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Effective Parent/Child Communication

But you can use these skills with anyone!

Do More of These

PRAISE

Reinforces the behaviors you want to see more of

Be specific (Thank you for standing next to me -or- I love how you're playing gently with Fluffy)

REFLECT

Repeat back appropriate language.

Teaches language/speech

Demonstrates understanding and confirms that you're paying attention to them

IMITATE

During play, follow their lead, let them take charge from time to time Only imitate behavior you want to see repeated.

DESCRIBE

Gives positive attention to desirable behavior

Shows approval of what they're doing

Encourages language development

ENJOY

Everyone wants to feel wanted and valued.

Do Less of These

QUESTIONS

Implies doubt or disapproval in their behavior or choices

Can contribute to anxiety, doubt, and defensiveness.

COMMANDS

If necessary, they should be direct, concise, and positively stated.

Give one at a time and give time for compliance.

CRITICISMS

Lowers self esteem

Brings reinforcing attention to unwanted behavior

Be careful of veiled criticisms: "I love how you don't look as fat in that dress!"

"Wow, this dinner isn't nearly as disgusting as usual!"