

## Build self-esteem for a lifetime of confidence

How a child feels about him or herself can have a strong influence on their academic achievement. If their self-esteem is strong, they can respond to life's challenges better, and become happy and successful adults. As a parent, you play a major role in shaping your child's self-esteem. Here are some ways to help your child feel good about themselves:

- *Acknowledge and encourage your child's strengths and special talents.* Provide opportunities for your child to participate in things she is good at, such as music, sports, dance, theatre, or community service.
- *Help your child see the positive.* Remind him of his past achievements and special skills. Developing confidence in his ability to solve problems is a key element in self-esteem.
- *Teach your child that it's OK to make mistakes.* Reassure him that no one gets everything right all of the time.
- *Support your child's attempts to try new things.* Help her to feel that she doesn't have to be a "star" at everything she tries. The pressure to succeed may lead a child to limit herself to activities she knows she can already do.
- *Help your child take responsibility for the negative consequences of his own behaviour.* Learning to acknowledge and try to repair harm or damage done to others is a far more effective tool to build a child's self-respect than blame or punishment.

After school programs can help children develop self-esteem by providing structured and supervised activities such as computer instruction, sports, literacy tutoring, music and art lessons, nutrition guidance, and help with homework.

"We've funded hundreds of Canada's after school programs and have learned that kids enrolled in these programs actually develop enhanced social behaviours and are more motivated to excel in and stay in school," says Jasmina Zurovac, director of corporate donations at RBC. "This in turn has a positive impact on a child's self-esteem."

The RBC After School Project supports programs that help kids learn, grow and reach their full potential. Visit [www.rbc.com/afterschool](http://www.rbc.com/afterschool) for more information. These tips brought to you by Ceridian Canada.