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SELF ESTEEM AND KIDS WITH SENSORY ISSUES

Whether your child has trouble controlling their body, their behavior or if life just seems hard, self esteem is truly the underlying skill that most parents want their children to achieve. It becomes so challenging, because no matter how much we might tell our kids that is positive, some just seem to dwell on the negatives, and what they “can’t” do. While a sensory program to address underlying foundational issues is a great start to helping children make life easier, there’s a lot that can be done at home and with friends to help them through this tough transition time of finding out what they “can” do. Here are just some ideas from a great resource, “Parents Do make a Difference”, by Micele Borba.

How to make “can’t” become “can”

- Use more positive messages of your own (“I like this dinner I made tonight”)
- Develop slogan for “I can” such as “success comes in cans, not in cannots”
- Confront negative voices- talk back to that negative inner voice
- Turn negative comments into positive ones- whenever anyone says something negative about themselves, they have to follow it up with something positive that they like about themselves or their performance etc. that day
- Praise yourself in your head (“that was a great kick I made today in soccer”)

Ways to see success

- Have your child write down, each day or week, what they did well or were happy with
- Make a favorite work folder to keep things they are proud of- rotate through them and see the progress that was made
- Do paper chains- use 1”x5” colored paper strips to write special accomplishments on- hang it up in child’s room so they can see how great they are
- Sit down with your child and write together:
 - things mom/dad think I’m good at
 - things I think I’m good at
 - add to the list regularly and save month/year to year to compare

Developing positive self belief

- Avoid using negative labels (clumsy, shy, hyper, stubborn)
- Never let anyone label your child- turn labels into positive:
 - shy=great observer
 - hyper=energetic
 - unpredictable= flexible
 - aggressive= assertive