

# Self-Esteem

## Introduction

Psychology Assistants from Milton Keynes Council Educational Psychology Service created a self-esteem programme based off of two books: 'Positive people: a self-esteem building course for young people' – Claire Moore and Tina Rae and 'Confidence, Assertiveness, Self-Esteem' – Tina Rae. The programme was designed for use by teachers, TAs and parents/carers who are seeking to provide support for children and young people who are presenting difficulties regarding low confidence and self-esteem and may need a boost in this area.



## Psychological Underpinning

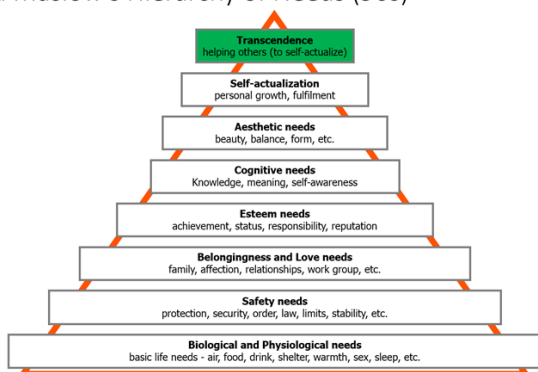
Self-esteem and its effects have been widely studied within Psychology for many years. This research has repeatedly shown the importance of building self-esteem.

One piece of research was done by Orth & Robins (2014), who analysed longitudinal studies examining self-esteem and found that self-esteem is likely to peak at about 50/60 years old and then decrease into old age. They also suggest that recent research shows self-esteem does not fluctuate over time, but that we build up foundations of self-worth and that this is relatively stable, but by no means immutable. Lastly, they suggest that self-esteem is predictive of a person's success and well-being in important life domains including satisfaction in marriage and relationships, social support, physical and mental health, education, employment and criminal behaviour.

This piece of research shows how important it is to build self-esteem early in life in order to give children and young people the best chance in many life domains going in to adulthood.

Maslow (1954) developed a hierarchy of needs, which has since been extended, and suggested that all levels must be met for people to truly fulfil their potential in life.

## Extended Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (90s)



## The Intervention

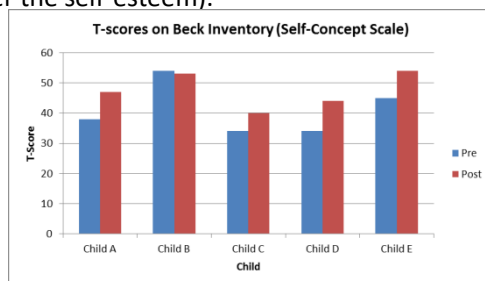
The Psychology Assistants from Milton Keynes Council Educational Psychology Service delivered this intervention in a primary school. The school chose 5 children in Year 4/5 who they thought would benefit from the intervention. The intervention was delivered by the Psychology Assistants over 8 weeks (with a Teaching Assistant being present), each session lasted an hour and focused on a different topic (e.g. practising positive thinking and being a good friend to ourselves)

## Results

Progress was measured through a pre and post test of the self-concept scale from the Beck Youth Inventory. The table below show the qualitative descriptors from the pre and post test for each child.

Child	Pre	Post
Child A	much lower than average	average
Child B	average	average
Child C	much lower than average	lower than average
Child D	much lower than average	lower than average
Child E	average	average

The graph below shows t-scores from the pre and post test for each child (where the higher the score, the better the self-esteem).



## Conclusion

The results highlight that overall, each child's self-esteem made progress over the 8 weeks.

## Taking it further

The Psychology Assistants are currently undertaking a research project on the efficacy of the self-esteem intervention under the supervision of Dr Sima McGuigan, involving 4-6 schools.