

healthy NEWS4U

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Self-Esteem: What it is and how to get it

Self-esteem is something that you hear a lot about, but it can be hard to figure out what it really means. The dictionary defines self esteem as “a realistic respect for or favorable impression of oneself; self-respect.” **Self-image** is used to refer to a person’s mental picture of himself or herself. A lot of our self-image is based on interactions we have with other people and our life experiences. This mental picture (our self-image) contributes to our **self-esteem**.

Self-esteem is all about how much we feel like we’re valued, loved, accepted and thought of by others — and how much we value, love and accept ourselves. People with healthy self-esteem are able to feel good about themselves, appreciate their own worth, and take pride in their abilities, skills and accomplishments. People with low self-esteem may feel like no one will like them or accept them or that they can’t do anything well.



Steps to Improving Self-Esteem

- 1 **Stop thinking negative thoughts about yourself.** Start focusing on the positive aspects about yourself rather than the negative. When you catch yourself being mean to yourself, counter it by saying something positive about yourself. Each day, write down three things about yourself that you appreciate or that make you happy.
- 2 **Aim for accomplishments rather than perfection.** Some people become paralyzed with trying to be perfect. Instead of holding yourself back with thoughts like, “I won’t try out for the dance team until I lose 10 pounds,” think about what you’re good at and what you enjoy and go for it.
- 3 **View mistakes as learning opportunities.** You will make mistakes because everyone does, so you might as well accept that. Mistakes are part of learning. Remember that a person’s talents are always developing and everyone excels at different things — it’s what makes you interesting.
- 4 **Try new things.** Experiment with different activities that interest you and get in touch with your talents. Then take pride in the talents you develop, and your willingness to try something new.
- 5 **Understand what you can change, and what you can’t.** If you realize that you’re unhappy with something about yourself that you can change, then start today. If it’s something you can’t change (like your height), then start to work toward loving yourself the way you are.

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Self-Esteem, continued

- 6 Set goals.** Think about what you'd like to accomplish, and make a plan on how to do it. Stick with your plan and keep track of your progress.
- 7 Take pride in your opinions and ideas.** Don't be afraid to speak up.
- 8 Help others.** Tutor a classmate who's having trouble, help clean up your neighborhood, participate in a walk-a-thon for a good cause, or volunteer your time in some other way. If you feel like you're making a difference and that your help is valued, it can do wonders to improve self-esteem.
- 9 Exercise!** You'll relieve stress, and be healthier and happier.
- 10 Have fun.** Ever found yourself thinking stuff like "I'd have more friends if I were thinner?" Relax and have a good time — and avoid putting your life on hold.

It's never too late to build healthy, positive self-esteem. In some cases where the emotional hurt is deep or long lasting, it can take the help of a mental health professional, like a counselor or therapist. These experts can act as a guide, helping people learn to love themselves and realize what's unique and special about them.

Why does it matter that much?

Self-esteem plays a role in almost everything you do. People with high self-esteem do better in school and find it easier to make friends. They tend to have better relationships with peers and adults, feel happier, find it easier to deal with mistakes, disappointments, and failures, and are more likely to stick with something until they succeed. It takes some work to develop good self-esteem, but once you do, it's a skill you'll have for life.

Source: <http://kidshealth.org/>

Play Sports. Play Safe.

Getting involved with sports is a fun way to stay active. But if you end up on the bench because of an injury, you could find yourself sidelined for an extended period of time.

Use these tips, to avoid getting hurt and stay in the game.

- 1. Warm up and cool down.** Before you jump into the game or activity, start with some moderate walking or stretching to get your body warmed up. The same goes for after the game. Walk slowly for a couple of minutes to give your body the chance to cool down and lower your heart rate safely.
- 2. Wear the right gear.** Protective gear, such as helmets, protective pads, and eye protection can help prevent major injuries. It's also important to make sure you're wearing appropriate shoes and clothing for the sport.
- 3. Obey the rules of the game.** Many of the rules of the game are there for your safety. Make sure you and your teammates understand the rules so no one gets hurt.
- 4. Don't play when you're injured.** If you've got an injury, sometimes the best way to heal is to rest. Playing when you're hurt will only make it worse and could extend your recovery time. Be patient and allow yourself to heal before jumping back into it.

Source: <http://kidshealth.org/>

















Food Portion Pop Quiz

Good nutrition is the key to being healthy. Knowing the right portion size is just as important as what you eat, but sometimes it's difficult to figure out what a serving size actually looks like. Take this quiz to see how much you know about portions.

Instructions:

Draw a line from the serving size to the picture that best represents that portion.

Serving size		Portion	
	deck of cards		1 1/2 oz. cheese
	golf ball		serving of fruits or vegetables
	4 stacked dice		3 oz. poultry or fish
	computer mouse		small pancake or waffle
	tennis ball		1/2 cup cooked rice or pasta
	compact disk		small baked potato
	one cupped palm		2 Tbsp. peanut butter

KEY: deck of cards=3 ounces of poultry or fish, golf ball=1/2 oz. serving of cheese, computer mouse=small baked potato, tennis ball=serving of fruits or vegetables, compact disk=small pancake or waffle, one cupped palm=one-half cup of cooked rice or pasta.



The video games of today are a lot different than your parent's video games. Realistic graphics, complicated levels, and some of them will even get you off the couch and on your feet.

If video games are something you and your family enjoy doing, make sure you keep it in balance and make smart choices that can be good for your health and wellness.

Video Games and Fitness: Can they work together?

- **Check with your parents or guardian.** Some video games are not suitable for all ages, so be sure the game has been "approved" before you purchase or play the game.
- **Limit video games to two hours a day or less.** Some studies show that video games can increase hand-eye coordination, but keep your playing time to a minimum. Two hours or less per day is recommended.
- **Invest in games that get you on your feet.** There are many popular games available that will get you off the couch and on your feet. Dance and fitness-related games are fun and they can get your heart rate up and burning calories at the same time.
- **Take a break.** The best option is to take a break from video games and get outside. Try suggesting a family activity after dinner. If you can't get outside, get out a board game or start up a card game that can get the whole family involved.

This program is brought to you by Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield and the Iowa Newspaper Foundation. We are proud to offer *Healthy Newz 4U* as a resource to help increase knowledge about health and wellness.



Find additional information online at www.HealthyNewz4U.com.

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