

Assignment Discovery Online Curriculum

Lesson title:

Building Self-Esteem

Grade level:

6-8

Subject Area:

Health

Duration:

One or two class periods

Objectives:

Students will do the following:

1. Explore the concept of self-esteem
2. Analyze their personal strengths and weaknesses
3. Consider the role self-esteem plays in a healthy life

Materials:

- Paper and pencils
- Newsprint and markers
- Construction paper and colored pencils
- Old magazines
- Scissors and glue
- Computer with Internet access (optional but very helpful)

Procedures:

Ask students to define the term *self-esteem*. Write their ideas on a sheet of newsprint. Help students understand that self-esteem refers to how we understand and value ourselves.

People with high self-esteem are realistic about their strengths and weaknesses and are able to set goals and work toward them with optimism and humor. They also feel competent in areas they consider important and do not take other people's negative impressions of them too seriously.

People with low self-esteem have a hard time honestly evaluating their strengths and weaknesses and often have an unrealistic, overall negative impression of themselves. They take other people's opinions of their strengths and weaknesses more seriously than they should. Also, they do not feel competent in areas they consider important. People with low self-esteem tend to be pessimistic.

For more information about research on self-esteem, visit the following Web sites:

National Association for Self Esteem

<<http://www.self-esteem-nase.org/research.shtml>>

The Self Esteem Institute

<<http://www.theseelfesteemstitute.com/AboutSelfEsteem.htm>>

1. Tell students that an important first step in building self-esteem is taking a realistic look at their strengths and weaknesses and likes and dislikes. This helps them know what goals are realistic to pursue, what aspects of their personality and lifestyle to seek to improve, and how to identify their weaknesses without worrying about how others perceive them. Tell students that self-knowledge helps lay the foundation for high self-esteem.
2. Then tell students they are going to complete a personal inventory during this lesson to help them achieve better self-understanding. Tell students to follow the directions, filling in blanks or checking the answers that apply to them. You may copy the inventory for students, read it out loud, or write it on a piece of newsprint and post it in the classroom.

Personal Inventory

School Subjects

1. I like _____.
2. I do not like _____.
3. I am good at _____.
4. I am not good at _____.
5. I am good at this subject, but I do not like it: _____.
6. I am not good at this subject, but I like it: _____.

Activities

7. I like _____.
8. I do not like _____.
9. I am good at _____.
10. I am not good at _____.
11. I am good at this activity, but I do not like it: _____.
12. I am not good at this activity, but I like it: _____.
13. I prefer being involved in individual activities _____ or group activities _____. (Check one.)

Relationships with Friends and Adults (Check the statements that apply to you.)

14. I am generally well liked: _____.
15. I am generally not well liked: _____.

16. I have a group of friends: _____.
17. I prefer having one or two friends: _____.
18. I am a leader: _____.
19. I am a follower: _____.
20. I prefer people who like the same things I like: _____.
21. I prefer people who like different things: _____.
22. I have the support of significant adults in my life: _____.
23. I have the support of a group of peers: _____.

Food Preferences

24. I like to eat _____.
25. I do not like to eat _____.
26. I do ____ do not ____ eat a balanced diet. (Check one.)

Relaxing

27. I relax by _____.
28. I like relaxing alone ____ or with other people _____. (Check one.)
29. After this activity, I always feel calm and peaceful. _____.

Then tell students they are going to complete a personal inventory during this lesson to help them achieve better self-understanding. Tell students to follow the directions, filling in blanks or checking the answers that apply to them. You may copy the inventory for students, read it out loud, or write it on a piece of newsprint and post it in the classroom.

