DIAGNOSTIC SUGGESTIONS:
Axis I:  
303.90  Alcohol Dependence  
304.30  Cannabis Dependence  
300.4  Dysthymic Disorder  
300.02  Generalized Anxiety Disorder  
V61.21  Neglect of Child (995.52, Victim)  
V61.21  Physical Abuse of Child (995.54, Victim)  
300.23  Social Phobia  
309.21  Separation Anxiety Disorder  
266.xx  Major Depressive Disorder  
314.01  Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Type

Axis II:  
V62.89  Borderline Intellectual Functioning  
317  Mild Mental Retardation

BEHAVIORAL DEFINITIONS
1. Inability to accept compliments.
2. Verbalization of self-disparaging remarks; seeing him/herself as unattractive, worthless, stupid, a loser, a burden, and unimportant; taking blame easily.
3. Avoiding contact with adults and peers.
4. Excessively seeking to please or receive attention and praise from adults and/or peers.
5. Inability to identify or accept his/her positive traits or talents.
6. Fear of rejection by others, especially the peer group.
7. Acting out in negative ways that are quite obviously attention seeking.
8. Difficulty saying no to others; fear of being liked by others.

LONG TERM GOALS
1. Elevate self-esteem.
2. Continue to build a consistent, positive self-image.
3. Demonstrate improved self-esteem through the acceptance of compliments, the identification of positive characteristics about him/herself, the ability to say no to others, and the absence of self-disparaging remarks.
4. Attain the core belief that he/she is lovable and capable.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES
1. Verbalize an increased awareness of self-disparaging statements.
2. Decrease the frequency of negative self-descriptive statements.
3. Decrease the verbalized fear of rejection while increasing statements of self-acceptance.
4. Identify positive traits and talents about him/herself.
5. Develop the ability to identify and verbalize feelings.
6. Increase eye contact with others.
7. Identify accomplishments that can improve self-image.
8. Develop the ability to identify and express verbally his/her needs.
9. Show recognition verbally or in writing of the secondary gains received from negative behaviors.
10. Take responsibility for daily self-care tasks that are developmentally age appropriate.
11. List specific things to do to build self-esteem and ways to implement each.
12. Positively acknowledge and verbally accept praise or compliments from others.
14. The parents identify specific ways they can assist in developing self-esteem in the client.
15. The parents verbalize realistic expectations for the client.
16. The parents verbally reinforce the client's active attempts to build self-esteem.
17. Increase the frequency of speaking up with confidence in social situations.

**THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS**

1. Use play therapy techniques to probe the causes for the client's low self-esteem.
2. Use role play and behavioral rehearsal to improve the client's assertiveness and social skills.
3. Assist the client in becoming capable of identifying and verbalizing needs.
4. Conclude a family session in which the client expresses his/her needs to the family and vice versa.
5. Use therapeutic stories to help the client identify feelings and needs and to build self-esteem.
6. Use neurolinguistic programming (NLP) or reframing techniques in which messages about the self are changed to enhance the client's self-esteem.
7. Educate the client in the basics of feelings and assist him/her in beginning to identify them.
8. Help the client reduce the fear of rejections.
9. Help the client and his/her family identify and implement daily responsibilities for that client that are age appropriate. Monitor the follow-through and give positive verbal feedback when warranted.
10. Discuss and interpret incidents of abuse (emotional, physical, sexual) as to how they have impacted the client's feelings about him/herself.
11. Help the client identify distorted negative beliefs about him/herself and the world.
12. Reinforce the client's use of more realistic, positive messages to him/herself in interpreting life events.
13. Ask the client's parents to attend a series on positive parenting then process how they can implement some of these techniques.
15. Assist the client in developing self-talk as a way of boosting his/her confidence and positive self-image.
16. Use a therapeutic game such as: Talking, Feeling, Doing; or The Ungame to promote the client's awareness of him/herself and his/her feelings.
17. Assign self-esteem-building exercises from a workbook such as The Building Blocks of Self-Esteem (Shapiro) or a selected individual exercise.
18. Ask the client to make eye contact when speaking to the therapist during a session, to teachers at school and to parents at home.
19. Assist the client in making consistent eye contact with whomever he/she is speaking.
20. Reinforce verbally the client's use of statements of confidence or positive evaluation about him/herself.
21. Develop with the client a list of affirmations and have him/her read it three times a day to him/herself.
22. Ask the client to make one positive statement about him/herself daily and record it on a chart or in a journal.
23. Refer the client to a self-esteem group.
24. Probe the parents' interactions with the client in family sessions and redirect or rechannel any patterns of interaction or methods of discipline that are demeaning of the client.
25. Assist the client in becoming aware of how he/she expresses or acts out negative feelings about him/herself.
26. Confront and reframe the client's self-disparaging comments.
27. Explore the parents' expectations of the client and assist, if necessary, in making them more realistic.
28. Ask the parents to involve the client in activities that are self-esteem-building such as scouting, experiential camps, music, sports, youth groups, and enrichment programs.