

**"Encourage the effort rather than praise the product!"**

Children need encouragement like a plant needs water.

**Notes (use back for additional notes):**

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper appears to be a standard notebook page or a sheet of stationery.

1. Read *Encouragement vs. Praise*—practice giving at least one encouragement response during your play session (note on *Play Session Skills Checklist*). Also practice giving at least one encouragement outside of your play session.

What happend or what child said (outside of play session) \_\_\_\_\_

What you said \_\_\_\_\_

How child responded (verbally or nonverbally) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Write down one issue you are struggling with most outside of play session time.

3. Conduct play session (same time & place)—review *Play Session Do's & Don'ts* & *Play Session Procedure Checklist*

- a. Complete Parent Play Session Notes.

- b. Use *Play Session Skills Checklist* to note what you thought you did well, specifically focus on encouragement responses, and select one skill you want to work on in your next play session.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will bring my videotape for next week (if videotaping at clinic: my appt. day/time\_\_\_\_\_).

4. Additional assignment:

**Reminder:** Write second note to your child of focus, as well as other children in the family, pointing out another positive character quality you appreciate about the child. (Vary how the note is delivered, for example, placing in child's lunchbox, taped to mirror in bathroom, on the child's pillow, under the child's dinner plate, etc.)

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# CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

## Encouragement vs. Praise - Session 8

### 👉 Rule of Thumb: "Encourage the effort rather than praise the product"

**Praise:** Although praise and encouragement both focus on positive behaviors and appear to be the same process, praise actually fosters dependence in children by teaching them to rely on an external source of control and motivation rather than on self-control and self-motivation. Praise is an attempt to motivate children with external rewards. In effect, the parent who praises is saying, "If you do something I consider good, you will have the reward of being recognized and valued by me." Overreliance on praise can produce crippling effects. Children come to believe that their worth depends upon the opinions of others. Praise employs words that place value judgments on children and focuses on external evaluation.

**Examples:** "You're such a good boy/girl." *The child may wonder, "Am I accepted only when I'm good?"*  
 "You got an A. That's great!" *Are children to infer that they are worthwhile only when they make As?*  
 "You did a good job." "I'm so proud of you." *The message sent is that the parent's evaluation is more important than the child's.*

**Encouragement:** Focuses on internal evaluation and the contributions children make—facilitates development of self-motivation and self-control. Encouraging parents teach their children to accept their own inadequacies, learn from mistakes (mistakes are wonderful opportunities for learning), have confidence in themselves, and feel useful through contribution. When commenting on children's efforts, be careful not to place value judgments on what they have done. Be alert to eliminate value-laden words (good, great, excellent, etc.) from your vocabulary at these times. Instead, substitute words of encouragement that help children believe in themselves. Encouragement focuses on effort and can always be given. Children who feel their efforts are encouraged, valued, and appreciated develop qualities of persistence and determination and tend to be good problem-solvers. *Note: Parent's voice should match child's level of affect; if child is excited about getting an "A" on a test, parent responds likewise with excitement in her voice, "You're really proud of that!" Use after-the-event celebrations (based on child's pride in achievement) instead of rewards (external motivators to get the child to achieve) to recognize achievement. In the above example, the parent could add "Sounds like something to celebrate; let's make a cake!" or "You choose the restaurant, my treat!"*

#### Encouraging Phrases That Recognize Effort and Improvement:

"You did it!" or "You got it!"  
 "You really worked hard on that."  
 "You didn't give up until you figured it out."  
 "Look at the progress you've made..." (Be specific)  
 "You've finished half of your worksheet and it's only 4 o'clock."

#### Encouraging Phrases That Show Confidence:

"I have confidence in you. You'll figure it out."  
 "That's a rough one, but I bet you'll figure it out."  
 "Sounds like you have a plan."  
 "Knowing you, I'm sure you will do fine."  
 "Sounds like you know a lot about \_\_\_\_\_."

#### Encouraging Phrases That Focus on Contributions, Assets, and Appreciation:

"Thanks, that was a big help."  
 "It was thoughtful of you to \_\_\_\_\_" or "I appreciate that you \_\_\_\_\_."  
 "You have a knack for \_\_\_\_\_. Can you give me a hand with that?"

#### In summary, encouragement is:

1. Valuing and accepting children as they are (not putting conditions on acceptance)
2. Pointing out the positive aspects of behavior
3. Showing faith in children, so that they can come to believe in themselves
4. Recognizing effort and improvement (rather than requiring achievement)
5. Showing appreciation for contributions

Adapted from Dinkmeyer, D., & McKay, G.D. *The Parent's Handbook*, (1982). Circle Pines, Minn: American Guidance Service.

# CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

## In-Class Play Session Skills Checklist:

### For Review of Videotaped (or Live) Play Session - Session 8

Directions: Indicate ✓ in blank when you observe a play session skill demonstrated in videotaped or live play session

1. \_\_\_\_ Set the Stage/Structured Play Session
  
2. \_\_\_\_ Conveyed "Be With" Attitudes  
*Full attention/interested*  
*Toes followed nose*
  
3. \_\_\_\_ Allowed Child to Lead  
*Avoided giving suggestions*  
*Avoided asking questions*  
*Returned responsibility to child*
  
4. \_\_\_\_ Followed Child's Lead  
*Physically on child's level*  
*Moved closer when child was involved in play*  
*Joined in play when invited—took imaginary/pretend role when appropriate*
  
5. \_\_\_\_ Reflective Responding Skills:
  - \_\_\_\_ Reflected child's nonverbal play behavior (Tracking)
  - \_\_\_\_ Reflected child's verbalizations (Content)
  - \_\_\_\_ Reflected child's feelings/wants/wishes
  - \_\_\_\_ Voice tone matched child's intensity/affect
  - \_\_\_\_ Responses were brief and interactive
  - \_\_\_\_ Facial expressions matched child's affect
  
6. \_\_\_\_ Used Encouragement/Self-Esteem-Building Responses
  
7. \_\_\_\_ Set Limits, As Needed, Using A-C-T



# CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

## Parent Play Session Notes - Session 8

Play Session # \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Happenings:**

**What I Learned About My Child:**

Feelings Expressed:

Play Themes:

**What I Learned About Myself:**

My feelings during the play session:

What I think I was best at:

What was hardest or most challenging for me:

**Questions or Concerns:**

**Skill I Want to Focus on in the Next Play Session:** \_\_\_\_\_

# CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

## Play Session Skills Checklist - Session 8

Play Session # \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Indicate ✓ in column if skill was used; — if skill was not used; and + if skill was a strength)

✓ — +	Skill	Notes/Comments
	Set the Stage/Structured Play Session	
	Conveyed "Be With" Attitudes <i>Full attention/interested</i> <i>Toes followed nose</i>	
	Allowed Child to Lead <i>Avoided giving suggestions</i> <i>Avoided asking questions</i> <i>Returned responsibility to child</i>	
	Followed Child's Lead <i>Physically on child's level</i> <i>Moved closer when child was involved in play</i> <i>Joined in play when invited</i>	
	Reflective Responding Skills:	
	Reflected child's nonverbal play (Tracking)	
	Reflected child's verbalizations (Content)	
	Reflected child's feelings/wants/wishes	
	Voice tone matched child's intensity/affect	
	Responses were brief and interactive	
	Facial expressions matched child's affect	
	Use of Encouragement/Self-Esteem-Building Responses	
	Set Limits, As Needed, Using A-C-T	