



Positive Self Talk FACT SHEET

Positive self-talk can help build positive relationships and increase self-esteem.

Negative self-talk can hurt relationships, cause stress and decrease self-esteem.

Self-talk is a good strategy to help manage challenging or difficult situations.

We can support children develop positive self-talk through ongoing conversations and by encouraging alternative ways of thinking about a situation.

*"What does your friend think of the situation?"
"Is there any other way to look at the situation?"
"What else is there to think about here?"*

It is important to keep your stance neutral and curious when exploring a child's or teenager's thinking to ensure they don't feel judged or criticised. It can help to validate their feelings and perspective prior to asking questions.

For example: "It sounds like you think that you are no good at football and that is leading you to feel rather sad and frustrated."

Self-talk diary

- > Record all messages that you have said to yourself over the course of two to three days. Highlight the positive messages in green and the negative messages in red.
- > How can you change the red to green?
- > Talk to yourself like you would a friend. Give yourself encouragement, support and forgiveness.
- > If you have trouble thinking of positive, helpful things to say to yourself, ask yourself "what would I say to a friend or someone I care for?"

SELF-TALK:

- > **Is a voice inside your head; it is sometimes called your inner voice, which means it is a voice or thoughts which you don't say out loud.**
- > **Can help to shape and reinforce how you are feeling.**
- > **Often occurs subconsciously (you don't know you are doing it).**
- > **Can be very powerful because it can influence how you feel and what you do.**

Exploring the links between thoughts, emotions and actions can also be achieved in everyday conversations about movies and books.

Parents can ask: *"What do you think he was thinking when he did that?"* or *"How would you think in that situation?"* or *"What if she thought... instead of...?"*

We can also model positive self-talk by showing the children in our lives how to change a negative perspective to one that is positive and helpful.

"My friend ignored me today when I said hello. My first thought was that they were angry at me for something I had said yesterday. Then I thought again and realized I was jumping to conclusions and that she may not have seen me or might have had a rough night or was thinking about something else."