

« My little notebook that makes me feel better »

How to support self-esteem in children aged 6 to 10

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INTRODUCTION

Self esteem is a very popular subject, since everyone yearns for a good self-esteem and wants to be happy in life.

If you want your house to fear neither the wind nor the storms, it must have good foundations, and the materials that make it up firmly assembled.

In the same way, having a good self esteem comes easier when built solidly right from the beginning of life. We all want our children to feel comfortable with their body, to be happy about themselves and to reach their full potential. But....

Concretely, how to proceed ?

Definition of self-esteem

Building self-esteem is a dynamic process that lasts all your life.

According to Danielle Laporte and Lise Sevigny, from Saint Justine's Hospital in Montreal, « Having a good self esteem is not showing kindness, but rather being aware of our strengths and weaknesses and accepting ourselves as an individual person. This means taking responsibilities, being assertive, knowing how to meet our needs, having goals and doing what it takes to achieve them. Having a good self esteem is to respect ourselves while having consideration for others.

On the other hand, low self-esteem leads to anxiety, ill-being and difficulties in the relations with others. If the loss of self-esteem is intense and prolonged, then it becomes a major element of a depressive syndrome.

Self esteem and CF

With diagnosis announce, the outbreak of the disease will shake all the new family construction up, and parents will have a different look on their new born.

Even if they fight it, the concern, the desire to protect their child and the fear of doing wrong will be even more important than if the child had been healthy.

Autonomy might then happen later, and the child might interpret his parents anxiety about him as « I am not able to »

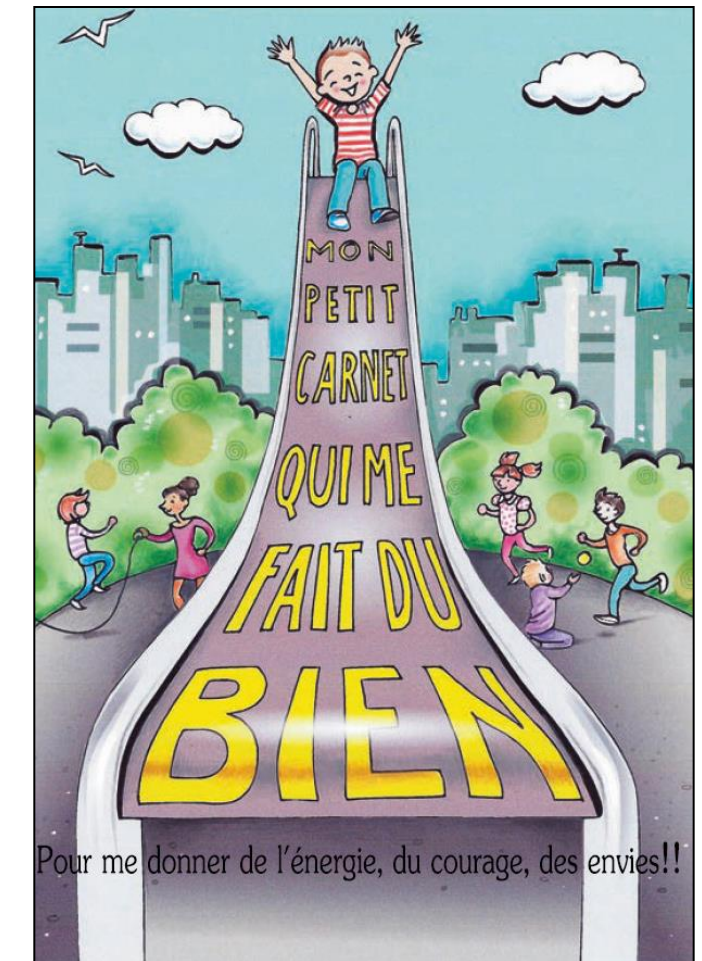
OBJECTIVES

Booklet intended for children aged 6 to 10

Created with the help and support of the french association against CF and the GETHEM wich brings together professional people from different CF centers in France.

It is all about valorizing the child through the recognition of his talents, his qualities and skills, if possible with an adult able to reformulate and accompanying the child in this work of valorization.

After all, we realized that this booklet could be suitable for any child aged 6 to 10, if possible knowing how to read and write, with or without chronic illness !



PAGE 1
Presentation of the child, with a drawing or a picture, his name and his age. These are two important identifying features, defining the child as a person.
The barometer of the mood before the activity makes it possible to know his mood of the moment, in order to better welcome him

PAGE 2
My birthday is ... who will come ?
Birthdays are times for celebration and conviviality.
Is this the case for the child ?
This enables to approach the topic of social relations and friendship.

PAGE 3
I write in stars my first qualities... I am... But I know that nobody's perfect !
The child names his qualities. Putting them in writing makes it easier to confirm and internalize them.
If he can't find any, or too few, then go to page 4 before coming back to page 3.

PAGE 4
I drew up my qualities
From a list of qualities, the child chooses those who best characterize him.
Rather than talking about faults, this activity allows to perceive the positive sides of his personality.

PAGE 5
I write my talents
This page is about the talents of the child.
Can he name it ?
It can be very concrete activities :
Cooking, cycling, drawing, singing...

PAGE 6
I recognize my emotions
The recognition of emotions is part of a good knowledge of oneself.
Here is a matter of spotting and identifying them, without judgement.
Emotions exist. Naming them and telling in what occasion they arose allow a psychic elaboration of the filling.

PAGE 7
Try !
Some actions seem difficult to achieve,
But if we talk about it, they gradually seem less out of reach...

PAGE 8
I write people's name who help me to feel good
The child identifies the people around him who are positive for him.
He can also refer to animals...

PAGE 9
What do you appreciate in me ?
The benevolent look of people around him is essential for self-esteem building.
Too often does the child hear negative comments from adults (at home, at school...)
Here, this is about talking the positives sides of the child.

PAGE 10
What makes me happy ?
...And...what is heavy to me ?
It is a symbolic act : writing the worries that « weight ».
The child can also cut them to let the balloon fly away...

PAGE 11
What is my dream ?
Naming a dream, talking about it and putting it in writing allows psychic elaboration, increases the motivation to heal : if you want your dream come true, you'd better be in good shape !

PAGE 12
If you want to climb up on a mountain, begin with one step...
Small graphic activity and reading a wisdom sentence...

PAGE 13
Assesment of the activity
And collect child's emotions

CONCLUSIONS :
With this notebook, we tried to create a concrete tool and to implement the very difficult-to-define concept that is self-esteem, at the age of concret though according to Piaget. Self-esteem is being built all throughout life and this is only a small stone in its building, but all stones are important when building a house !
In our CF service, we use it when we feel that a child is sad or when he says some sentences as : « I'm not good... I can't dare with... I am an idiot... » or when parents are worried about his abilities, or lack of motivation to do treatments.
You can find it in the GETHEM web site :
<http://www.etp.centre-reference-muco-nantes.fr/downloads/ETP-pratique/conducteurs-outils/competences-adapation/Monpetitcarnet.pdf>

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