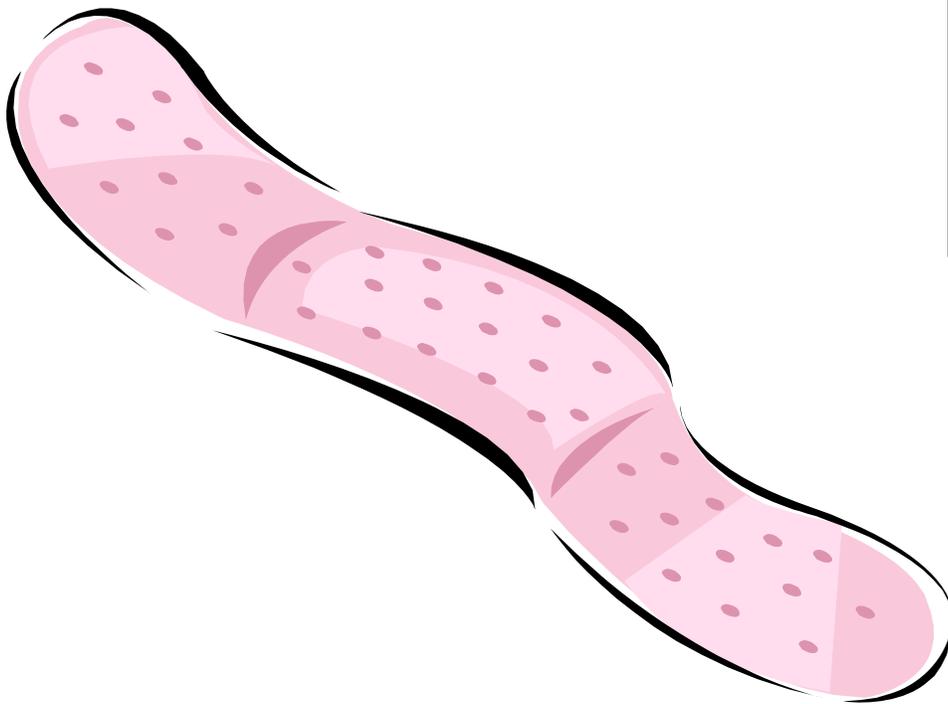


# Self-Esteem: More Than A Bandaid Approach



Building  
Your  
Students'  
Self-  
Esteem

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## *Activities:*

### **BULLYING, STEREOTYPING, & TEASING**

Having the opportunity to anonymously poll students can be a good way to start a discussion on topics like bullying, stereotyping, or teasing.

#### **Marble Box**

In order to anonymously survey your class in regard to their personal experiences or attitudes on any topic, create a marble box. Make a small hole in the top a small jewelry-sized box. Take a larger box with a flip-top that will hold the small box and marbles (or beads). Buy marbles (or beads) in 7 different colors. You will need enough of each color marble/bean for each student in your class. Write the following on the board: Statements can be filled in with your topic. (colors will match your choice of marbles/beads.)

*Red:* I have never . . . in my entire life

*Black:* I have tried . . . once or twice

*Orange:* I have . . . several times, but not on a regular basis

*Green:* I do not . . . regularly

*Blue:* I do . . . moderately

*Yellow:* I do . . . on a regular basis

*Silver:* Pass

Write the topic or statement to be surveyed on the board and explain that students will place one marble/bean in the smaller box according to their personal experience or opinion. If they have no preference or prefer to pass, they drop in the designated “pass” marble color.

When the box has gone around the room, count each color of marble/bean and write the results on the board. Discuss such things as: What did the majority say? Were you surprised by the results? Why?

