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## February 2022

Our thoughts naturally shift to love during February and around Valentine's Day. While a new crush/ partner, paper hearts, friendship rings, flowers, and chocolate can be exciting; we think it's a great time to focus on self-love. So what is self-love and how can we foster it in our children?

### What is Self-Love?

Self-love or Self-compassion is the act of seeing, knowing, and accepting one's self. It means asking for what we need, doing the things that help take care of ourselves, and considering our own wellbeing and happiness as important and worthwhile endeavors.

### How do I help my child develop this?

Although we cannot compliment or convince our kids to have self-love, we can help guide them on a path to develop it for themselves. This is a big endeavor and takes time and practice! There is no one activity that creates self-compassion. Through many small acts, thoughts, conversations, and activities, we can build up our self-love reservoir.

1. First and foremost, we need to be examples of what self-love looks like. Do you constantly put yourself down, judge yourself for your mistakes, appearances, or areas where you don't measure up? Do your children see you creating and maintaining boundaries? Are you making time for the self-care items that help you function? Do you always use filters to hide behind in social media?
2. Teach your children how to forgive themselves! This is especially important when they make a mistake or act outside of their morals or values.
3. Invite your children to create mindful moments where they check in with themselves and ask "what do I need right now?" (Be prepared for the answer to sometimes be chocolate chip cookies, hugs, or to play outside ☺)
4. Teach your children what boundaries are, how to set them, and why they are important.
5. Encourage your child to make a "Dailies List" that includes what they NEED each and everyday. This might include: a good breakfast, shower, outside time, hug or snuggle, etc. This list shouldn't be long. Allow your child to be the driver on what they feel they need each day. This is also a great time to teach the difference between NEEDS and WANTS.
6. Encourage your child to ask for things when they need them, and sometimes when they want something.

If you have more questions about these topics or would like more instruction on how to teach this to your children, we are here for you! A parenting consultation is the same price as a regular session(\$75) and can help further your knowledge or help you create a personalized plan.

Do you have a question you would like us to answer in future issues of the newsletter? Please email them to [cmccown@tanqueverdepeds.com](mailto:cmccown@tanqueverdepeds.com)