

“SELF-ESTEEM IS THE KEY” Building self-esteem in your child

The studies are in and it seems one of the major contributing factors to the likelihood of a teen becoming sexually promiscuous is low self esteem. In dealing with hundreds of pregnant teenage girls through the years, I don't remember many who had a good self-image. The profiles are almost always the same:

- A lack of self-respect and self-confidence
- An overwhelming desire to please others
- A desperate need to be loved and appreciated

Basically they are attempting to make up for something that is lacking in their lives. It is really up to the parents to make sure your child has a positive self-image. So, what follows are some steps you can take to help build your child's self-esteem and in the process you will develop a positive relationship between you and your child.

Does your child know you love and appreciate him or her. Don't assume! Do you tell him/her on a regular basis how special he/she is and how much joy he/she brings into your life?

Do you give your child lots of physical love? By that I mean non-sexual hugs, pats on the back, a hand on the shoulder, etc. When was the last time you hugged your children?

Do you have special time each week with your child? What about special time each day? It can be nothing more than making sure the entire family sits down to dinner together.

When was the last time you made your child laugh?

Who does most of the talking when you are with your child, you or your child? The answer should be your child.

Do you apologize to your child when you are wrong or get angry? If not, you should.

Do you praise your child more than criticize? If not, you should.

Don't ease up on the love and affection when your children enter their teenage years. That is the time when they will need you the most.