**Lifetime Timeline** [This can be done on a chalk/white board or by using post-it notes.]

With student input, create a timeline of an anonymous peer. Name him and include many events that all teens should look forward to. Try to develop the character as though he was a real person. Once you get to the end of this person’s life, become very quiet. Slowly start erasing the board (or taking away post-it notes) from the end. (This should get the student’s attention.) Explain that this person didn’t have the opportunity to experience the full life that was described in the timeline. (Take the time to go through some of the experiences as you erase them.) Erase down to an age which matches your class and say that “John” will never have the experiences we planned for him because he felt overwhelmed because he was being bullied. “John” decided the only way out of it was

to end it all. He was only \_\_\_\_\_. (You can change the cause of death to match the problems in your area.)

Discuss life events that your students have to look forward to and how unpredictable life can be. Describe how dangerous bullying, stereotyping, and teasing can be – they have the potential to end life or alter it. List other consequences associated with bullying, stereotyping, and teasing.

#### **Don’t Push My Buttons**

Identify who ‘pushes your buttons.’ Recognize what your ‘buttons’ are. Draw them on a figure. Talk in small groups about whether or not these should be buttons and how to disable them.

#### **The Road to Somewhere**

Draw a road to somewhere you can go to experience positive happy experiences. Place stops along the way where you can get support and positive feedback.



### **A TOLERANT AND RESPECTFUL CLASSROOM**

#### **Random Acts of Kindness**

Students report when they see peers helping someone else. Create rewards such as:

Name on board

Special ‘club’

Certificates

Honored at school assemblies

Free time

Homework pass

#### **The Paper Exchange**

When students exchange papers for grading, etc., help them learn unique things about their peers by having a list of qualities such as:

Same color eyes, hair, shirt, etc.

Parts hair on the same side

Same number of siblings

Born in the same month, state, etc.

**RESPECT** Being able to see the value in diversity helps one to appreciate the value in oneself and others.

#### **Black & White**

Place an object between students that is white on one side and black on the other. Ask the first student what color the object is. When this student answers white, the second student will disagree. It’s only after the students trade sides to ‘stand in the other person’s shoes’ and look at the situation through their eyes that we truly understand their perspective.

#### **Violence Protective Factor (VPF)**

Relate VPF to the SPF (sun protection factor) found on a bottle of suntan lotion. Draw a human figure on two index cards. Cover one with wide clear tape or contact

paper. When you write or draw with a water-based or dry wipe off. The plain card the ink will soak in. Discuss how important it is not to let anger/stress/violence into our lives. Use this as an introduction to the protective factors needed to promote health, safety, or well-being.



### **Body Map**

Talk about how we hold our feelings (store them somewhere in our bodies). Give students an outline of the body and ask them to color their “feelings” in different parts of their body using different colors. Give their feelings a name. Discuss their work.

### **It’s In the Bag**

Each student will decorate the inside of their (lunch size) paper bag with pictures of how they see themselves. The outside will be decorated with pictures of how others see them. Discuss the differences.

### **How Do You Feel Relay**

Form 2 or more teams. Align posterboards (one for each team) against another wall. On signal, students will ‘race’ to their board and write something they are feeling randomly on it. (Small teams can go twice.) When everyone has gone, try to guess what might be going on in a person’s life to give them those feelings.

### **The Bike Says**

Have students pretend to be some object in their lives (such as their bike). What would this object say about them?

**JOIN IN** Children/youth need to form attachments—to join and contribute to a group. Affiliation helps students to feel included, connected, and valued.

### **Team Work**

Come up with projects that the class must work as a team to complete. An example could be cleaning up the school yard or a nearby park.

### **If You Build It -**

Give teams 5 or 6 sheets of paper. See who can build the tallest tower. (No tape or staples allowed!)

### **Color It Together**

Students in small groups will work together to draw a picture. Each student has a different color marker, so each must do their share to complete the picture. By supplying a picture, you can guarantee that each student will have a necessary color.

### **Clique It**

Role play being in a clique. What are the advantages/disadvantages? How do people who are excluded feel?

erase marker on the one with the covering, it will easily

### **Traditions**

Create a class tradition. Record, photograph, and write about your tradition for future classes.

