

Developing Self-esteem through Active Movement

An activity guide for under-fives



? What is Active Movement/ Koringa Hihiko?





😊 Active Movement is just as important for newborns as it is for older children. By helping your child to get active, you help their body to develop, you help them to learn and to feel safe, and you show them they are loved.

The Active Movement series of brochures helps you with ideas for fun activities.







? Why is self-esteem important?

-  No matter what age we are, we all like to feel good about ourselves. Feeling loved and wanted, as well as confident and capable, are all feelings that develop in children when they are living in a positive and caring environment filled with exciting and happy experiences.
-  There are lots of things you can do to develop self-esteem, and Active Movement is one of them. Being active, learning through experiences and feeling confident all go together.
-  Young children enjoy doing simple activities, like jumping over the cracks in the footpath (learning to jump with two feet), walking up and down hills (developing their balance) and standing on one foot to kick a balloon.
-  The best thing is that children enjoy doing these simple activities over and over again. They need to do this, because they learn through repetition.

? Why is it important to be an active role model?


-  Children develop good feelings about themselves when adults say and do positive things while they are being active.
-  As parents and caregivers, the messages we give to children when they are moving and learning can either develop or harm self-esteem.







? How do I develop my child's self-esteem?

- ☺ If she tries an activity that she could hurt herself doing, tell her this in a positive way, such as "That looks tricky. How can we do that safely?" And work it out together.
- ☺ When telling your child that he has done well, make sure you tell him **what** he did well. "I loved the way you bent your knees when you jumped off the box," or "You had great balance when you walked across the fence." That way he really knows what to feel pleased about!
- ☺ Tell her about the things she does well rather than the things she needs to work on.
- ☺ Your body language is important too. In fact, it can be more powerful than your words. Make sure, that if you tell him he did something well, your face and body show that you approve too.
- ☺ Do activities with your child. If she sees you being an active role model, she is more likely to want to try and will then feel good when she has been successful. She might even try it again when you aren't there.
Doing activities together also gives you something nice to talk about – how you both felt when you did it, and what went well.





? How do I develop my child's self-esteem? (continued)

-  Cuddle and touch him to reinforce he has done the activity well. Actions speak much louder than words! As well as nurturing a feeling of acceptance, it is also a sign you approve, an important part of building self-esteem.
-  When doing an activity, allow her to explore and try different ways of doing it, as this encourages independence and self-esteem.
-  Use hand signals like high fives, or placing your hand over your heart while you look at him to show love, and thumbs up to convey appreciation of an action well done.
-  Talk with her to learn and discover what she enjoyed doing.