



20 Tips to Promote Positive Self-Esteem

By Richard D. Lavoie, M.A., M.Ed.

A dynamic relationship exists between self-esteem and skill development. As a child improves in self-esteem, his academic competence increases. And as that competence increases, his self-esteem improves. The caring and concerned caregiver must come to realize that positive self-esteem is both a prerequisite and a consequence of academic success. Here are 20 tips to help foster a child's self-esteem:

1. Value each child as an individual with unique strengths, needs, interests and skills.
2. Focus on the child's strengths. Emphasize and celebrate his "islands of competence."
3. Reject the child's behavior, but never reject the child. Use affectionate terms and nicknames when scolding ("Your room is a mess, honey. Now turn off the TV and make your bed.").
4. Remember that sincere interest can be more effective and meaningful than praise. Demonstrate a genuine interest in her activities, hobbies, etc.
5. Establish realistic, achievable goals for your child. Anticipate success.
6. Avoid using sarcasm with kids - children with language problems often misinterpret it.
7. When discussing an issue or a problem, avoid bringing up past difficulties.
8. Never compare one child to another.
9. Help the child develop decision-making and problem-solving skills.



10. Understand that mistakes are an inevitable (and valuable!) part of any learning experience. Use these as an opportunity to teach and assist.
11. Divide large tasks into smaller, manageable ones. This will ensure success, mastery, and retention.

12. Maintain a file of his academic work. Use this to demonstrate his progress and development when he is feeling down.
13. Encourage him to maintain "collections" (e.g., baseball cards, stamps, rocks, etc.). This allows him to be the resident expert on a topic.
14. If she does not participate in team sports, promote individual sports (e.g., skiing, golf, swimming). This will provide opportunities for success, exercise, and peer interaction.
15. Communicate your confidence in the child **and** in her future.
16. Permit and encourage the child to follow the normal fads of his peer group (e.g., clothing, music). This will enhance his acceptance at school and in the community.
17. Emphasize the positive aspects of her behavior or performance, even if the task was not completely successful. Reward direction, not perfection.
18. Anticipate that the child will have plateaus, failures, backslides, setbacks, and regressions. Support and encourage him at these times. Kids need love most when they deserve it least!
19. Look for opportunities to offer him choices to allow him to practice decision-making skills.
20. Never, ever, communicate disappointment to your child. The disappointment of an adult may be too great a burden for a child to carry.

Remember:

- Your child's self-esteem will be determined by the conditional acceptance that he receives from others - and the unconditional acceptance that he receives from you and
- Your child's self-esteem will be determined by success and progress in four areas:
 - Social (acceptance, friendships)
 - Competence (in a skill area)
 - Physical (clothing, attractiveness)
 - Character (effort, generosity, etc.)

Emphasize, recognize and reinforce all four areas!

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Easter Seals' Assistive Technology Center

This article can be viewed on the Easter Seals Iowa website: www.eastersealsia.org. Click on *Services* on the left side of the home page, and then click on *Assistive Technology Center*.

Demonstration Center

The Demonstration Center showcases different types of assistive technology and other equipment individuals may use to make their home more accessible.

The Demonstration Center requires appointments for groups of three or more. The Demonstration Center is located at Easter Seals Camp Sunnyside, 401 NE 66th Avenue, Des Moines, IA. Appointments can be made by calling 515-309-2395 (phone) or 515-289-4069 (TDD).

Autism Lending Library

The Autism Resource Lending Center allows families, individuals, counselors, and schools to check out up to five pieces of equipment for up to thirty days to find out if it will work for them before deciding to purchase from the vendors. Visit the website to see what is available for check out through the Easter Seals Iowa's Autism Lending Library. The catalog is in Word format. Click on the link to see Sensory Items or the one to see Daily Living Items.

New items will continually be added so please check back monthly to see new additions. All items are available for rent. Each family can check out up to five items at one time.

Equipment Loan

For those in need of medical equipment but cannot afford it, or might not have ready access to it, Easter Seals Iowa provides a valuable resource for those in need of durable medical equipment but might not be able to afford it or who might not have access to it. We loan durable medical equipment at a nominal fee to individuals with disabilities or illness.