**THINK BEFORE YOU ACT** How can one control the feelings of frustration, anger, and fear? Students need the opportunity to practice the proper ways to act and react to stressful situations.

### **Circle Breaker**

All but 1 or 2 students form a tight circle. The excluded student(s) tries to get into the circle. They may use any way they can to break into the closed circle. Discuss how that or those student(s) felt. Frustrated? Angry? Play again, only this time have excluded student(s) use a nonviolent method to gain entry. They may talk, barter, form a new circle, etc. Discuss the differences in consequences between the violent and nonviolent responses to situations. Often, the more violent responses lead to further exclusion and more violence.



### **Stress Can Be a Snap**

Use a large rubber band to remind students how stress can cause us to be ‘stretched’ and tense. If this amount of stress is not relieved, one can snap back and cause additional pain and suffering. Too much stress can cause one to lose his temper, break things, yell, hurt others, etc.

### **Stress Can Dissolve Away**

Drip water on a sugar cube (stress/anger) to show how healthful ways of dealing with the stress or anger can dissolve the problem.

### **Let’s Have a Ball**

Have a golf ball and a larger nerf-type ball. Discuss which ball would do more damage if it were thrown at you and you didn’t have time to protect yourself. Even though the golf ball is smaller, it can do more harm. Relate to how minor situations can escalate to result in serious problems.

### **I’m Protected**

Use either an umbrella or a shield to correspond with how you can be protected from stress, violence, anger, etc. when you have coping or protective strategies. Let students write coping/protective strategies on strips of paper to attach to the umbrella or on the shield. On raindrops/arrows, let students write things that stress them or cause them to become angry. Two volunteers come to the front of the room to be ‘rained on’ or ‘shot at’ by the stressors/anger/violence. One will have a protective device, the other will not. Which one feels the effects of the stress/anger/violence?

This can also be done with the raindrops/arrows are the CDCs risky behaviors and the coping/protective strategies are the questions you ask yourself when making important decisions about behaviors.



## POSITIVE WAYS OF EXPRESSING EMOTIONS

### Dealing with Anger



\* *Clay* - Create the cause of your anger out of clay and then bash it in.

\* *Physical Activity* - Encourage running, kicking a ball, hitting a pillow.

\* *Tape recorder* - Record your feelings of anger toward the person or act and then erase it.

\* *Puppets* - Role play with puppets.

\* *Drawing* - Draw pictures or write in a journal about your feelings.

### Dealing with Guilt

\* *Write or draw* - Have students remember the positive things. Write or draw in a journal.

\* *Balloons* - Have class write feelings on slips of paper and place inside balloons (all the same color). Blow up and play with them. Pop balloons and read feelings. Discuss.

\* *Advice Column* - Prepare a fictitious letter that asks "Aunt Blabby" for advice concerning a common situation that teens may face. Read the letter to the class and ask them to respond with their own advice. Read the responses anonymously. Discuss that we should treat others like we would like to be treated if we were in their position.

### Don't Hide those Feelings

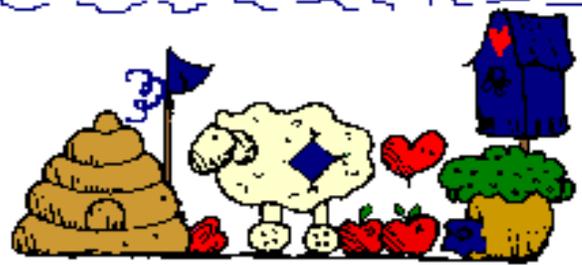
Use a slightly bruised apple. Discuss how the apple represents them – with the bruise representing hurt feelings. Cut the apple so students can see the bruising. Discuss ways we get 'bruised' and ways to deal with 'bruised' feelings.



