

# Praising Children and Their Behavior



Family Development Resources, Inc.

# What is Praise?

- Praise can be a compliment, gesture, facial expression, or form of gentle touch like hugs or high fives that promote feelings of self pride, worth and accomplishment in others.





# Why is Praising Children Important?

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- When children receive praise, they learn that who they are and the things they do are pleasing to parents.
- Children who are praised for their behavior develop a personal sense of self-worth.

# Why is Praising Children Important?

- Praise is like fuel that powers the self-esteem of children.
- Children who sincerely believe they have worth treat themselves and others in positive ways.



# Why is Praising Children Important?

- Research shows that children with positive self-worth get better grades, are more popular in school, don't get discouraged easily, and generally live more productive lives.





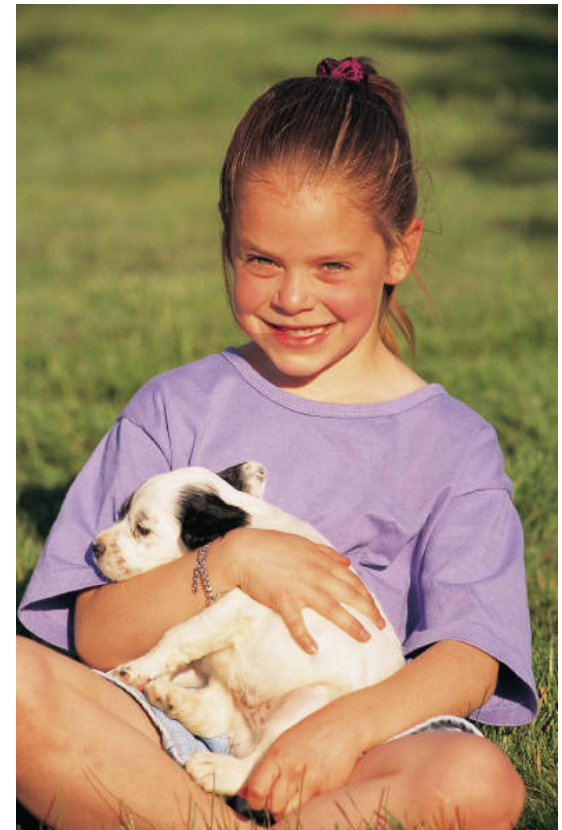
# Roadblocks to Using Praise

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- There is a popular myth that if children are praised they will become conceited, or believe that they are better than others.
- The fact is, children who are praised develop a strong sense of self and do not need to put themselves above others to feel good about themselves. They already do.

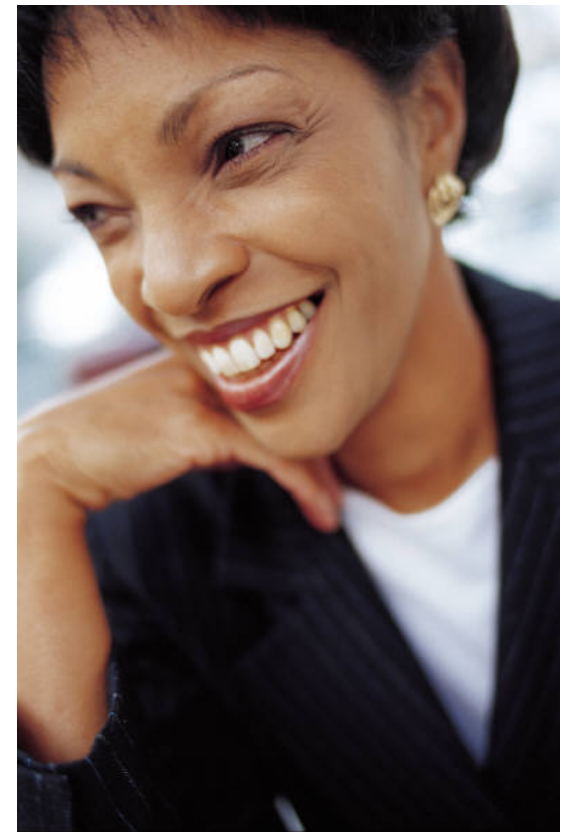
# Roadblocks to Using Praise

- Some parents just expect their children to do what they're told to do without having to praise them.
- No one, adult or child, will behave in appropriate ways without some form of recognition.



# Roadblocks to Using Praise

- Many adults have not had the experience of receiving praise as children, so it makes it hard for them to practice the skill as parents.
- Adults who have difficulty accepting compliments from others may feel very uncomfortable in giving praise to their children.







# Praise for Being and Praise for Doing

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- **Praise for Being** is the highest form of praise anyone can receive. It tells children that they have value and worth.
- **Praise for Being lets children know you value them for who they are.** It is unconditional and given freely at any time.



# Praise for Being

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Some Praise for Being statements are:

- “I really love you.”
- “You’re a beautiful person.”
- “What a special child you are.”
- “I am so happy you are my son.”
- “You’re a wonderful daughter.”