The durable medical equipment (such as walker, wheelchair, shower bench, etc.) is loaned to the individual in need or to a visiting relative or friend who might require the equipment for a short time. A person with a chronic medical condition may borrow the equipment for an unlimited length of time. A medical prescription, nominal fee, and transportation to pick up and return the equipment are required. Access of durable medical equipment is based on availability in our inventory.

The available equipment includes electric hospital beds, electric and manual wheelchairs, bath chairs, and other adaptive home healthcare devices. A physician's approval is required to assure that the equipment is being used for the most urgent need. Equipment can be shipped statewide for a small charge.

Having the proper medical equipment can often mean the difference between simply existing with a long or short-term

disability or being cared for at home and functioning independently.

To be eligible for the Equipment Services program, a person must have a disability and not reside in a licensed care facility. An initial equipment fee, ranging from \$10 for a walker to \$50 for an electric wheelchair, is charged for the loan of equipment; however, the individuals may use the equipment for as long as needed. Download the Equipment Loan Program Fees effective September 1, 2008.

Availability of items is contingent upon inventory at hand. A completed application and a prescription from a physician, nurse, or physician's assistant is required prior to issuance of durable medical equipment. Download an Equipment Loan Application in Microsoft Word.

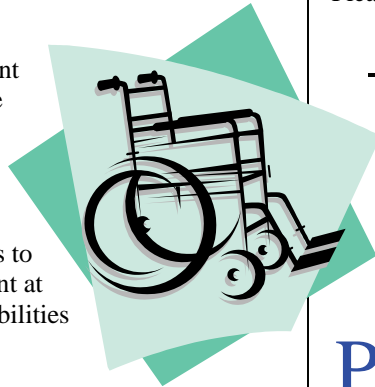
Equipment services

The equipment loan program operates solely through donations of good quality durable medical equipment. Easter Seals accepts items in need of repair depending upon the overall condition of the piece and the repairs needed.

To donate equipment to this valuable program contact Easter Seals Equipment Loan at (515) 309-2395 or info@eastersealsia.org

Want more information?

Please contact info@eastersealsia.org or (515) 309-2395



SPECIAL NEEDS DAY

Mississippi Valley Fair

Tuesday, August 4th
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

People with special needs will be admitted free to the grounds, given a free carnival ride, and treated to lunch at the Genesis Health System Variety Tent just west of the main towers, compliments of the Mississippi Valley Fair. Pizza will be served beginning at approximately 11:00 a.m. Canned pop and cookies will also be served while supplies last.

You must have your hand stamped at the Variety tent by 1:30 p.m. in order to participate in the carnival ride promotion. The carnival promotion will be held from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Feel free to stay for the remainder of the day if you wish, but the grandstand admission is not included in this offer.

- This includes all children and adults who are physically or mentally challenged.
- Limit one free parent admission with a Special Needs person.
- No RSVP required, just come and join the fun.



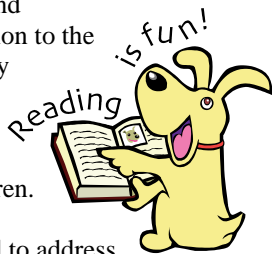
Infant-Toddler Language and Early Literacy Activities: Free and Reproducible

*Developed by Angela Notari-Syverson, Ph.D, and
Judy Challoner, M.S.*

The development of these materials was supported by Grant H324M0200884 from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

These materials include twenty home and community activities for adults and children birth to three that encourage early language and literacy development. They are appropriate for children with disabilities as well as children who are developing typically.

Each of the twenty activities includes an activity description, and hints for making the activity fun and developmentally appropriate. In addition to the activities, you can download an activity checklist that helps parents and caregivers notice their children's skills, and also cues adults to examine and grow their own interactions with children.



The materials are specifically designed to address the three key skills of 1) language development, 2) sounds and rhythms, and 3) general book and print awareness.



- A brief introduction to the materials
- Activities and hints for adapting them to the child's specific needs
- Activity checklists for self-evaluation by the adult

The files are in PDF format to allow easy and secure downloading.

The materials are made available by Angela Notari-Syverson and colleagues, and may be copied and distributed as long as they are not sold.

To download materials go to <http://www.wlearning.com> and click on the purple button that says "Free Parent Education Handouts" on the home page.

They also have free parent-child activities for "On-the-Go" (car rides, walks, bus rides, etc.) and preschool age range.

