

henshaws

beyond expectations

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• affirmations for kids

Affirmations are more than just a modern and trendy idea: they are highly beneficial to children and young people, and adults (of all ages). Most children will have dips in self-confidence and self-esteem as they grow. Having a positive mindset will not only help them in school, but will help them grow into happier young people.

**I am good
at listening
to others.**



In the current climate, with the difficulties the world is facing with Covid-19, it is easy for both adults and children to get sucked into negative thinking. Whilst it is healthy for children to express their emotions, getting stuck in negative emotions for an extended period is not helpful for their mental health.

Words are powerful! The words we say in our own mind can affect how things go for us, how we see the world and how confident we feel within ourselves.

Positive statements we hear in our self talk, and from others, can create a sense of calm, strength and kindness. Likewise, negative words have the power to hurt, or make you feel useless or unworthy. Affirmations are positive, helpful statements that you repeat to yourself regularly, to help take control of your thoughts and positively affect your day. They have been proven to help change mindset from negative to positive. Growing up can be tricky at times, but empathy and positivity can go a long way. We want our children to be both kind to others and to themselves.



**I can ask
for help.**

**I am not
afraid to try
new things
and new
ideas.**

Introducing the Concept of Affirmations

The best way to introduce the concept of affirmations to children is the analogy of listening to music. We can listen to music on our devices, and we have choices: we can continue to listen to the same song with the same words over and over, or we can change the song at any time.

Repetitive thoughts are just like playing that same song repeatedly in our heads. Talk to your child about how our 'inner voice' works. Sometimes, negative thoughts play over in our heads just like a song. Maybe it is a 'song' about not being good enough, or being scared or worried about something. At other times, it might be a positive 'song' telling us how good we are at something or how well we have tried. It is important to acknowledge that this happens to everyone, and that is it perfectly normal.



It is also important that your child realises that we are able to change the 'song' that is in our heads. If it is a negative song, change it to a positive one. Positive self-talk leads to a positive mindset. Changing the song in our heads takes practice, the more we do it, the easier it becomes. Children need to hear positive statements, both from those around them and from themselves, over and over again. If you, as a parent, show a positive attitude to life, and show kindness and optimism, your child will learn from that, but it is important to also positively teach it too. Introducing affirmations, or activities around affirmations is a small but mighty way to support your child's mental well-being.



What kind of affirmations can I use?

The internet is awash with ideas for affirmations to use with children. Affirmations should reflect personal values and may shift as the child gets older. Below are just some of the affirmations that are useful to use with children, but you may choose to use ones which focus on particular feelings that will benefit your child, for example: anger, anxiety or jealousy.

- I have lots to be proud of.
- It's ok to make mistakes.
- I'm good at lots of things.
- My smile makes other people happy.
- I am a good friend.
- I can feel sad and know that I will be ok.
- I can share what I'm feeling.
- I can wake up grumpy and still make it a good day.
- It is ok if things don't always go to plan.
- I am excited to see what I can do.
- I have hopes and dreams for myself.
- I notice when someone needs help.
- I am unique.
- I can listen to advice.
- I will not give up when learning is difficult.



● activities using affirmations

“I allow myself to smile and feel the happiness I deserve”

Happiness Jar

With your child, fill a jar with relevant affirmations. Use coloured paper or card to make it more appealing. Use large print or a braille to make it accessible. Each week, ask your child to pick out an affirmation and use it to inspire a positive attitude to the week.

Affirmation Board

Get a cork board / poster board and together write/braille, or draw or find pictures to describe their values. It might be two friends playing, somebody helping another person, something they want to achieve or the kind of person they want to be. Encourage your child to include things they believe about themselves, their goals and the things they can't do yet but want to achieve.

A Treasure Chest of Goodness

To help offset negativity in their brain, you can help your child to learn to treasure themselves. Use an old tissue box or small box with a lid. Paint/write/braille the words, 'I am.....'. Fill the box with cards starting with the phrase 'I am...'. It could be 'I am brave', 'I am a hard worker', 'I am good at sport', 'I am a good friend' or 'I am able to help people'. Ask your child to pick a card from the box regularly to promote self-esteem and confidence.

Finally, it is just worth reminding ourselves that a few positive words spoken to ourselves each day can, amazingly, make such a difference to our whole body, our mind, our heart, and physically too. Something very simple can make the world of difference to your child's mental well-being and maybe your own!

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