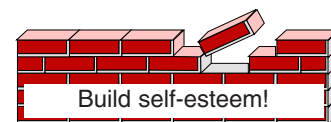








# WAYS OF PRAISE



We know that we need to positively encourage children to help build their self-esteem. In addition to phrases of praise such as "great job!" or "good work!", parents can offer encouragement by asking meaningful questions or describing positive actions and behavior.



| Behavior or action   | What to say  | Result  |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Your child does something considerate for someone else. Your toddler shares a toy; your school age child offers a seat to someone standing on a bus, for example.</p>            | <p>Call attention to the reaction of the recipient of your child's generosity. Go beyond , "Great job for sharing," by saying, "Did you notice how happy he was to be able to play with that toy?" or "Did you notice how appreciative they were to be able to sit down?"</p>  | <p>Children will become aware of how their actions can positively affect others. You show interest, yet your children are allowed to judge their own actions. They'll notice that something they've done is recognized, which is very helpful, according to Dr. Richard M. Ryan, a psychology professor at the University of Rochester. Joan Grusec, a University of Toronto professor, found that children are more likely to be generous when it is noted that they seem to like helping others, a descriptive response rather than just being told, "Great job!"</p> |
|  <p>Your child (preschool - school age) successfully cleans up an area she was playing in (i.e. putting books back on a shelf, cleans up materials from an art project, etc.).</p> | <p>Better than, "Nice job cleaning up!", you may want to state, "I notice that you put your books away. Now you will be able to find them more easily the next time you want to read."</p>   | <p>Children will develop intrinsic, or internal, motivation to take care of their belongings if they can see how it benefits them. It's not something they will do just to please the parent or caretaker. When children feel motivated inside, the positive behavior is more likely to continue even when the external force of praise (the parent or caretaker) is not present.</p>   |
| <p>Your toddler hands you a picture she has drawn; your school-age child shows you a picture he has painted.</p>    | <p>Don't stop at, "Lovely picture!" Look at the picture and take notice of what you're child has drawn and comment, "I see that you have drawn some red lines and circles. What else can you draw?" For more detailed pictures, you may say, for example, "I see that you drew a house and yard. What are some things you can add to the picture?"</p> | <p>Comments such as this show your child you are interested in what she is doing. Describing what you see and asking open-ended questions encourages children to think, be creative, and feel good about their work, according to experts.</p>  |
| <p>You notice your child trying to figure out a puzzle or solve a problem.</p>    | <p>Take notice of your child's efforts by stating, "I see you are working hard on that."</p>   | <p>Your child will notice your encouragement, and it will allow her to feel good about her own accomplishments.</p>   |



(Ideas for this parent tip sheet were inspired and adapted, by the Title I Dissemination Project, from Pam Belluck's article, "New Advice for Parents: Saying 'That's Great!' May Not Be", which was featured in the New York Times on October 18,