

Helping Children Develop Self-Confidence

This book features a girl who loves her hair but would like others to show respect by asking before they touch it. She learns that trying to run away doesn't help. Instead, she takes charge of her own experiences. She discovers how to capably and confidently establish and enforce personal boundaries.

CORE SKILL OBJECTIVES

INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

RELATE



Children will:

- ◆ Express confidence and positive feelings about self

Teachers will:

- ◆ Promote autonomy

TEACHING TIP

Self-confidence is a child's belief that they are capable—they can do it! When children feel confident in their abilities, they know that what they say or what they want matters. They feel secure in their ability to advocate for themselves. They persevere even when things get tough. Teachers can help children develop self-confidence by letting them know that it's safe for them to express their thoughts, ideas, and needs because they are valued and respected by others in their lives.

1. INTRODUCE

- ◆ "Thumbs up if you've ever had someone in your space, and you've had to say something to get them out of it. It can be hard sometimes to stand up for yourself. Today we're going to read *Don't Touch My Hair* about a girl who stands up for herself and keeps trying even when things are tough."

2. READ THE BOOK

- ◆ Pause occasionally to narrate the challenges the girl is facing in the story and describe how she responds.
- ◆ Encourage children to share their thoughts about the story and acknowledge their responses.

Narrate How to Handle Challenging Situations with Confidence



Read: "... but the critters just can't keep their hands to themselves."

Ask: "Do you think that it's okay for others to invade her space like that? How do you think she's feeling?"

Acknowledge: "You're thinking! She loves her hair, but she doesn't like others touching it without asking. So, she tries to get away from others or she hides, but it's not working. Let's see what else she tries to do."

Read: "This is MY hair. It's great that you love it. I love it, too. But please, just look and don't touch without my permission."

Ask: "What is she doing? How is she taking care of what she needs?"

Acknowledge: "I hear your ideas! She's standing up for herself! She's letting people know what she thinks and needs. If they want to touch her hair, they can ask. She will decide if it's okay for them to touch her hair."

Read: "... people still ask to touch my hair, but if I say no, they listen."

Ask: "How do you know that this solution is working?"

Acknowledge: "Yes! She's doesn't run away anymore. She found a solution that works by standing up for herself. She can tell others 'yes' or 'no.' She feels confident because she's in charge of what happens with her."

3. REVIEW

- ◆ "Sometimes things can be challenging. Everyone wanted to touch Aria's hair! She kept trying new things – hiding and running away – until she found a solution that worked. After she faced her challenge, she felt confident in standing up for herself and letting people know that they might be able to touch her hair if they ask."

4. KEEP IT GOING

- ◆ Let children know that their wants or needs are important. Support and encourage them to stand up for themselves (e.g., "I see that your friend is too close. What can you say so that you can have more room for your body?"). Understanding others' wants and needs may be difficult for some children. Make these concepts as concrete as possible by introducing social stories or using items like a hula-hoop to demonstrate boundaries.