

# Teach

## UNIT 1

### Goal

To learn that we feel good about ourselves, or have a positive **self-concept**, when we do positive actions, and there is a positive way to do everything.

### Kit provides:

Music and lyrics on Resources website (also see lyrics in Appendix B), 9ICU Box, 9“Word of the Week” card:, Positive Action.

### You provide:

Pencils, pens, markers, or crayons; writing paper; audio player, internet access. Optional: eggs; needle (if hanging eggs); glue; yarn; sequins, buttons, pieces of fabric or paper, other decorating items.

### Step 1 Positive Thoughts

*Anne Marie hit the front door of her aunt's house on a dead run, steps ahead of her big brother Sam. She was laughing and teasing, telling him he was more than just a pretty face. Sam had gotten an “A” on a difficult science test, the one about cells.*

*“Yeah, Anne Marie, but I studied hard. Science isn’t easy for me.”*

*“Hey, I know, and I’m proud of you. Let’s go tell Aunt Louise.”*



*Anne Marie and Sam rushed to Aunt Louise’s office and found her working. She opened her arms wide and scooped her niece and nephew up in a big hug, enjoying every second of their presence in her life. Aunt Louise was eager to listen to what they had to tell her.*

*Sam and Anne Marie told her about Sam’s test and how hard he had studied, and about Anne Marie’s Fun Run coming*

up on Saturday and how she'd been training every day.

Aunt Louise asked, "So how do you feel about yourselves when you do those things, those positive actions?"

"Great, Aunt Louise, just great." Anne Marie and Sam said the same words at the same time. There was silence for a second or two.

Aunt Marie grinned and said, "That goes double for me."

All three looked at one another and laughed. "Just wait until you get home and tell your parents," Aunt Louise said. "They are going to love Sam's news!"

Anne Marie, Sam, and Aunt Louise liked the good feelings they got about themselves when they did positive actions. **We all want to feel good about ourselves.** Feeling good about ourselves is one of our most basic needs. Almost everything we think, do, and feel is aimed at meeting that need to feel good about ourselves.

**The way we think and feel about ourselves is called our self-concept.** Our self-concept affects our goals, our attitudes, and our decisions. It impacts everyone, including ourselves, our families, and our communities. The way we feel about ourselves is important to everything we do with our lives.

**Hold up page and show examples.**

Here are a few examples of self-concept, or positive and negative feelings about ourselves:

### Self-Concept



The way we think and feel about ourselves is the result of the actions we take. In other words, our self-concept is formed by what we do. The main idea of the *Positive Action* program is that **we feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions, and there is a positive way to do everything.** Positive actions are the good deeds we do for ourselves and for others. Our positive and negative actions affect us, and they often affect others, too. We need to consider the actions we take as well as the effect of our actions on others, and we have to remember that—no matter what—we can take a positive action.

**Hold up page and show examples.**

Here are a few examples of positive and negative actions:





To feel good about ourselves, we need to take positive actions in the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional areas of our lives. For example, Anne Marie did *physical* positive actions when she ran. Sam learned how to study and achieve in science, an *intellectual* positive action. Aunt Louise did *emotional* positive actions when she showed her niece and nephew that she cared about them.

Aunt Louise knew how to care about her niece and her nephew and how to treat others' self concepts positively. She treated Sam and Anne Marie with respect, love, and good humor. She also knew that the way we treat others' self-concepts affects our own. When we affect someone else's self-concept, we affect our own self-concept. Aunt Louise knew that we need to treat our self-concept and one another's self-concepts with care.

When we do positive actions, we feel good about ourselves; our self-concept is positive. When we do negative actions, we feel bad about ourselves; our self-concept is negative. Abraham Lincoln said it this way: **"When I do good I feel good, and when I do bad I feel bad."**

We will develop a positive self-concept when we choose to do positive actions. Sounds simple, doesn't it? But if it's so simple, why don't we do positive actions all the time? Well, just because something is simple to understand doesn't mean it's easy to do. Here are some reasons why we might not always do positive actions:

**First**, we don't always know what positive actions are. To one degree or another, we learn in various places what positive actions are: in homes, places of worship, schools, and in society in general. As best we can, we have learned what's good to do and what's bad to do but often in a haphazard way.