For questions please contact:

Mary Maddox
Washington Learning Systems
2212 Queen Anne Ave. No. Ste. 726
Seattle, WA 98109
(206) 310-7401 FAX (206) 283-9243
mmaddox@wlearning.com



Save the Date!!!

Parent-Educator Connection/ Early Childhood Conference

November 8, 9, 10, 2009

Keynote Speakers, Break-Out Sessions, Networking Opportunities and more.

More information to follow-

Stay Tuned!!!

Help Set a Date!

Iowa Hands & Voices is working on a parent training session for the IEP process with an emphasis on kids who are deaf/hard of hearing.



While no formal date has been set, the event is expected to occur sometime in August or September, 2009. If interested, please e-mail juliehahn.IHV@gmail.com with your suggestions as to what day of the week and which hours work best for you.



Parents as Presenters Workshop



You are invited to participate in "Parents as Presenters," a 2-day workshop that will teach you the skills you need to effectively share your story with college students and community professionals. There will be no cost for attending the workshop. Applicants selected to participate in "Parents as Presenters" will receive a stipend in the amount

of \$325 to assist with childcare, hotel, and travel expenses. Each couple will receive one stipend. **Training is scheduled for September 25 & 26, 2009.**

Through the Parents as Presenters training, participants will:

- Understand the multiple purposes of being able to tell their family story to an audience in a positive way;
- Understand presentation strategies and will formulate creative ideas for their personal presentation;
- Demonstrate and receive feedback from other participants as they present a sample "Telling Their Story" presentation;
- Develop a network among themselves to support "Telling Your Story" around the state.

Participation will be limited to 40 family members throughout the state. Applications must be received by May 26, 2009.

This training is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education, Parent-Educator Connection, Family Voices, Early ACCESS, the Parent Training and Information Center of Iowa and the College of Human Sciences, Iowa State University.

For more information or to obtain an application, contact your Parent-Educator Connection Facilitator. You may reach the main office at 1-800-947-2329 or 563-359-1371. You may also contact us at our sector offices.

Carol Aden	Bettendorf Sector	344-6287
Kathy Anson	Clinton Sector	242-6454
Cindy Laughead	Muscatine Sector	263-8476



Website Offers Parents a Look at the Iowa Core Curriculum

The Iowa Department of Education announced the launch of a new Iowa Core Curriculum website at www.corecurriculum.iowa.gov.

The purpose of the official Iowa Core Curriculum site is to help Iowa parents and all citizens learn more about the state-wide academic expectations for kindergarten through 12th-grade students.



The website offers a look at the skills and concepts all Iowa students must know under the Iowa Core Curriculum, signed into law by Governor Culver in 2008. This includes concepts and skills in literacy, math, science, social studies, and 21st

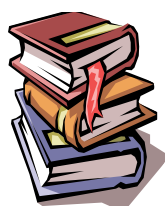
century learning skills (civic literacy, financial literacy, technology literacy, health literacy, and employability skills). Parents will be able to do customized searches by academic area or by grades.

Superintendents, principals, and other education leaders in Iowa are currently receiving training on how to implement the Iowa Core Curriculum, which must be fully put into practice in high schools by 2012 – 2013 and in kindergarten through eighth grades by 2014 – 2015. Iowa's area education agencies and the Iowa Department of Education have collaborated to provide this training. This cooperation will continue as districts begin to provide professional development directly to teachers on the Iowa Core Curriculum and supportive teaching strategies.

For background information on the Iowa Core Curriculum, please visit the Iowa Department of Education's website at www.iowa.gov/educate and click on "Iowa Core Curriculum" on the left-hand side of the page.

The Iowa Department of Education works with the State of Iowa Board of Education to provide oversight, supervision and support for the state education system, which includes public elementary and secondary schools, nonpublic schools that receive state accreditation, area education agencies, community colleges and teacher preparation programs. The department is committed to high levels of learning, achievement and performance for all students, so they will become successful members of their community and the workforce.





What's New in the Parent-Educator Library?

The *Unwritten Rules of Friendship*, by Natalie Madorsky Elman & Eileen

Kennedy-Moore is a book which includes practical activities, games, and exercises to identify a child's social strengths and difficulties and to sharpen any child's social skills.

