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IMPRESSIONS

INSIGHTS FROM THE PRACTICE OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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topics which may
be of interest to
professionals
providing services
to children,
adolescents, adults
and their families.*

If you are important in the life of a child and could only give that child one gift, the gift of confidence is more important to her than any material gift could ever be.

A confident child is more likely to become a competent child, one whose positive self-esteem does not allow doubt to take up residence in his psyche. A confident child grows into an adolescent who makes friends easily and into an adult who achieves, sometimes against the odds.

If you examine the lives of people who have succeeded in spite of social or economic disadvantages, you will find confi-

The Gift of Confidence

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dent individuals who have had adults in their lives who believed in them.

How does one instill confidence in a child? Encouraging new experiences, giving praise for effort, and communicating belief in the child's value as a person is helpful. It is also important to stay actively involved with a child by way of patient instruction and ongoing

follow-through so that a child does not engage in trial and error learning without receiving guidance.

Empty praise does not help children learn and creates those who seek flattery in the absence of any real accomplishment while harsh criticism is hurtful to self-esteem, is not instructive, and instills insecurity, not confidence, in children.

Confident children believe in themselves, feel masterful and see mistakes as occasions to learn without feeling defeated. These qualities allow them to be resilient and to recognize no limits to what they can accomplish.