3. Give students ample time (it should not take more than 10 or 15 minutes) in class to complete the inventory. Then ask students to take the information they learned about themselves and create a drawing, collage, or short essay that illustrates who they are. Make available paper, art supplies, and magazines to cut up. Give students about 20 minutes to complete their projects.
4. During the next class period, ask for student volunteers to share their artwork or essays, and their personal reflections, with the class.
5. Ask students what they learned about themselves? How can they apply this information to their lives? How does it affect the goals they set for themselves? Tell them that understanding their own strengths, weaknesses, and preferences is essential in boosting their self-esteem.
6. Conclude the lesson by asking students what role they think self-esteem plays in leading a healthful life. If students feel good about themselves, do they think they will make good decisions about friends; diet; exercise; sex and abstinence; dangerous habits such as drugs, smoking, and drinking; and overall work habits? Why do they think this is so? Help students understand that if they feel good about themselves, they will want to take care of themselves.

Discussion Questions

1. Using what you learned about yourself from the inventory, do you think you have high self-esteem or low self-esteem? What is one thing you can do to build your self-esteem? (Be sure to tell students that they need not share this information with anyone. These are questions that they can think about as they begin to learn more about themselves.)
2. What do you think the relationship is between self-esteem and becoming involved with drugs, alcohol, or a potentially bad crowd at school? Do you think that a person with high self-esteem or low self-esteem would be more likely to do those things? Give reasons to support your ideas.
3. Do you have a friend who has low self-esteem? What are some of the signs of low self-esteem? What could you do to help your friend raise his or her self-esteem?

Evaluation:

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' involvement in class discussions, their attitude toward completing a personal inventory, and the quality of their projects:

Three points: was highly engaged in class discussions; demonstrated positive attitude toward completing the personal inventory; created a realistic project highlighting the results of the inventory.

Two points: was moderately engaged during class discussions; demonstrated mostly positive attitude toward completing the personal inventory; created a project that highlighted some key points from the inventory.

One point: was not engaged during class discussions; demonstrated negative attitude toward completing the personal inventory; was not able to produce a project highlighting the results of the inventory.

Extension:

Self-Esteem Builders

Have students develop a community service project that may also help them build their self-esteem. For example, students can tutor a younger child, help coach an elementary school sports team, or assist in an arts and crafts program for young children. Have

students keep a log of the progress of the child they are assisting. Make sure your students note how the child they are assisting felt about his or her abilities when they first started and whether their attitude changed over the course of a couple of months. Encourage students to notice signs of improved ability in the subject or activity, such as more facility in reading, better performance on the sports field, or more proficiency in crafts.

Then ask students to observe signs of improved self-esteem, such as more self-confidence or a more optimistic outlook. Do students see a correlation between improved competence in a specific area and greater self-esteem? Are their own findings consistent with the definition of self-esteem they learned about in this lesson? Aside from helping the younger child improve his or her skills, what else did they do to elevate the child's self-esteem?

World Book Online Search

Health

<<http://school.discovery.com/homeworkhelp/worldbook/atozscience/h/249580.html>>

Vocabulary:

high self-esteem

Definition: A realistic, honest, and healthy view of oneself.

Context: Even though Mary was not good at soccer, she enjoyed playing it very much, and did not let her inadequacies affect her **high self-esteem**.

low self-esteem

Definition: An overall pessimistic and negative view of oneself.

Context: Carolyn was always devastated if she received criticism at school because she had very **low self-esteem**.

personal inventory

Definition: A tool used to determine an individual's strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes.

Context: After taking a **personal inventory**, Jake realized he loved music and got so much pleasure from playing the guitar that he didn't care if he wasn't the best in the band.

Academic Standards:

The following standards are from the American Association for Health Education for students in grades six through eight:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.

2. Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

This lesson plan adheres to the standards set forth in the *National Science Education Standards*, in particular the category Science in Personal and Social Perspectives.

Credit: Marilyn Fenichel, freelance writer and curriculum developer.

This lesson was created in consultation with Shauna Felton, middle school health teacher.

DiscoverySchool.com

<http://www.discoveryschool.com>

Copyright 2002 Discovery.com.

Teachers may reproduce copies of these materials for classroom use only.