



Tip Sheet for Parents

Help Girls Improve Their Self-Esteem

Developing a healthy sense of self-esteem is important for girls, especially when they reach adolescence. Girls need the freedom to explore all aspects of their abilities and not feel pressured into preconceived notions of what's feminine. Here are some ways you can help your daughter:

1. Encourage your daughter to think independently and consider her needs as much as others.
2. Give your daughter the freedom to work toward goals she sets for herself.
3. Recognize your daughter's achievements, especially when she reaches goals.
4. Encourage your daughter to express herself without passing judgment on her opinions.
5. Talk about gender stereotypes — on television, in popular music, advertising, magazines — and encourage your daughter to think critically about how girls and women are portrayed.
6. Learn about the contributions women have made to various fields. For example, if your daughter is interested in science, find out more about the contributions of famous women scientists. The local library is a great place to search out this information together.
7. Use inclusive language — like police officer, not policeman.
8. Talk to your daughter about what she's thinking and feeling.
9. Make your daughter aware of negative influences such as discrimination, sexual harassment, and violence against women.
10. Encourage your daughter to take self-defense classes or take one together.
11. Be a positive role model for your daughter.
12. Encourage your daughter to have a diverse group of friends, including boys and girls.
13. Introduce your daughter to books written by women and stories with strong female characters. Many schools and public libraries offer special events and resources each March during National Women's History Month. Check it out.



Take 15 for the Family...Building a Lifetime of Learning is a new statewide initiative launched by the Maryland State Department of Education. It encourages Maryland families to dedicate at least 15 minutes each day to doing everyday activities, like eating dinner together, and turning those moments into learning opportunities. The goals of the program are to build awareness among parents that involvement in their children's education is critical and to provide resources to make this involvement easy and fun. For more information, dial 1-888-246-0016 or log on to marylandpublicschools.org.