

Positive Self-Talk (Levels A-B)

WRITTEN

To build early confidence, regulation, and emotional strength by introducing simple positive self-talk phrases that help students feel proud, brave, and ready to try.



Learning Intentions

Notice Positive Words:



Students will explore simple, happy, and encouraging words through visuals, gestures, or AAC.

Practise Kind Self-Talk:

Students will practise saying or showing positive words about themselves with adult support.

Use Self-Talk in the Moment:

Students will learn to use one positive word or gesture during a challenging or new activity.



Success Criteria

Students choose or copy one to three simple positive words (spoken, gestured, pointed to, or selected on AAC).

Students show how the words make them feel, smile, gesture, vocalisation, or pointing to an emotion visual.

Students practise their affirmation through a gesture, symbol, AAC activation, or simple repeat-after-me routine.



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Duration: 10 minutes

Objective

To build early confidence, regulation, and emotional strength by introducing simple positive self-talk phrases that help students feel proud, brave, and ready to try.

What You Need

Paper or card

Coloured pencils

Visual affirmation cards (examples: "I can," "I try my best," "I am strong," "I am kind," "I am brave," "I am happy") (found in PDF resource)

Emotion visual cards (happy, proud, calm) (found in PDF resource)

AAC devices with affirmation words or core vocabulary ("I can," "good," "happy," "strong," "try," "yes")

Optional: superhero capes, scarves, or small props to match poses

Setup

1. Print and cut out the visual affirmation cards and emotion visual cards
2. The teacher introduces positive self-talk:
"Positive self-talk means saying kind words to *ourselves*."
3. Teacher models with visuals and gestures:
 - "I am strong!" (superhero pose)
 - "I can try!" (thumbs up)
 - "I am kind!" (hand to heart)
4. Students receive paper/card and choose from 3–6 visual affirmation cards.

Gameplay / Activity Steps

Step 1: Choose Positive Words

As the teacher go through each affirmation card and briefly explain each one to the students. Students will then select **1–3 affirmation cards** by:

- pointing to a visual card
- touching or picking up the card
- pressing AAC button
- adult offering 2-picture choice and the student choosing one of the two (repeat twice).
- nodding or vocalising to show preferences



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Step 2: Write, Stick, or Draw

Students then decorate their affirmation cards by:

- colouring the words already printed on the cards
- drawing simple images (heart, star, smile, muscle arm) on their cards
- sticking symbols or stamps on the cards
- tracing words with support

Encourage simple, bold visuals for recognition.

Step 3: Practise Saying the Words

Students then aim to repeat their affirmation using:

- their voice
- AAC button
- gesture (thumbs up, superhero pose, smile, hand-to-heart)
- eye contact and nodding

Or a combination of the above.

Teachers can help to model each one with slow rhythm:

“I can do it” (grit your teeth)

“I am strong” (flex your bicep muscles)

“I try my best” (hand on heart or index fingers pointing to temples in the head)

Step 4: Use the Affirmation in Context

Teacher introduces a simple challenge (throw a ball, pick up a block, balance, draw a circle).

Students repeat one of their affirmation cards before trying the task.

Teacher prompts:

“Say your positive words! ... Now try.”

“Which word helps you feel strong?”

This supports emotional regulation and bravery during challenges.

Reflection Prompts

Use visuals and simple choices:

- “How do your positive words make you feel?” (happy, calm, proud)
- “Which word do you like best?”
- “Show me your strong/kind/brave pose!”
- “Do you want to use your positive words tomorrow?” (yes/no)

Any response, gesture, look, AAC, is celebrated.



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Sensory-Seeking Learners Variation

1. Add Movement to Each Affirmation

Pair words with full-body sensory actions:

- "I am strong!" → big superhero stance
- "I can try!" → stomp and thumbs up
- "I am brave!" → chest out, arms wide
- "I am calm." → close eyes and breathe out deeply and calmly

2. Use Sensory Affirmation Cards

Laminate textured cards:

- rough = strong
- soft = kind
- shiny = brave
- fluffy = happy

Students select affirmations by touch.

3. Action Chant

Create a rhythmic routine:

Clap-clap → "I can!"

Stomp-clap → "I try!"

Stretch arms → "I am brave!"

4. Affirmation Movement Path

Place affirmations on the floor.

Students step, roll, or reach toward their chosen card and do the matching movement.

AAC-Specific Supports

1. Prepare Vocabulary

Include symbols such as:

- I can
- strong
- happy
- try
- brave
- good
- more
- finished

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2. Aided Language Input

Teacher models:

"I can."

"I try."

"You are strong."

"You feel happy."

3. Choice-Making

Use 2-picture choices:

"Strong or happy?"

"I can or I try?"

Students respond by AAC, eye gaze, pointing, or reaching.



4. AAC Practice

Students press their chosen affirmation repeatedly as part of the routine.

This builds confidence and familiarity.

5. AAC Reflection

Students may express:

- "happy"
- "good"
- "more"
- "finished"
- "I like it"



AFFIRMATION CARDS

PRINT THE CARDS, CUT THEM OUT, AND LET STUDENTS PICK THEIR FAVOURITES. GIVE COLOURING TOOLS SO THEY CAN DECORATE THE WORDS, THEN HELP THEM PRACTISE SAYING EACH AFFIRMATION WITH VOICE, GESTURE, OR AAC. USE THE MATCHING EMOTION CARDS TO SHOW HOW THE WORDS MAKE THEM FEEL.



**I AM
KIND**



**I AM
HELPFUL**



AFFIRMATION CARDS

**I AM
BRAVE**



**I AM
CALM**



AFFIRMATION CARDS

**I AM
STRONG**



**I AM
PATIENT**



AFFIRMATION CARDS



AFFIRMATION CARDS

**I AM
ENOUGH**



**I AM
THANKFUL**