## RELATIONSHIPS

### Getting out of a Bad Relationship

**Yarn Game** – Each student is given a 2-3 foot piece of yarn with a loop on each end. Students place loops over their hands so yarn becomes like handcuffs. Face partner (someone of opposite sex) and 1 person slides loop from right hand and places around partner's yarn and then back on their hand. Allow 3 minutes to 'break' the joined circle without 1. Breaking the yarn; 2. Taking the yarn off the wrists.



### **Kids Who Are Different**

Here's to the kids who are different,  
The kids who don't always get A's,  
The kids who have ears twice the size of their peers,  
And noses that go on for days...  
Here's to the kids who are different,  
The kids they call crazy or dumb,  
The kids who don't fit, with the guts and the grit,  
Who dance to a different drum...  
Here's to the kids who are different,  
The kids with the mischievous streak,  
For when they have grown, as history's shown,  
It's their difference that makes them unique.



Discuss how each partner felt 'in a relationship that they could not or had difficulty getting out of.' Discuss how important it is that an outside person help physically or by going with them to an adult in order to break the cycle of abuse/control.

[Getting out: Partner A hold left hand down & right hand up, pulling the yarn vertical while partner's is horizontal. Partner A takes the middle of their yarn & slides it to B's left wrist where the yarn is slid under the wrist cuff of B. Partner B slides left hand through the A yarn and their own wrist cuff and the partner's are untied.]

**TO THE TEACHER** The following are tips to help assure you are doing what you can in the classroom to build self-esteem among students:

1. Find time to get to know your students more personally - Remember, you are teaching children - not curriculum!
2. Keep track of the amount of individual time you spend with each student.
3. Talk to children who act up. Listen and let them explain why they acted that way.
4. Encourage students to set their own reasonable expectations to help them learn that *their* expectations are the important ones - not yours.
5. Be willing to admit your mistakes. Show students how you learn from them and move on.
6. Remind students that there are no 'right' feelings - only 'honest' ones.

### Resources:

*104 Activities that Build: Self-Esteem, Teamwork, Communication, Anger Management, Self-Discovery & Coping Skills* by Alanna Jones

*200 Ways to Raise a Girl's Self-Esteem* by Will Glennon

Web Sites:

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org) 'Dealing With Feelings'

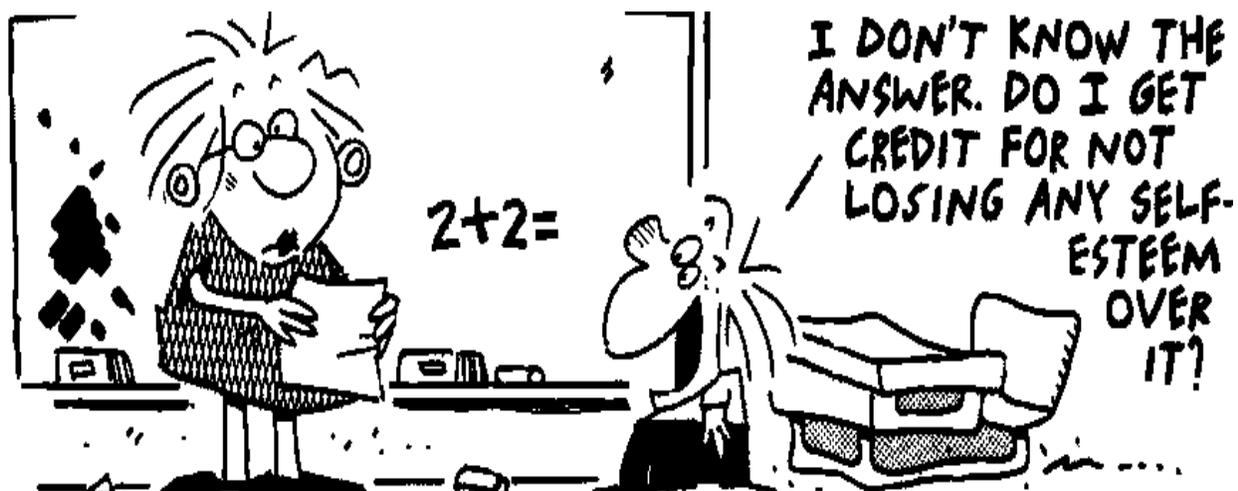
[www.bam.gov](http://www.bam.gov) The Body & Mind website

