

Bully Proofing Your Child

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One of parents' biggest fears is having their child be bullied. Although bullying is a major issue in today's society, all parents have the ability to empower their children and help make them resilient against bullying.

No one wants to have their children bullied. Yet one out of every four youth report that they have experienced being bullied. More than 160,000 U.S. students stay home from school each day for fear of being bullied. Bullying is often listed as a major cause of depression and suicide.

How do parents combat this behavior of threats, spreading rumors, verbal and physical attacks, and social media cyberbullying? One strong approach is to make sure you are building strong self-esteem and values into your children. Teach them to respect themselves and others. Spend time talking and listening to your child. Encourage youth to find good community support programs and activities such as 4-H community programs. If you are interested in finding additional things to help children build self-esteem, visit the *Search Institutes* website and learn about their Developmental Assets. *Search Institutes* materials can provide many ideas and resources that can help in building strong, resilient youth.

Self-esteem is built by experiences, relationships, and how people feel about themselves. Having successful experiences and overcoming unsuccessful experiences builds positive self-worth. Assertiveness is a positive way of expressing yourself and gaining self-respect.

These words: self-esteem, self-worth, self-respect are what we believe about ourselves. At times, they may fluctuate with our life experiences, but rebuilding is important for happiness and success. Strong communities have strong families and strong youth. Strong youth have good self-esteem. It is important!



Carolyn Washburn is a family consumer sciences agent for Utah State University Extension. Her responsibilities include financial management education, food safety and nutrition, healthy family relations, emergency preparedness and working with youth. Her goal is to help individuals and families become self-sustaining and resilient by being financially prepared and healthy for any emergency. She serves on the National Disaster Education Network and has just completed the new food storage manual for USDA. Her most cherished award is America's Promise, awarded by Colin Powell.