Supporting pupils' self-esteem and confidence

Mind
for better mental health
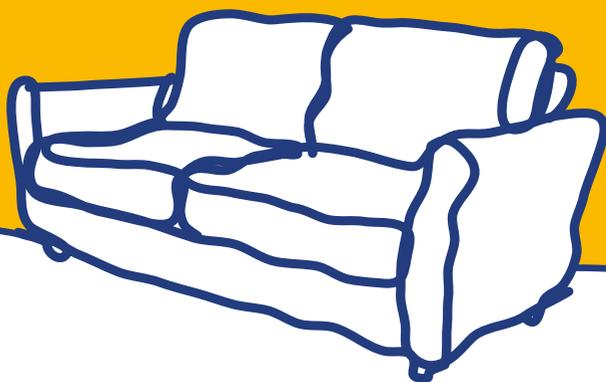
As they grow older and continue to have new experiences, most young people will experience times when their self-esteem or confidence gets knocked, whether in the way they look, or in their own abilities.

If pupils are struggling with their self-esteem they might:

- have a negative view of themselves

- lack confidence

- find it hard to make and keep friends

- feel lonely or isolated

- avoid new things

- find it hard to cope when things go wrong

- put themselves down and say things like "I'm not smart enough" or "I can't do it"

- not be proud of what they achieve and always think they could have done better

- often compare themselves to others.

Here are some tips for how you can support pupils' self-esteem:

Encourage them to try new things such as joining a new club, or talking to someone they haven't spoken to before.

Try to emphasise positive feedback which can be given alongside negative feedback, with something they can work on.

Ask them what is affecting their confidence and let them know there is support if they're struggling – this could be from the school, their family, or charities.

Remind them that all pupils struggle with confidence issues at times, and they are not alone.

Help them set small goals for things they would like to improve on, such as in a particular subject.

Tell them the positive things you like about them you could help make a list of positive comments from you and other children, for them to keep and look at.

Ask them what went well each day and join them in reflecting positively on their efforts, as well as their achievements.

Be a role model they can relate to.

Communicate with parents and guardians and encourage them to support their child in building their self-esteem.

For further support

If you're worried about a pupil's wellbeing you can talk to your school nurses, your manager, or visit the Mind website (mind.org.uk) for information about support options for young people.

For more ideas and information on looking after your pupils' self-esteem visit mind.org.uk/youngpeople
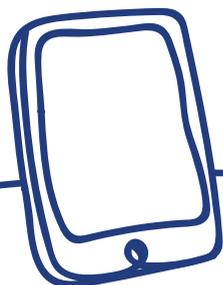
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