**TO THE STUDENT** Make a list of:

1. At least 5 of your strengths
2. At least 5 things you admire about yourself
3. The 5 greatest achievements in your life so far
4. Ten ways to 'treat' yourself without food or money
5. Ten ways to make yourself laugh
6. Ten ways to help someone else

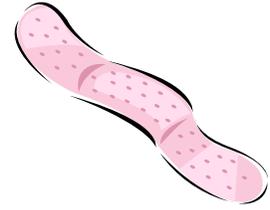
FRANK & ERNEST

By Bob Thaves



# Self-Esteem: More than a Bandaid Approach

## PowerPoint Outline



### ⦿ Building Your Students' Self-Esteem

#### ⦿ What is Mental Health?

“Mental health is how people think, feel, and act.” It affects how we handle stress, relate to each other and make decisions. It influences how we look at ourselves, our lives, and others.

Works Sited: NMHA (National Mental Health Association)

#### **MENTAL ILLNESS**

A mental illness is a disorder of the brain that results in a disruption in a person's thinking, feeling, moods, and ability to relate to others. (wikipedia.org)

- One in ten children and adolescents have a mental illness severe enough to cause some level of impairment. Yet only one in five receives mental health services in any given year.  
Source: U.S. Surgeon General's Conference on Children's Mental Health, 2000
- Among youth 15-24, suicide is the third leading cause of death, after auto accidents and homicide.  
Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Childhood mental disorders continue into adulthood: 74 % of 21-year-olds with mental health disorders had prior problems.  
Source: U.S. Surgeon General's Conference on Children's Mental Health, 2000

#### **Role of the School**

- ⦿ Promote positive mental health/social and emotional development
- ⦿ Address mental health problems as they present barriers to learning
- ⦿ Provide linkages to community agencies and resources

#### **What we do for our students:**

- ⦿ Know the signs and symptoms
- ⦿ Understand school policies
- ⦿ Make referrals
- ⦿ Follow up after referrals
- ⦿ Make accommodations
- ⦿ Communicate with families and other school personnel

#### **Signs/Symptoms - Feelings of:**

- ⦿ Sadness or hopelessness
- ⦿ Extreme anger most of the time
- ⦿ Crying or over-reaction
- ⦿ Excessive worry or anxiety
- ⦿ Worthlessness or guilt
- ⦿ Excessive concern with physical problems or appearance



### **Experiences:**

- ⊙ Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- ⊙ Hyperactivity or excessive fidgeting
- ⊙ Persistent disobedience or aggression
- ⊙ Racing thoughts

### **Behaviors:**

- ⊙ Uses alcohol or drugs
- ⊙ Binges or purges
- ⊙ Breaks the law: abuses the rights of others
- ⊙ Takes part in risk-taking behaviors
- ⊙ Behaves without regard for others
- ⊙ Acts out or withdraws



### **Why should schools be concerned?**

- ⊙ Students may miss school or fall behind in their studies.
- ⊙ Students are often at great risk for substance abuse and involvement in the juvenile justice system.
- ⊙ Schools are on the front line for identifying students with POSSIBLE mental health needs.

### **Cost of not intervening early**

- ⊙ Lost productivity
  - > Parents have to miss work.
- ⊙ Lost learning
  - > Children miss school and fall behind academically
- ⊙ Safety
  - > Children may drop out or are suspended or expelled and are unproductive
    - Unemployed, involved in chemical abuse or criminal activities

Diminished quality of life \*Source: Children's Defense Fund

### **Forget the Bandaid**

- ⊙ Recognize signs
- ⊙ Teach coping skills
- Boost confidence
- Reinforce positives
- Build Self-esteem