Another book on a similar topic is *Hidden Curriculum: Practical Solutions for Understanding Unstated Rules in Social Situations* by Brenda Myles, Melissa Trautman, and Ronda Schelvan. This book also addresses the unspoken rules of social engagement.



The DVD, *Through Your Eyes* by Michael Madsen and David Carradine tells the story of the only known deafblind triplets in the world—modern day Helen Kellers.

Babies with Down Syndrome, A New Parents' Guide, edited by Susan J. Skallerup, is written as a guide to your child's first 5 years. It covers medical care, daily care, family life, development, early intervention, etc.

Teaching Children with Down Syndrome about Their Bodies, Boundaries, and Sexuality, A Guide for

Parents and Professionals by Terri Couwenhoven. This book gives parents the background and confidence to speak to their children about their bodies, personal boundaries, privacy, sexuality, etc.

Connections in the Land of Disability by Alan Brightman contains thought provoking stories and essays about whether people with disabilities are that different from you.

Four more books related to Autism have also been added.

The ADHD Autism Connection: A Step Toward More Accurate Diagnosis and Effective Treatment by Diane M. Kennedy provides a summary of current autism and ADHD research and treatments.

An 8-year-old girl tells about her 7-yr-old brother who has autism in the book, *All about My Brother*, by Sarah Peralta.

The Kaleidoscope Kid: Focusing on the Strengths of Children with Asperger's Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism, by Elaine Marie Larson, is a book of poems focusing on the strengths of children with Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism.

Developing Talents: Careers for Individuals with Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism by Temple Grandin & Kate Duffy covers all aspects of the search for suitable careers for people with Asperger Syndrome.



What is the Parent-Educator Connection?

The Parent-Educator Connection or PEC is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education. It began in 1984 in order to provide parents and educators with opportunities to work together in positive ways. We help facilitate collaboration that enhances education programs for children/youth with special needs.

The PEC operates through the AEA and is part of a state-wide network. Each PEC consists of Parent-Educator Facilitators (parents of children with special needs) an Educator Representative, and an area-wide steering committee (parents and educators).

The Parent-Educator Connection believes:

- With encouragement and support from educators and community providers, each family determines their level of participation in the system processes.
- In successful partnerships, families, educators and community providers work together by recognizing,

understanding and respecting individual differences, cultural backgrounds and differing approaches and seek solutions.

- Two-way, frequent and meaningful communication builds successful partnerships.
- Building partnerships among families, educators, and community providers as early as possible enhances the degree of family and child success.
- Families, educators and community providers all have important roles, responsibilities and perspectives in the education and support of children.

If you would like more information or to check out materials from the libraries which are located in Bettendorf, Clinton and Muscatine, please contact your Parent-Educator Connection Facilitator. Their names and contact information are located on the back page of this newsletter.



Mississippi Bend AEA
 729 21st Street
 Bettendorf, IA 52722-5096
 563-344-6287
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 Experience Classes

The **Parent-Educator Connection** provides support and resources for families and teachers.
 For more information, please contact the Parent-Educator Facilitator in your service center:

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Serving school districts: Bettendorf, Davenport, North Scott and Pleasant Valley

Kathy Anson, Clinton **563-242-6454** **Email: kanson@aea9.k12.ia.us**
Serving school districts: Andrew, Bellevue, Calamus-Wheatland, Camanche, Central Clinton, Clinton, Delwood,
 East Central, Northeast, Maquoketa and Preston

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Serving school districts: Bennett, Columbus Jct., Durant, Louisa-Muscatine, Muscatine, West Liberty and Wilton
 Any one of them can also be reached by calling **1-800-947-2329**.

Tete Long, Bettendorf **563-344-6201** or **1-800-947-AEA9** **Email: tlong@aea9.k12.ia.us**
 Director of Special Education



Websites of Interest

www.mvfair.com.....Mississippi Valley Fair, Inc. Special Needs Day is Tuesday, August 4.

www.iowaParents.org .Iowa Statewide Parent Information Resource Center

www.aea9.k12.ia.usMississippi Bend Area Education Agency—This publication, **PARTNERS**,
 is available on this site. Click on Programs & Services. Next, under Special
 Education, click on Departments, then click on Parent-Educator Connection,
 and in the left column click on Partners Newsletter.



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The Mission of the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency is to improve teaching and learning for all students through active partnerships and assertive leadership in a climate of mutual respect.