



Self-esteem

Definition

Self-esteem is the overall opinion or perception we have of ourselves—how much we value, respect, and accept who we are. It reflects our beliefs about our worth, abilities, and how we compare to others. In simple terms, it's the confidence we have in our own worth or abilities.

How does it affect teenagers

Self-esteem plays a crucial role in the development and well-being of teenagers. During adolescence, young people go through significant physical, emotional, and social changes, and their self-esteem can deeply influence how they handle these challenges. Here's how self-esteem affects teenagers:

- 1. Decision-Making:** Teens with high self-esteem are more likely to make positive, healthy decisions. They trust themselves and feel more confident in saying no to peer pressure.
- 2. Mental Health:** Low self-esteem is closely linked to anxiety, depression, and feelings of worthlessness. High self-esteem contributes to emotional resilience and better stress management.
- 3. Academic Performance:** Teens who believe in themselves tend to perform better in school because they are more motivated and less afraid of failure.
- 4. Social Relationships:** High self-esteem helps teens form healthy relationships based on mutual respect. Low self-esteem may lead to social withdrawal or unhealthy attachments.





Self-esteem and social inclusion

Self-esteem is described as the personal evaluation of one's own worth, shaped by thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

It significantly impacts how individuals relate to others and navigate social environment.

It supports forming balanced relationships and fosters social inclusion, helping youth participate actively in group settings.



How to tackle it?

To tackle low self-esteem and social exclusion:

Create safe, supportive spaces.

Teach emotional skills.

Encourage participation and teamwork.

Celebrate strengths and progress.

Prevent bullying.

Involve families and communities.





Warm up questions

1. How would you describe self-esteem in your own words?
2. What makes you feel confident or proud of yourself?
3. Can you remember a time when someone made you feel included? How did it feel?
4. Why do you think it's important to feel accepted by others?



Questions for discussion

1. What are the main factors that influence a person's self-esteem?
2. How does social media affect the way we see ourselves?
3. In what ways can low self-esteem lead to social exclusion?
4. Can a person be socially included but still have low self-esteem? Why or why not?
5. How can schools or communities promote a sense of belonging among youth?
6. What role do friends and family play in shaping our self-esteem?

Find out more

Books: The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem – Nathaniel Branden, Wonder – R.J. Palacio and I Like Myself! – Karen Beaumont (for kids)

Classes: The Science of Well-Being (Coursera), Khan Academy – Life skills and TED-Ed videos on self-esteem

Movies: Inside Out – emotions and self-awareness, Wonder – inclusion and kindness and Billy Elliot – self-acceptance

The Breakfast Club
– identity and belonging





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