Some of us have been taught the difference between positive and negative actions. But sometimes what we've been taught hasn't been clear, or we have received mixed messages. The messages are mixed because the teaching of values at home, school, and church is often countered in other parts of society such as the media.

Also, we don't know which actions are positive because what's positive is often cloaked in confusion. Our popular culture sometimes represents negative actions as positive. Sometimes it suggests that negative actions are "cool" or sophisticated or essential for acceptance or for self-preservation. Television, music, movies, and other media often suggest that negative actions are necessary in order to succeed in this society. Positive actions and positive role models don't get much attention. And often it's difficult for homes, schools, and churches to counteract this confusion and do all the screening that's necessary.

**Second**, because we haven't been taught it directly, we may not understand at a conscious level why and how positive actions work to form a positive self-concept. We haven't learned in a conscious way that our good deeds are positive actions and that our positive actions help us feel good about ourselves.

**Third**, another reason we might not do positive actions is that positive actions are harder to do at first than negative actions. Positive actions require more discipline and effort. We have to do positive actions deliberately and follow through with them.

Negative actions seem to happen easily. It's easier to not exercise than to exercise. It's simpler to not learn than to learn. Creating takes discipline; destroying requires little or no discipline. Being responsible takes lots of work; just letting things slide is ridiculously easy. Being respectful takes sensitivity, intelligence, and effort; being rude requires no intellect, no social skills, no effort. Telling the truth takes courage, but lying is a slick way out. Setting and achieving goals takes planning and follow-through; if we don't set goals, we don't risk failing.

Negative actions leave us feeling out-of-control, vulnerable, and lacking in confidence. But positive actions are worth the effort. When it comes to self-concept, we're building either a positive self-concept or a negative one, depending on our actions. There is no "in between."

Even though positive actions are more difficult, they are more rewarding and work better in the end. They bring us joy, peace, and a sense of satisfaction about our lives. While they take more effort in the beginning, in the end positive actions are much easier. When we exercise, we are healthier and are likely to exercise more. When we are creating, we gain confidence in ourselves and will try creating in even more areas. Being respectful gives us self-respect, and the more we respect ourselves the more respectful we'll be of others.

Our lives run better when we are responsible. Telling ourselves the truth helps us make better decisions and solve problems easier. When we see things working well for us, we'll work harder to make good decisions and solve problems. By improving ourselves we'll gain more confidence. When we're more confident, we'll set more goals for ourselves. We feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions—we have a positive self-concept.

It improves how well we learn and work, how we give and receive love, and how we get along with others. A positive self-concept helps us avoid substances that can harm us, such as alcohol and other drugs, and enables us to contribute to our community. Feeling good about ourselves is vital to our well-being; it affects our whole lives.

"We feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions, and there is a positive way to do everything" are thoughts we need to keep in our minds. Learning to do positive actions is a big step in our lives. The more positive actions we do, the more confidence we gain in our ability to do them. And when we do them well, we feel even better about ourselves.

Feeling good about ourselves is one of our strongest needs. In spite of all the negative actions we are exposed to in our culture, we are still moved and thrilled by positive, uplifting messages. We identify with them. Why? Because we feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions! Let's work to feel good about ourselves! Remember, there is a positive way to do everything!

**Questions.** *What is self-concept? How is self-concept formed? Why is our self-concept important? What do we do to have a positive self-concept? Why don't we always do positive actions so we can feel good about ourselves?*

## Step 2 Positive Actions

### Personal Positive Actions

Discuss:

- Why do you feel good about yourself when you do positive actions?
- What positive actions have you done that made you feel good about yourself?
- Why do you feel bad about yourself when you do negative actions?
- What negative actions have you done that made you feel bad about yourself?
- Do you generally do more positive or negative actions?
- Do you generally feel more positive or negative about yourself?

Plan and Do:

Let's learn something about how we feel about ourselves.

First, draw a smiling face on a sheet of paper. Then turn the paper over and draw a frowning face on the other side.

***Distribute paper and something to draw with. Give everyone time to draw the faces.***

I will read some pairs of words. When I do, if you have positive feelings about yourself in response to the words, show me the smiling face. If you have negative feelings, show me the frowning face. Or if you would rather not show everyone else your response, just make a check mark on one side of the paper or the other.

