



Teenhelp

menu



Well-Being - Confidence & self esteem

Q. I am a 16-year-old girl. I like school and got on well in my Junior Cert. But when I go to discos I feel shy and awkward. I'm not very good at putting on make-up and feel fat most of the time. I have a few close friends but just don't feel confident about myself when socialising outside school. What can I do?

A. Many young people feel like this and some are better than others at hiding it. It is a normal part of growing up, feeling that others look and get on with people better than you do. It sounds like you have a lot of talents and devote time to studying and school life. You are also able to have close friendships with girls who appreciate you. It is not necessary to be good at putting on make-up to look nice. Young girls often gain a little weight when they are teenagers; this is natural and doesn't mean you are fat. Focus on the things you like about yourself and continue to enjoy school and your close friendships.

It might help to talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling, such as a close friend, your parents or another close relative or a teacher. You will find that many adults will remember how they felt when they were your age, shy and lacking confidence even though they had many talents and positive traits, just like you.

Q. I am a 16-year-old boy who recently dropped out of school. I was good at football in primary school but haven't played since then. I get irritated when the lads talk about girls they have been with. I never ask a girl out because I know she would say no. I get fed up at times, especially when I see my older brother getting on so well at school and everything. What can I do?



A At the moment it sounds like your confidence is a bit low and that things might be getting on top of you. Many people your age can feel like this. Start to focus on the positive things about yourself. You say you were good at football when you were younger. Check things out at your local football club. Most clubs are on the look out for experienced players like you. Taking part in sport will help make you feel better anyway and might encourage you to try out other new things.

Start to focus on the positive things about yourself

Some boys boast a lot about their success with girls. Often that's because they too feel shy or insecure about it all and boast as a cover up. You and your older brother are different, not better or worse, just different. As you get older you will discover other things you are good at so think about that rather than comparing yourself with your brother.

Talk to someone about how you are feeling - perhaps a close friend, your parents or another family member or someone else that you trust. If you want, you could talk with a counsellor to help you work through your thoughts and feelings. To find out ways of getting help and advice from people outside your family, check out the [Finding Help](#) section.