These women—high-wattage celebs and ordinary citizens—have taken extraordinary steps to provide the resources and attention to build self-esteem in those facing life's challenges. We honor our 2004 Mothers & Shakers Award winners for reaching out and shaking things up. Read on to be moved.
UMA THURMAN
For nurturing kids born into poverty

Despite a roller-coaster couple of years—giving birth to two kids (Mara, 6, and Roan, 2), kicking butt in Kill Bill 1 and 2, and separating from husband Ethan Hawke—Uma Thurman has never stopped thinking about improving the lives of others. She’s currently using her star status to raise funds for Room to Grow (roomtogrow.org), a New York-based group (soon opening an office in Boston) that provides low-income children born into poverty with essentials for the first three years of their lives.

Thurman first heard of Room to Grow from a neighbor in 1997 while pregnant with Maya. As a soon-to-be mom herself, she was motivated to get involved. Thurman, who serves on the board of directors, helps with the organization’s financial backing, enabling Room to Grow to provide parents with one-on-one child-rearing guidance, as well as books, clothes, and toys. “I feel very moved by children,” she has said. “They’re innocent and helpless. Their unnecessary suffering takes your breath away. You can’t be a mother and not think about the world your children’s contemporaries are coming into.”