

The Four P's - by Laura A. Riffel, Ph.D.

Self-esteem issues definitely affect a student's performance in school. Here are the statistics:

In first grade 80% of students have high self-esteem.

In fifth grade 20% of students have high self-esteem.

In high school 05% of students have high self-esteem. (Canfield, 2003)

Sometimes children with low self-esteem will puff themselves up to appear larger than life to compensate for their low feelings of self-worth. Other times they will blend into the background and fly under the radar. There is no one sign that determines low self-esteem. Children with low self-esteem will typically receive a compliment and then do an inappropriate behavior because the compliment does not match how they feel on the inside. The child has to prove they are as bad as they feel about themselves on the inside.

In 2009, I started doing research on ways to raise self-esteem and I came up with four areas that need improvement:

- 1) Public Relations
- 2) Proficiency
- 3) Power
- 4) Philanthropy

If we take care of these four quadrants in the child's life, we can change academic achievement and behavioral issues. My preliminary results focused only on academic achievement, but we later found behavioral issues were just as important and possibly a "quicker" fix than the academic. Many students are so far behind in academics because they have spent so much time out of class being dealt with for inappropriate behavior, that it takes a little longer for the academic change to occur.

So, if children with low self-esteem cannot take a compliment how do we build them up to look good in front of their peers without holding them up and having everyone clap for them? How do we make up for lost learning time by adding proficiency skills to their repertoire? How do we give them power over their emotions? How do we build philanthropy into the school day? This workbook will help you.

First start with a student that you suspect has low self-esteem. Put that child's name in the center of page two. After you read pages 3-5 fill in the squares on page two for your student

The Four P's

- **Public Relations**
- **Proficiency**
- **Power**
- **Philanthropy**

Describe behaviors you want to target for change:

Public Relations: What skills can you give this child to help them relate better to others socially?

Proficiency: What skills do they need to beef up academically?

Child with low self-esteem- Use student initials for faxing purposes

What you are going to measure for child's success score?
Examples: behavior outbursts, homework completion, latency time, time on task, grades, social interactions etc.

Power: Use social autopsy sheets to help student see where situations went wrong.

Philanthropy: Help this child do something for others. A way to raise self-esteem is to help others less fortunate.

Public Relations

- As educators, we need to determine ways we can help the child look good in front of their peers. Here's an example: Set up the "Secret Agent" game. Tell the students you have chosen someone to be the secret agent in the classroom. You will be watching the secret agent all day and if the secret agent is respectful of self, others, and property (or whatever behaviors you want to focus on) that person will get to select 5 free answers for tonight's homework (or prize of your choice). At the end of the day if the student you are focusing on does not exhibit those behaviors just say, "I'm so sorry. Today's secret agent didn't cut the mustard. I'll choose someone different to try tomorrow." However, if the student you are focusing on was anywhere near the behavior you were wanting to see say, "Class, I would like you to know that Taylor was the secret agent today and Taylor did a great job of exhibiting respect to others, self, and property. Taylor please choose 5 problems for me to give the answers to for tonight's homework."
 - This technique helps the student look good in front of their peers.
- Wait for a good day and let the student of focus make a positive phone call home.
- Send home post cards pointing out behaviors the student of focus does well.
- Let the student of focus be a peer model or helper for children in a lower level class or students who are struggling with a topic the student of focus does well.

Proficiency

- Many times when I sit in on a behavior support team meeting and I hear about behaviors the student of focus is having and the antecedent for the behaviors is during a specific academic task, I will ask "Can the student proficiently work on this level?" I am surprised by how many people say, "I think so."
 - We can easily do an academic assessment to determine in what skills the student needs a booster shot.
 - Pre-teaching the anticipatory set for each difficult lesson will help the student feel confident that they can handle all the problems that follow.
 - The anticipatory set is the action the teacher does to "hook" the children on the lesson.

- For example, if you were going to be teaching the students a science lesson on distance between the sun and the Earth you might get them excited to learn that by asking "How many snickers bars would it take to go between the Earth and the sun?" Then pass out a snickers bar to each student and have them measure the snickers bar with their rulers. Now you have their attention! Then do all the math using an overhead calculator or the smart board and the calculator on the computer.
- You would have taught the student of focus on the day before that there were 93 million miles between the sun and the Earth and that there were 5,280 feet in one mile. This would help the student feel like he or she was able to handle this task.

Power

- Give the student the power to handle their emotions. We can teach students what we do when we are upset. For example: I share a story with students about a time I was waiting for a parking place. I had my turn signal on and waited while a mother loaded her children in the car. As the car was backing out and blocking my entrance to the space another car whipped in from the other side and took the space. The lady laughed as she walked into the store. I could have gotten mad but whenever I am upset I listen to music. I went to the farthest row and listened to my favorite song on a CD. Then I walked in to the store and I made sure I did three good things to make up for the bad karma. I picked up some items that had been knocked off on the floor. I helped a woman shorter than myself get down something off a top shelf and I let someone with less groceries go in front of me in the line. Whenever I have something bad happen to me, I try to do three good deeds to make up for the bad thing. I feel better when I do something for others.
- Teaching a child how to do a simple yoga exercise to calm themselves down is a great technique to give them power over their emotions.
 - Put your tongue behind your two front teeth
 - Close your mouth
 - Breathe in through your nose-2-3-4
 - Breathe out through your nose-2-3-4
 - Repeat 10 times

- Take off your shoes and wiggle your toes. This creates a calming activity and alleviates stress
- Put four fingers on your forehead. Tap each finger individually against your forehead while looking up with your eyes. Repeat twice. It will move the synapses to a different area of the brain and the urge to be upset will dissipate.
- Teach the student how to think through and plan for what to do the next time they get upset. Rick LaVoie coined the term "Social Autopsy". This means the student will dissect where the behavior fell apart and what they can do the next time to keep the interactions "alive".

Philanthropy

- One of the best ways to build self-esteem in a child to have them help someone else.
- It is impossible to feel bad about yourself when you are doing "good" for someone else.
- The student of focus can be a peer model for a lifeskills class, a lower grade level or even be the custodian's helper. As long as the job is of value to someone else, it will help the child feel better about themselves.

These are the Four P's and when you put them together you have a child who

PROSPERS

Data Results: Please fax page 2 and 6 to 913-239-0547

Student initials: _____

Student age: _____

What behaviors or grades were measured: _____

One week of average scores for above prior to intervention: _____

If you used more than one topic for data collection please put those scores here:

One week of average scores for above prior to intervention: _____

One week of average scores for above prior to intervention: _____

One week of average scores for above prior to intervention: _____

One week of average scores for above prior to intervention: _____

Implement the intervention for one full month

One week of average scores for above post intervention: _____

If you used more than one topic for data collection please put those scores here:

One week of average scores for above post intervention: _____

One week of average scores for above post intervention: _____

One week of average scores for above post intervention: _____

One week of average scores for above post intervention: _____