

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP SHY CHILDREN BUILD CONFIDENCE

Shy kids can face social and emotional challenges

Shy children are at greater risk, when compared to outgoing children, of being bullied, feeling insecure, having bouts of chronic sadness, giving in to peer pressure, and having anxiety. Parents may feel at a loss regarding how to help their very shy child. When pressed to act more independently, the child frequently freezes in fear—or tears begin to well up and lower lips begin to tremble.

The Solution

As with many parenting dilemmas, the solution is straightforward. Encourage your shy child to act with greater assertiveness. Be kind, be patient, and consistent. Parents may be tempted to save your son or daughter from the momentary distress of facing their insecurities. The best way to help your shy child become more confident is by having him, or her, behave as though they already felt bold and self-assured. Parents can develop a plan that involves a series of assertiveness steps, each one being somewhat more challenging than the one before.

Confidence Building Experiences: Examples

There are many opportunities for building confidence, including:

- Joining a sports team, dance class, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, etc.
- Asking questions in class
- Helping when you volunteer at a charity or church
- Assigning chores at home (and insisting that they be done on time and correctly)
- Writing thank you notes after receiving gifts
- Joining a local theater group (standing on stage in front of an audience can be tough!)
- Running an errand such as asking a neighbor to borrow something
- Answering the door to accept a package
- Joining a school club/organization (yearbook club, school newspaper, etc.)

Key Points:

- Painfully shy children often miss out on life-changing experiences.
- Teaching shy children to be more confident and assertive helps prepare them for the next development phase of life.
- There are some simple steps parents can take that can help their shy child feel secure and behave with confidence.

Excerpt from: [How Parents Can Help Shy Kids Build Confidence | Psychology Today](#)