***Read each of the five pairs of feelings about ourselves shown in the illustration that follows: happy/unhappy, confident/uncertain, etc. Allow everyone to respond. You may need to explain some words to younger children.***



## Self-Concept



Let's talk about our responses. When we do positive actions, do we have positive feelings about ourselves? If we have many negative feelings, is it because we do negative actions?

**Discuss the way positive and negative feelings affect self-concept.**

Let's remember that even though positive actions take discipline and follow-through, the effort is worth it. We simply feel better about ourselves when we do positive actions.

Now we'll listen to the "Self-Concept Unit Song." This song is an easy way to learn more about self-concept.



### Music

**Play the "Self-Concept Unit Song" from the Resources website (see Introduction).**

Family Positive Actions

Discuss:

- Is our family positive most of the time?
- What positive actions do we do now to feel good about ourselves as a family?
- How do negative actions affect us as a family?
- How can we help one another develop positive self-concepts?

Plan and Do:

**Two options are available for this activity. Decide ahead of time which one you want to do and prepare the materials for it.**

Option 1: Drawing Self-Portraits.

We're going to draw self-portraits to represent our positive self-concepts. This activity will help us look at our own and others' self-concepts and learn how to care for them in positive ways. Let's draw the pictures of ourselves and make our portraits very positive.

**Draw self-portraits.**

Now let's discuss why it's important to treat our own and others' self-concepts in positive ways.

**Discuss why it's important to treat self-concept with positive actions.**

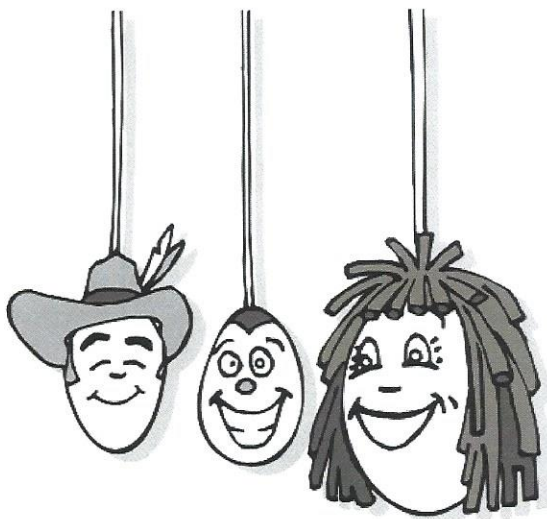
Let's hang our self-concept portraits in a special place as a reminder to keep our self-concepts positive.

Option 2: Eggshell Self-Portraits.

Making eggshell self-portraits is a fun way to learn how to care for our own as well as others' self-concepts. We'll each need an empty eggshell. Eggshells are emptied by blowing the insides out through a small hole in the shell. (If we'd rather, we can use hard-boiled eggs, and then follow the instructions for drawing faces and decorating them.)

***Be sure eggs are washed thoroughly before you begin. You probably want to be in the kitchen since blowing out eggs can be messy.***

Use the needle to poke a small hole in the top of the eggshell, making sure to



***Some of the activities in these parent sections involve both parents. If you are a single parent or if your spouse is unable to do these activities with you, you may do them by yourself.***

### **Parent Positive Actions**

**Ask Yourself:** How do you feel about yourself as a parent? How do you think your children feel about themselves?

**Plan and Do:** This week as you take actions, think how they make you feel about yourself as a parent. Also, watch your children, and see how their actions affect their self- concepts. See the main idea of the *Positive Action* program at work in you as a parent and in your children: “We feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions.”



### **Music**

Listen to the song “Children Are the Hope of the World” on the Positive Action Resources website. Really listen to the words. Think what it would be like for you and your children to “live your dream.” Think what a difference a positive self- concept can make for you, for your children, and for your relationship. Think what a difference you, as a positive family, can make in your community.

pierce the yolk, and a larger hole in the bottom of the eggshell. Carefully blow the yolk and the white through the larger hole into a bowl.

### ***Blow out the eggs.***

Thread the yarn through the needle, and tie a large knot in one end of the yarn. Put the needle in the bottom hole and pull it out through the top hole. The knot should slip through the bottom hole but catch securely in the top of the shell. Then pull the needle free from the yarn. We’ll hang our eggshell portraits with the yarn when we are finished.

