

# Parent Talk

**\*\*formerly known as the Weekly Chatter**

## Self esteem, self worth, and body image

**Low self-esteem, specifically poor body image, is associated with increased tobacco and alcohol use, according to recent research (1).**

Self-esteem refers to a person's measure of self-worth and is directly related to a person's body image, or perceptions of their physical appearance. **When children think poorly of themselves, their abilities and their bodies, they are more likely to feel depressed** which can lead to unhealthy coping like drug and alcohol use, delinquency and promiscuous sexual behavior.

**Parents are the best people to promote positive self-esteem and body image in a child's life.**



(2)

## Tips for supporting positive self-esteem and body image in children

**Compliment their physical features (in a healthy, non-sexual way) and never criticize their looks.**

- Tell your daughter that she's beautiful and your son that he is handsome. A child who has heard their parents call them beautiful will be **less likely to fall head over heels in love or become sexually active with a person just because that person thinks he or she is attractive.**
- **Even overweight children are beautiful.** When dealing with weight problems in the home, encouragement is always better than criticism and research (3) shows that **fat shaming doesn't help kids lose weight** and can increase the likelihood and severity of obesity in adulthood.



UNDERGOES FLOATING ANXIETY AND HOSTILITY

They constantly feel anxious and fearful of making mistakes, because they need the assurance from others, so they have high standard for themselves. The tendency to overly magnify the mistakes they made is higher than usual.

LOW  
ESTEEM



SUFFERS FROM CHAOTIC RELATIONSHIPS

The need of assurance from others caused them to have poor boundaries in relationships. They have the difficulties in building and maintain a healthy relationship because they don't trust people easily.

**Foster close relationships with each of your children.** Listen to them, play with them and give them your undivided attention when you can. [Research](#) (4) shows, **kids who feel close to, supported and loved by their parents tend to have high self-esteem.** Read the ACPeds blog post, [The Importance of Close Parent-Child Relationships](#) (5) for more information.

MAKES DECISIONS BASED ON GOOD JUDGMENTS



They recognize their own abilities and believe that they can do well in what they are doing. To make a better life, they improve themselves to achieve better results.

HIGH  
ESTEEM

VALUE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP



They are capable of accepting negative feedbacks and criticism, without letting it to deny their confidence. They don't put others down to build up themselves, because they love to bring happiness to others.

**Limit access to the media, including television, secular music and the internet.** Excessive exposure to screens (television, tablets, smartphones, computers, and video game consoles), especially at early ages, is **associated with lower self-esteem** in kids, [research](#) (6) shows.



HAS EXCESSIVE DESIRE TO BE ACCEPTABLE BY OTHERS

Because of the constant feel of anxious and fearful of making mistakes, they tend to strive to not upset or displease anyone who is important to them. They think that is the only way to be acceptable by others.

LOW  
ESTEEM



EXPERIENCES INTENSE SELF-CRITICISM

The need for them to seek for self-approval from others, they don't believe in themselves that they are good. They desperately seeking for assurance from others to proof that they are lovable.

**Teach your children healthy eating habits, encourage and support physical activity, and ensure that your kids get adequate rest on a regular basis.** Healthy children look good because they feel good and focus more on health than physical appearance.

For more information on fostering healthy habits in kids, view the ACPeds webpage [Lead Your Child to Good Health](#) (7).



## Sex differences in teen depression

**Teen girls are more than twice as likely as boys to experience depression according to a recent [study](#) (8).**

While some research speculates this difference has to do with sex differences in the brain, other [research](#) (9) suggests environmental factors may also play a role.

(10)

## TEEN DEPRESSION IS...

### AN ILLNESS

Marked by a chemical imbalance that impacts moods, thoughts and behaviors.



### COMMON

**15-20%**

of teens will develop depression before adulthood.

### SERIOUS

Depression is the **#1** risk factor for suicide.

### TREATABLE

Treatment for depression can include talk therapy or a combination of talk therapy and medication.



**(So what can parents do to decrease the likelihood that their daughters (and sons) will develop depression?**

- Make sure to equally encourage daughters (and sons) to spend as much time as possible outside in physical activity. Though studies (11) show that **physical activity and spending time in nature can help ward off depression**, research (12) suggests that girls are generally less likely to receive encouragement from parents to spend time outdoors and participate in athletic activities.
- Once again, limit access to the media, including television, secular music and the internet. Research (13) shows that **sexualized images of girls and young women in advertising, merchandising and media is harmful** to girls' self-image and healthy development.
- Monitor your daughter's (and son's) internet use, especially in relation to dating. Research (14) shows that **girls are more likely to experience severe emotional consequences from digital dating abuse**.

### Practice Good Mental Health



Eat three nutritious meals per day.



Do the things and surround yourself with the people that bring you happiness.



Get 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night.



Avoid harmful substances.



Get 2½ hours of exercise per week.

