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- *The job of parenting Family influences on the development of self-esteem in infancy.*
- *The parents of little despots New fathers.*
- *When parents separate.*

### **Presentation**

The second volume of this series is intended to help parents to have greater knowledge of their own child and of themselves by asking new questions. Every child is unique, as is the family in which they grow up: this volume tries to offer a new point of view on the development of the mind and personality of the child, on their life of relationships and feelings.

The initial chapter reveals the complex process through which 'the role of parents' is learned, not only concretely, but also from an emotional point of view. The author focuses on the internal and external vicissitudes that accompany this crucial passage, offering insights on the distinction between being partners and being parents, on the relational dynamics of couples and on the different and complementary functions performed by the mother and father.

All parents want their children to develop good self-esteem, but this is not an easy task. In the second chapter we will try to understand how the relationship between parents and children can affect the growth of self-confidence of children. Through observations, we will see that the development of self-esteem is affected not only by the relationship with parents, but also by that with siblings. Often parents meet difficulty in giving rules and limits to children. One of the chapters is aimed at the parents of 'little despots', arrogant, aggressive and tyrannical children, to help them understand the meaning of the behaviour of their child without reacting to their violence with the same violence, distinguishing the aspects of childhood aggressiveness functional in development from those which should be opposed with firmness.

In the whole series ample space is given to the role of fathers, but in particular in the fourth chapter of this volume: after a historical and cultural introduction on the role of the father in the development of children, the author analyses the relationship between father and son, first neonate and then adolescent.

The volume ends with a reflection on how difficult it is for children to pass through the experience of the separation of parents, which can happen both as a disruptive and unexpected event and as the culmination of a period of instability and tension; in these situations children show (in different ways) pain, anxiety, uncertainty, hostility and fear, linked to a sense of guilt, evident or latent, and to experiences of impotence.

We hope that parents find in these pages stimuli to develop a capacity to observe and reflect on the feelings and behaviour of their children and that this understanding can help them to face difficulties and promote change.