

# Self-Esteem Toolset

## Bonus Handout

The best way to quickly remember the basics of building self-esteem and using descriptive encouragement is D.I.P.:

**D**escribe what the person did well or any effort/improvement, focus on

**I**nternal qualities or what the person thinks/feels, and have a

**P**ositive focus on what is *right*.

Give each person you know “A D.I.P. a day” and see how quickly their self-esteem *and behavior* improves!

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So what if you need to address something that’s not perfect? Use this 1-2-3 process:

1. **Start with encouragement, using D.I.P. to describe what the child did well.** Avoid the words *right* and *wrong*, *good* and *bad*. Use words like *effective*, *less effective*, *helpful*, and *unhelpful*.
2. **Pause...**to allow children to experience their pleasure and satisfaction.
  - a. Decide how important it is to point out the negative *now*.
    - i. If children know how to do the task but didn’t do it well, notice their efforts and any progress they made. Reassure them that they’ll continue improving with practice.
    - ii. If they don’t know how to do the task well or lack information, wait to teach another time (if you can). It could be in a minute, an hour, a day or a week. The key is that there is a *pause* between the positive comment and the lesson to improve.
3. **Use questions instead of pointing out the negative or imperfection.** With older children, ask how *they* feel about their work. If they are dissatisfied, ask them what they would do differently or to improve. Show faith in their ability to figure out a way to do their best. With younger children, ask them to show you how they did it. Ask if you can show how you do it --- on yourself, not for them or on them.