POSITIVE SELF IMAGE

One of the issues that can affect teenagers is that of self-esteem. Self-esteem refers to how one feels about him or herself. Also, it refers to how you think others feel about you. Do you think they like you? Or do you feel like no one values you? There are different factors that go into self-esteem, and for teenagers these factors often make a bigger difference. Low teen self-esteem can lead to sexual activity (sometimes resulting in teen pregnancy), depression and even suicide. It is important to recognize that teenagers need to feel valued and loved.

WHY IS TEEN SELF ESTEEM SO IMPORTANT?

- Teen self-esteem can set the stage for one's entire life.
- According to a questionnaire given to 90,000 students in grades 7-12, self-esteem helps teens deal with emotional stress.
- Having good self-esteem correlates with success later in life - mainly because good grades and confidence can allow a teen to start out with scholarships and other opportunities.
- Self-esteem is also important when it comes to making good choices. Teen pregnancy statistics show time and time again those girls who engage in unprotected sex often have lower self-esteem than their counterparts. Other decisions, such as those regarding risky behavior and use of illegal drugs, can result from low teen self-esteem.
- Poor teen self-esteem can lead to emotional and mental issues. Depression can stem from feeling as though you are not good enough. In some cases, teenagers who cannot overcome their feelings of hopelessness and low self-esteem resort to suicide.

WHY IS TEEN SELF ESTEEM SO IMPORTANT?

- Appearance (self-image). It may seem shallow, but most teenagers are concerned to some degree about their appearance. This can be difficult to overcome, because in some cases it can be difficult to change one's appearance. Overweight teens often feel bad about themselves, as do teens that think that there is some sort of irregularity with the way they look.

- Peers. Teenagers may have peers that make fun of them or put them down. If a teen feels like an outcast, it can have an effect on his or her self-esteem.
- Parents. Sometimes parents or other authority figures put teens down and cause self-esteem problems. Parents, coaches and teachers who always criticize can make a teenager feel as though he or she never does anything right, and is never valued. Such constant criticism may cause him or her to feel unloved.
- Unrealistic expectations. We all want to live up to our potential. But sometimes teenagers feel pressures from unrealistic expectations. Parents and teachers may expect too much of them. Often, a teen can develop low self-esteem because he or she is not "living up" to the expectations that one sets for oneself. A teenager can, at some times, be his or her own hardest critic.

http://www.familyfirstaid.org/teen-self-esteem.html