is ready makes them feel intimidated. Let the child know it's OK to fail, as long as they try their very best, and let them know that with most things, "if at first you don’t succeed, try, try again."

What does Kriegisch Martial Arts School have to do with Self Esteem?

The Lesson of Respect

One of the early lessons that your child will learn at our school is that of respect. The child is taught to respect the instructors as well as the other students, the school and themselves. They learn that even opponents preparing to engage in combat can respect each other. Having good role models is important in the development of a child. Martial Arts training starts as a relationship between the child and the instructor, a respected adult role model, who lets the child, know exactly what is expected of them. Children strive to meet the expectations that people they look up to have for them. When a child accomplishes these expectations they feel capable and valuable nurturing their self esteem.

Communication and Attention

At Kriegisch Martial Arts School our instructor’s job includes communicating with the students on their progress. The instructors spends time focusing on the individual needs of each student so that individual progress is made. In addition, Kriegisch Martial Arts School is a wonderful place for your child to meet new friends with similar interests. It is a great environment in which children can practice communication and social skills.

Discipline

In martial arts training, discipline is also an important ingredient. It takes discipline to consistently focus on improving one’s skill. It takes discipline to concentrate on the work. Martial arts focus on the positive action and the accomplishments of mental as well as physical feats. It is the philosophy of
martial arts that both the body and the mind must be disciplined in order to overcome the obstacles that hinder one’s growth. Discipline is essential to developing healthy self-esteem. Another benefit that comes from this discipline approach is the ability to concentrate on achieving a goal. This increased concentration carries over into other areas of the child’s life, including higher performance in schoolwork and team sports.

**Responsibilities**

In addition, as a child gains in rank in our school system, other students begin to look to them for guidance. They learn to feel confident in their abilities. They learn to effectively communicate what they know to others and make new friends. Although mastering the martial arts can be fun and rewarding, it is not easy. The martial arts require much preparation and practice. This value of preparation and practice instills a sense of responsibility in a child, although martial arts training takes place in a team atmosphere. It is essentially a sport of individual accomplishments. The student strives to improve their skill for their own benefit, and this reinforces the idea that they are important and a valuable person. The martial arts student is taught to identify their unique strengths, and take pride in them. One important side effect of responsibility is the realization that ultimately the individual alone makes the difference in how well they do in an endeavor. A sense of responsibility adds to the self-esteem of a child because they realize that they are in control of their own behavior, that they can make a difference, and that the achievement of goals is possible when they apply themselves to them. At Kriegisch Martial Arts School, students take on many responsibilities. They are responsible for their own accomplishments, for showing up for practice on time, for eating right and taking care of their bodies, for their treatment of other students, and for picking up after themselves. When the child moves up in rank and earns the honor of the next belt, they learn the valuable lesson that responsibility feels good! The belt is sign of how much the student has advanced and how much hard work they have committed to the goal of moving forward in the art. It is a sign respected by other students in the school. It is a proven positive reinforcement.

**Recognition and Praise**

The need for approval and recognition form others is very important, especially for children. The job of our school instructors is to let the child know what is expected, and encourage the child with the knowledge that, although the goal of reaching the next belt level will require work and effort, it is attainable. The martial arts instructor is trained to effectively teach the art be rewarding students with the attention and recognition they need when they have accomplished a goal. Reinforcing positive behavior is essential for the proper development of both a child’s positive behavior and self-esteem. The martial arts incorporate positive reinforcements into a program of self improvement based on a system of structured goals. The student learns to have confidence in themselves, to praise themselves, and to value their own efforts and talents. One of the more obvious benefits that come from practicing the martial arts is
the development of a healthy body and mind. Children who learn the martial arts gain improved agility, balance, coordination and reflexes. And this translates into better performance in team sports. Sometimes children who before might have been passed over when it was time to choose teammates in baseball game are now the first round draft picks. Our students more often than not see improvements in their grades at school and in the quality of their schoolwork. This provides the child with yet another area in which they can be proud of themselves.

**Success**

The true armor that Kriegisch Martial Arts School gives to a person is the strength of self-esteem. Strong values make the child a stronger person. In the martial arts they learn respect for others. They learn to avoid dangerous situations, yet feel confident in their ability to defend themselves. They feel proud of their success in the studio, on the field, and in the classroom. They learn to think positively, to have belief in their abilities, and look forward to new challenges. Training at Kriegisch Martial Arts School provides the focus on goals, the methods to achieve them, the patience of learning skills one step at a time, and the positive reinforcement kids need. Our school can build your child’s self esteem, step by step, by improving their physical and mental abilities, teaching them discipline and responsibility, improving their social skills, and instilling deep rooted confidence in their own abilities. As parents, you want the best for your children. You want them to grow up to be good people, successful and happy. You want them to feel about themselves. You want them to recognize their strengths, use their talents, and believe in their own ability to achieve what they want. When a child can take pride in their actions and what they can accomplish, they gain a sense of direction and purpose, increased confidence, and improved feelings of self-esteem. Our unique personal development curriculum and training is a structured, time proven way to achieve all of those benefits. Your child will enjoy the training that instills these, and the values they learn now will be the ones they carry with them for the rest of their life!

Stop by our school today and ask us to “Arm your Child with Self-Esteem!”
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Self Esteem Checklist

__Does your child have a sense of security; coming from well-defined and fairly enforced limits, and a loving environment?
__Does your child have a sense of being unique, talented, and having potential in a certain area?
__Does your child have a sense of belonging (To the family, church, school, or group)?
__Does your child have a sense of focus and purpose?
__Does your child know the power of responsibility, goal setting and achievement?
__Does your child respect others and themselves?
__Does your child have the independence and confidence necessary to make achievements on their own?
__Does your child know that you are there to support them when they need you?
__Does your child know it’s OK to fail, as long as they did their best?