### ***Thread the eggshells.***

Let’s draw our most positive faces on our eggshells and then use yarn, sequins, buttons, pieces of fabric or paper, or other interesting things to decorate our egg- shells. Our eggshell portraits will represent our positive self-concepts.

### ***Make eggshell self-portraits.***

Let’s think about self-concept as some- thing to treat very carefully—as we would an eggshell—in ourselves and others by using positive actions. While we’re think- ing about it, we will pass our eggshell self-portraits around for each of us to see and hold very carefully.

***Carefully pass the eggshell self-portraits from person to person until everyone has held everyone***



***else's eggshell self-portrait.***

Now let's discuss why it's important to treat our own and one another's self-concepts in positive ways and how to do that by taking positive actions.

***Discuss the importance of treating our own and others' self-concepts in positive ways by using positive actions.***

Let's hang our eggshell portraits where we can see them frequently as a reminder that everyone's self-concept should be treated carefully with positive actions.

***Hang eggshell self-portraits in a special place. If the eggs are hard-boiled, display them in the carton for a few days; then throw them away.*****Community Positive Actions**

Communities have a self-concept, too. We can do our part to create a positive self-concept for our community.

Let's review the list of positive and negative feelings and discuss our community.

For instance, if the community seems more peaceful than anxious, hold up your paper with the smiling face showing. If the community seems more anxious than peaceful, show the frowning face. Then we'll discuss why we think our community is peaceful or anxious.

As we go through each of these five feelings about self-concept, we'll get a clearer sense of our community's self-concept. We can spend the week thinking about our community's self-concept. Once we have an overall sense of community self-concept, we will know better how to serve our community through positive actions.

**Self-Concept****Step 3 Positive Feelings**

**Our self-concept is how we think and feel about ourselves.** We all want to feel good about ourselves. Feeling good about ourselves is one of our most basic needs. How we feel about ourselves affects our whole lives.

How we think and feel about ourselves is determined by the actions we take. We feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions. Positive actions are the good deeds we do for ourselves and for others. When we do negative actions, we feel bad about ourselves—our self-concept is negative. To feel good about ourselves, we need to take positive actions in all areas of our lives—physical, intellectual, social, and emotional. We need to take positive actions in all situations—no matter what—because there is a positive way to do everything.

Why don't we do positive actions all the time? First, we may not always know what positive actions are. Second, we may not consciously understand how positive actions form a positive self-concept. Third, in the beginning positive actions are harder to do than negative actions. Positive actions require discipline and follow-through, but they are worth the effort. Even though they take time and effort, we get joy and satisfaction—and we feel good about ourselves—when we do positive actions. And remember, there is a positive way to do everything.

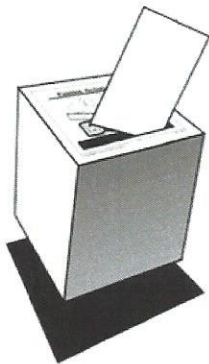
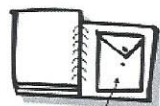
Like Anne Marie, Sam, and Aunt Louise, we can develop a more positive self-concept as we do more positive actions. Our actions must be carefully and responsibly thought out because they affect not only us, but they affect others as well. We need to treat our self-concept and one another's self-concepts with care.

Positive actions bring us joy, peace, and a sense of satisfaction about our lives. We gain in confidence and capability. We trust ourselves to do positive actions. Doing positive actions helps us feel good about ourselves.

**Introduction to the ICU Box.** Here's a *Positive Action* activity we'll be doing in each lesson of the *Family Kit*.

**ICU Box****Show the ICU Box.**

We'll put notes in this box when we see one another doing positive actions. It's called an ICU Box. Here's how it works. When **I See You (ICU) Doing Something Positive** during the week, I'll write your action on a piece of paper and put it in the ICU Box. We can all do the same thing. Each week we'll open the box and read the ICU notes aloud while we are together. Let's be generous with our ICU notes to one another. Let's see how positive the climate in our home can become.

**ICU Box****Materials**

**Show this "Word of the Week" card. Then put it up where everyone can see it throughout the week. Use and practice the word whenever possible. You might want to make a display, adding the new card each week.**

Word of the Week:

**Positive Action**

*To do or cause good things to happen.*