



# Helping Hands for Families

## Praise or Encouragement?



**Encouragement** gives children positive feedback focusing on their efforts. It allows children to evaluate

their own efforts rather than comparing to others. Encouragement is specific and is given as a child works towards a goal.

**Praise** focuses on what the adult feels, sending a subtle message that the adult's opinion is what matters. Children who receive too much praise tend to do things to please adults, not because they are self-motivated.

**Encouragement** teaches children to evaluate themselves on their own merits. When adults provide children with feedback about what they are doing, children learn to evaluate themselves without comparing their efforts and successes to those of others. Children who hear encouragement regularly learn that what they think about themselves is more important than what others think.



### 1 - Be specific.

Instead of saying, "Liza, your picture is beautiful," make specific comments about the child's picture. "I see you used a lot of blue in this area and red over here." Or simply ask a child to tell you more  
(continued other side)

## Summer Routines

It's easy to get away from regular routines over the summer. Your days will go smoother if you try to keep up some routines, and it will be much easier when it comes time to go back to school.



**MORNING:** Set a general time that everyone gets up in the morning and how they start the day (getting dressed, making bed, washing up, etc.).

**MEALS:** Keep a general routine and schedule for meals.

**BEDTIME:** Keep your child's regular bedtime and routines for getting ready for bed.

**EXPECTATIONS:** Give your children (based on age) some household 'chores' or expectations to help with things that need to be done. Continue building self-help skills, such as picking out the clothes they are going to wear, getting dressed, brushing teeth, or picking up after themselves.

### DAILY SCHEDULES & ACTIVITIES:

Limit watching TV and playing video games. Plan out the days to have a variety of active and quiet times, family and personal times. Reading is important to do every day, even if it's only for a few minutes.

(continued on other side)



Marquette County Family Connections Coalition (MCFCC)

Volume 8—Issue 3  
Summer 2013

Marquette County Health Department  
608-297-3135

Marquette Early Learning Center & Head Start  
608-296-2141 x 2114

Marquette County UW-Extension  
608-297-3141

Family Health WIC  
1-800-942-5330

Marquette County Human Services  
608-297-3124

Child Care Resource & Referral  
800-628-8534

Marquette County Economic Support  
608-297-3124

WorkSmart Employment & Training Services  
608-242-4564

Westfield School District Family/School Liaison & Guidance Program  
608-296-2141

Montello School District  
608-297-7617

### Mission

The Marquette County Family Connections Coalition (MCFCC) mission is to link families with community agencies through communication and collaboration.

## How Praise and Encouragement Differ

Praise	Encouragement
Good job!	You are really working hard to line up those blocks.
What a beautiful painting!	You used lots of bright colors in your painting.
What a good girl/boy to clean up your room.	I see you are putting your dirty clothes into the hamper and already made your bed.
You are so strong!	That was a heavy load. Thanks for your help.
What a generous person you are!	When you saw your friend forgot his sandwich, you gave him part of yours. He looks pretty happy to have something to eat.
You were the perfect child.	That was a long speaker. You played quietly with your toys and read your book so as not to disturb others who were listening.

### Praise or Encouragement, continued

about his picture. Judgment about the picture should be left to the child to decide.

#### 2 - Describe what the child is doing or has done.

Instead of making a general statement such as "Good job," comment on what the child is doing. "You picked up the blocks and put them back on the shelf without being asked."

#### 3 - Set children up for success.

Comments such as, "You're such a good boy," or "You're a really nice girl," set up children for failure because it's impossible for a child to be good or nice all of the time. Comment instead on specific behaviors that you want to reinforce. For example, "Jacob, I saw that you helped Ethan clean up the spilled milk."

#### 4 - Describe the effect of your child's efforts on others.

When children hear encouragement such as "I appreciate your help in setting the table for lunch" or "You were a good friend to help Coralee when she fell," your comments help them to feel good about their efforts. Their effect on others, not your praise, becomes the motivator.

#### 5 - Avoid comparing children.

Telling a child "You're the fastest runner" may be intended to commend her efforts, but what does that statement say to other children? A better way to encourage this child without hurting others would be to say, "You can run fast."

(From Parenting the Preschooler, March 2011, UW-Extension Family Living, J. LeFebvre, D. Riley & P. Otte.  
<http://parenting.uwex.edu/parenting-the-preschooler/> )

### Summer Routines, continued

It can be helpful if your family sits down at the beginning of each week (or in the morning/evening) and talks about what things they or all of you are going to do that day or week. Develop a general plan - one that you know you will be able to do.

This time can also be used for making a general meal plan for the week. . . using a calendar or large piece of paper you can write these things down and put on your refrigerator to remind yourselves. You don't have to get too specific.

These things may take some time, but, with our busy lives it will reduce frustrations and stress, and will help you make sure you take advantage of this special time of year.

(Chris Lee, MELC/Head Start Family Activity Book Summer 2013)

With guidance, your kids can make this indoors or outdoors! Use cardboard, paper, markers, shells, sequins, paints, crayons, whatever! Teach numbers while having fun and being creative.

(From Pinterest.com)

