

## Self-esteem and confidence

### About self-esteem and confidence

Self-esteem is a way a person feels about themselves. Everyone has it in different degrees. A person with high/positive self-esteem generally feels good about themselves and feels they have a lot to offer. A person with low or poor self-esteem generally feels worthless and that they have little to contribute. Without positive self-esteem it is highly unlikely that a person would have a full, happy and productive life. The development of feelings of self-esteem starts very early in life. For example, when a child learns to walk or talk they feel a sense of having achieved something. Praise and encouragement at this point from parents, or people important in their life, boosts the positive feelings they have about themselves and encourages the child to go on achieving. Achievement in itself is not enough. Love, praise and encouragement are essential elements in helping a child develop a positive self-esteem.

### Positive self-esteem

Positive self-esteem is what good mental health is all about. It is about being able to look after ourselves and rely on ourselves to deal with challenges when they arise. It is about knowing what we are good at and knowing we have to continue to learn and develop. It is about being comfortable with others and knowing how to relate. It is about believing our thoughts have value and that we have the right to express them. It is *not* about putting others down so that we can feel better about ourselves.

### Children with high self-esteem:

- Make friends easily.
- Play as easily in a group situation as by themselves.
- Tend to be problem solvers.
- If unable to solve the problem will look for help.
- Display socially acceptable behaviour.
- Socialise without displaying anxiety.