- Get to know your daughter's (and son's) friends and practice being a positive influence to them as well. Peer pressure can have negative effects on a child's

mental health [studies](#) (15) show, especially when **friends pressure each other to participate in unhealthy behaviors** like drug use and sexual activity.

- Encourage your daughters (and sons) to practice sexual abstinence. [Research](#) (16) shows that **sexually active teens are more likely to suffer from depression and experience suicidal thoughts**.
- Teach your daughters (and sons) the importance of staying away from drugs and alcohol. [Research](#) (17) shows that **drug and alcohol use, especially marijuana, can lead to depression in youth**.

Most importantly, research shows that feelings of family connected can ward off child and adolescent depression.

### Red Flags of Depression

■ Change in eating habits	■ Sad or irritable mood	■ Loss of energy
■ Change in sleep	■ Restlessness or agitation	■ Trouble concentrating or making decisions
■ Self-injury	■ Feelings of worthlessness or guilt	■ Loss of interest in favorite activities
■ Thoughts of suicide		

**5 or more symptoms every day for 2 weeks or more**

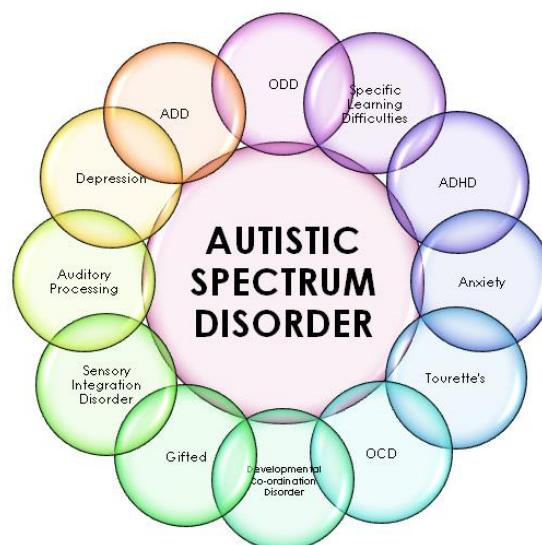
For more information, visit the ACPeds webpage, [Family: the Best Medicine](#) (18).

## What is Autism?

#WeeklyBlogPost

Families that have a child with autism know that there is often a lack of understanding from others on what autism really is.

Children with autism grow, learn, and have individual interests like other children, but they think in a different way.



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**For information on understanding Autism and supporting children and families of children with Autism,**

**CLICK HERE (20)**  
**and please, leave a comment!**

**We love to hear from our readers and hope to receive your feedback!**

Check [ACPedS.org/Blog](http://ACPedS.org/Blog) each Monday for a new post. Click [here](#) (21) to subscribe.

*Don't hesitate to contact us with your questions and comments. We look forward to hearing from you*

American College of Pediatricians, P.O. Box 357190, Gainesville, FL 32635

- 1 <http://munews.missouri.edu/news-releases/2017/0621-perceptions-about-body-image-linked-to-increased-alcohol-tobacco-use-for-teens/>
- 2 <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/bf/ce/25/bfce2533360a3eb31db797d15b4114a7--low-self-confidence-build-confidence.jpg>
- 3 [http://www.uconnruddcenter.org/files/Pdfs/Experiences-of-weight-teasing-in-adolescence-and-weight-related-outcomes-in-adulthood-A-15-year-longitudinal-study\\_2017\\_Preventive-Medicine.pdf](http://www.uconnruddcenter.org/files/Pdfs/Experiences-of-weight-teasing-in-adolescence-and-weight-related-outcomes-in-adulthood-A-15-year-longitudinal-study_2017_Preventive-Medicine.pdf)
- 4 <https://www.acpeds.org/the-importance-of-close-parent-child-relationships>
- 5 <https://www.acpeds.org/the-importance-of-close-parent-child-relationships>
- 6 <https://www.acpeds.org/the-college-speaks/position-statements/parenting-issues/the-impact-of-media-use-and-screen-time-on-children-adolescents-and-families>
- 7 <https://www.acpeds.org/parents/lead-your-child-to-good-health>
- 8 <https://blog.frontiersin.org/2017/07/18/frontiers-in-psychiatry-depression-affects-the-brains-of-males-and-females-differently/>
- 9 <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/318329.php>
- 10 <https://www.erikaslighthouse.org/filebin/images/Infograph-page-001.jpg>
- 11 <http://geminiresearchnews.com/2017/01/physically-active-children-less-depressed/>
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- 16 <http://www.heritage.org/education/report/sexually-active-teenagers-are-more-likely-be-depressed-and-attempt-suicide>
- 17 <https://www.acpeds.org/marijuana-use-detrimental-to-youth>
- 18 <http://www.acpeds.org/family-cycle/family-the-best-medicine>
- 19 <https://www.socialworkhelper.com/2015/03/30/helping-children-autism-spectrum-disorder/>
- 20 <https://www.acpeds.org/supporting-parents-and-families-with-an-autistic-child-part-1>
- 21 <http://acpeds.org/subscribe>