

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Island Parenting: An Effective Tool For Building A Child's Self-Esteem

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Outdoor portrait of a cute young black little girl reading a book - African people

"From your parents you learn love and laughter and how to put one foot before the other. But when books are opened you discover that you have wings." Helen Hayes.

There are many benefits to reading to your child. There are many benefits to raising a child with a voracious appetite for books. Reading leads to increased knowledge, an expansive vocabulary, improved academic performance, and a love of learning. Readings strengthens the parent-child relationship. A child who is raised a reader will

have an increased attention span. He or she will develop the ability to think critically. Reading also builds listening skills and imagination. It is a mentally stimulating exercise. It leads to improved writing skills. It teaches children valuable lessons about the world and relationships.

Most importantly, I have discovered that reading helps children to love, accept and believe in themselves and their abilities. When I say this, I am not referring to the confidence that children gain from the ability to read but the life lessons that the children learn from the characters in the books.

Reading exposes children to the possible. Reading helps to build self-esteem. Children read about characters and may say, "Well if he can do it, then so can I." If they see children loving themselves such as the child in one of the recommended books for this week, "I Am Who I Am," they will grow to love themselves. If they read about the little engine who thought he could, they in turn may think that they can accomplish anything with hard work and persistence. Reading is an effective tool in building a child's self-esteem.

"Parents need to fill a child's bucket with self-esteem so high that the rest of world can't poke enough holes to drain it dry." Alvin Price

Unstoppable Me! Ten Ways to Soar Through Life by Dr Wayne W. Dyer with Kristina Tracy and illustrated by Stacy Heller Budnick

On our recent trip to the library my six-year-old son jaunted gleefully to the librarian's desk and plopped his selection on the counter. His selection was a brightly colored and attractively illustrated blue book with two children gaily soaring above the earth. His selection was authored by Dr Wayne W. Dyer with Kristina Tracy and illustrated by Stacy Heller Budnick. It was titled Unstoppable Me! Ten Ways to Soar Through Life.

I flipped the book over, thumbed through it and remarked, "What's this, is it a self-help book for little kids? Are they serious... at this age?" Do you know what? I was pleasantly surprised by the contents of the book and have ordered a copy for my sons' library. Although targeted at young children, this book is appropriate for any age. This book is packed with positive messages for children. There are lessons of self-acceptance and what is described as 'no limit thinking', that is a child's belief that he or she can accomplish anything.

In this book, Dr. Dyer provides a clever rhyme to teach the concept. He follows up with an example so that the child may be able to apply it in his or her everyday life. As a mother of two boys who love each other dearly but butt heads sometimes, I particularly loved the lesson, "Peace begins with you." The example provided was about two brothers and how they handle conflict.

Here is a list of the topics covered in this book, "You are great no matter what! Persistence pays off! Welcome the unknown. You have a choice. Farewell to worry! Peace begins with you. Enjoy the here and now. Healthy me! Creativity is the key! What can you give?" There is also a questions/discussion section.

This week I have chosen to share with you a nugget from the aforementioned book and also a list of books that you may find useful in building your child's self-esteem. Happy

building!

Words of Encouragement for Your Child from the Book Unstoppable Me!

“Persistence Pays Off -- When there’s something in your life that you want to do, once you begin, you must follow through. It’s not about talent or if you are smart; it’s about never quitting something you start. Don’t tell yourself I can’t or dwell on mistakes; patience and determination are really all that it takes.” Dr. Wayne W. Dyer with Kristina Tracy

Recommended Reading for Children

The Unstoppable Me! Ten Ways to Soar through Life by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer with Kristina Tracy illustrated by Stacy Heller Budnick

Incredible You! Ten Ways to Let Your Greatness Shine Through by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer with Kristina Tracy illustrated by Melanie Siegal

I Am Who I Am by Bruno Hachler and Iris Wolfermann

The Amazing Hamweenie Escapes by Patty Bowman

I Don’t Want to Be a Frog by Dev Petty illustrated by Mike Boldt

Seven Things Every Child Needs to Hear

“I love you. I am proud of you. I’m sorry. I forgive you. I’m listening. This is your responsibility. You’ve got what it takes.” Josh Shipp

Parenting Quotes and Reminders

“One generation full of deeply loving parents, would change the brain of the next generation, and with that the world.” Dr. Charles Raison

“Stop trying to perfect the child but keep trying to perfect your relationship with him.” Dr. Henker

“Raising children is a creative endeavor, an art rather than a science.” Bruno Bettelheim

“Childhood isn’t a hothouse to be fenced in and closed off and climate controlled. It’s a wide open sundrenched, windswept field of endless possibilities, experiences and discoveries.” L.R. Knost

“Show your children love, tenderness, gentleness, patience and respect and they will treat others likewise. Remember nothing you can teach them is more important than the love you can give them.” Unknown

Recommended Reading for Parents

What Do You Really Want for Your Children by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer