

Study: inflated praise is damaging for children with low self-esteem

January 10, 2014

Wired:

As counterintuitive as it may seem, a study has revealed that inflated praise given to children who are suffering from low self-esteem could be detrimental to their ability to overcome their feelings of inadequacy. Whilst children with high self-esteem are seen to flourish when given inflated praise, those with low self-esteem are more likely to spurn new challenges when they are too heavily praised.

Inflated praise was defined in this research as an adverb, such as “incredibly”, or an adjective, such as “perfect”, attached to an already positive statement, resulting in an inflated evaluation of a child’s performance. For example, “You’re good at this” is not inflated, whereas “You’re incredibly good at this” is inflated. Lead author of the study, Eddie Brummelman, also discovered that adults gave twice as much inflated praise to children with low self-esteem than to children with high self-esteem.

Read the whole story: [Wired](#)