# Praise for Being

- When you praise children for Being, they don't have to do anything to earn it. Praise for Being is a powerful parenting practice for building a positive sense of self-worth in children.





# Praise for Doing

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- **Praise for Doing** lets children know you appreciate and value their efforts and behaviors.
- Praising a child's behavior can be for something they tried and completed, or tried but didn't quite succeed or finish. If you acknowledge your children's efforts, they are more likely to try again.



# Praise for Doing

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Some Praise for Doing statements are:

- “I’m really pleased to see you try so hard.”
- “You buttoned all your buttons. Good for you.”
- “I’m so proud of the way you cooperated.”
- “You’re really doing well in school.”



# Using Praise Incorrectly

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- Many parents unknowingly use praise incorrectly by using Praise for Being and Praise for Doing together. Such statements are:
  - “What a nice job cleaning your room. You really are a good girl.”
  - “Daddy really loves you for cooperating with me.”



# Using Praise Incorrectly

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- Such statements tell children you only love or appreciate them when they do something that pleases you. It's known as "conditional love," or love that must be earned.
- Children quickly begin to resent such love because they know if they don't "do the right thing," their parents will not love them.

# Promoting Self-Praise in Children



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- Self-praise is a way children learn the habit of praising themselves and boosting their self-image.
- To help a child learn self-praise, parents need to describe how good the act must have made the child feel. For example:
- “Tracy, I bet you feel really proud of the nice job you did in cleaning your room.”



# Promoting Self-Praise in Children

- By promoting self-praise, children learn to be their own best friend and develop self-confidence.
- To encourage children to use self-praise, parents should model the behavior for them.





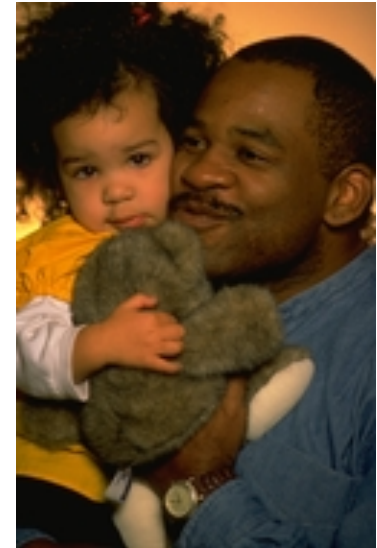
# Being Conceited

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- Some parents worry about their children becoming conceited because they received praise for the people they are or the things they do. Conceit is different from self-worth.
- When children feel conceited, they are usually sending the message that, "I'm better than you."
- Contrary to popular belief, it's children who don't have a positive self-image that wind up feeling conceited.

# How to Use Praise

- **Focus your attention on the child and the situation**-praise deserves your undivided attention.
- **Move close to the child** - praise feels good when given by someone close to you.



# How to Use Praise

- **Make eye-contact with the child on the child's level.**  
For example, you must bend down to be at eye level with young children.
- **Gently touch the child-**  
touch is a positive form of communication.



# How to Use Praise

- **Smile or look pleasant**-everyone likes to see a happy face.
- **Praise your child-**for Being or for Doing.
- **Offer a hug-**to “seal” the nice words.





# Accepting Praise As An Adult

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- Praise is fuel for our positive self-worth.
- Self-worth is the value we have for our self: our ideas, accomplishments, successes, as well as our appearance, personality and character.
- When others praise any of these qualities, they are doing us a big favor-they are recognizing us in a positive way.

# Why is Accepting Praise Important?

- It sends a message to others that we are worthy of their recognition and deserving of it.
- When we accept a compliment, we are building our positive self-worth. Parents with a positive sense of self-worth can help build the positive sense of self-worth in children.





# Why is Accepting Praise Important?

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- As models, parents show their children that accepting praise is the right thing to do.
- Everyone needs recognition. Accepting praise is a positive form of recognition.
- When we accept a compliment, we're more likely to send one.



# Rejecting A Gift

- For a lot of adults, they've simply forgotten how to say thank you when they receive a gift of recognition.





# Rejecting A Gift

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- Here are examples of how not to receive a compliment:
  - Compliment: “You look nice today.”
  - Response: “Well, I feel miserable.”
  - Compliment: “Nice report, John.”
  - Response: “Well, if I had more time, I could’ve done better.”



# Rejecting A Gift

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- Clearly we would not respond in the same way if someone were trying to give us a raise.
  - Compliment: “You have been working very hard. Here is fifty dollars. Go have dinner with your family on the company.”
  - Response: “No, I don’t really deserve it. I’m not that good. In fact, you probably need to decrease my salary.”

# Rejecting A Gift

- What happens to others who offer us a fifty-dollar compliment and we reject it?
- You will quit getting any compliments at all.
- When that happens, the fuel supply to your self-worth will be drastically cut short.





# How to Accept A Compliment

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- **Look pleasant.** Let the person sending the compliment see you enjoy being recognized.
- **Say, “thank you.”** Do not reject or send the compliment back (“Well, you look nice/work hard too.”) Be gracious and accept your gift.
- **Use gentle touch.** A touch on the arm or a handshake conveys your true appreciation.