

# “Mom, Am I Good Enough?”

## How To Address Tough Issues And Build Girls’ Self-Esteem

(NAPSA)—Girls today are facing increasing pressure to do it all—and do it perfectly—which is stressing them out and causing their self-esteem to plummet. Parents can make a difference by helping girls navigate difficult issues around body image, boys and the pressure to do well in school. While the top wish among girls is for their parents to communicate better with them, according to *Real Girls, Real Pressure: A National Report on the State of Self-Esteem* (Dove, 2008), many parents just do not know how to start the conversation.

The Dove® Self-Esteem Fund, established as part of the Campaign for Real Beauty, is committed to reaching 5 million girls globally by 2010 with self-esteem building programming. That is why it has collaborated with Jess Weiner, best-selling author and self-esteem expert, to create tips to help parents tackle some of the toughest subjects that teen girls face today.

**1. Supergirl Syndrome:** Girls may respond to the pressure around them from school, media, parents and peers by trying to do it all (look perfect, get good grades and have a busy social life) and do it all perfectly.

**Tip:** Encourage your daughter to find her favorite one or two activities and focus on doing them well, rather than being the very best at everything. Set an example for her by doing the same thing in your life.

**2. Body Image Breakdown:** When girls feel bad about their looks, more than 70 percent age 15 to 17 avoid normal daily activi-



**“Self-esteem can be a tough subject to discuss, but it is more important than ever for parents and other role models to talk to girls and get involved. Every person has the power to help girls gain confidence and reach their full potential.”—Jess Weiner, Global Ambassador for the Dove Self-Esteem Fund**

ties such as attending school, going to the doctor or even giving their opinion, as *Beyond Stereotypes: Rebuilding the Foundation of Beauty Beliefs* (Dove, 2006) revealed.

**Tip:** Your daughter’s body image starts with you. Show her each and every day how great you feel about your body and your looks—you will build the foundation for how she sees her body and the importance of how she looks.

**3. Cyberbullying:** The Internet has become an additional platform for the teasing and taunting of vulnerable girls. More than one in ten girls age 8 to 17 have been bullied online *Real Girls, Real*

*Pressure: A National Report on the State of Self-Esteem* (Dove, 2008) revealed.

**Tip:** If you find your daughter is participating in cyberbullying (by bullying or being bullied), do not ignore it, thinking it is harmless. Talk to your daughter about how it feels and let her know you understand it hurts. If your daughter is engaging in cyberbullying, talk to her about how it feels to be on the receiving end and ask her what is making her do this. If you find your daughter is being victimized, remind her that while she cannot always control what is said in school, she can control her reactions to it.

**4. Frenemies:** Frenemies are defined as relationships in which girls behave as half friends and half enemies. Self-esteem plays a crucial role in determining a girl’s tendency to engage in this type of behavior.

**Tip:** Talk to your daughter regularly and let her know you are aware of things that go on in school. Encourage her to walk away from a friendship that harms her and make other friends.

**5. Clashing with Cliques:** From jocks and geeks to drama queens and cheerleaders, cliques are rampant in middle school and high school.

**Tip:** Help your daughter recognize that being authentic is better than any label out there.

Every person can make a difference in the life of girls. To learn more, visit [campaignforrealbeauty.com](http://campaignforrealbeauty.com), where you can download free self-esteem building tools for girls, moms and mentors.