

# Praise

You can use praise effectively by:

1. Thinking in terms of acknowledgement and encouragement rather than praise. Praise helps most when it conveys not only approval but information about the progress a child is making. For example, *'You have been trying so hard to learn those new words and now you are able to read the whole story. That is very good.'*
2. Demonstrating interest and acceptance because children have innate value that is not contingent on their work. For example, say, *'(Child's name), I enjoy having you in my class/group because you always help put things away.'*
3. Using positive body language such as smiling, looking directly at the child, standing close, listening intently and assisting when needed.
4. Acknowledging a child's effort or progress without judgment; using clear, specific language. Offering descriptive praise to show that you are paying close attention. You might say, for example, *'I noticed how you took time to show the new child around school. I am sure she appreciated the help. Thank you for doing that.'*

It is also important to:

1. Acknowledge or give feedback on behaviour/actions rather than commenting on a child's personality or character.
2. Foster discussion with children and evaluation of the work/play by asking questions like, *'I can see that you are working hard on this project. Can you tell me about it?'* When adults listen to children, they are demonstrating interest and caring.
3. Encourage positive character traits in children by naming them. For example, *'Boys and girls, I appreciate each of you being quiet while I talked to Mrs Jones. You were being respectful.'*
4. Relate praise to effort and to how it benefited the child as well as others. Say things like, *'Since you remembered to return your library book this week, you can take home another interesting book.'*
5. Promote initiative and attempting new skills. For example, *'You did a good job because you listened well and followed directions without needing any extra help'* and *'Last week you could not kick the ball, but you practiced, and now you can kick it a long way.'*
6. Encourage perseverance and independence by saying things such as, *'That experiment did not work out. What do you think you will (or we should) try next?'*
7. Acknowledge independent thought and creativity, *'That's an interesting idea. Tell me more about it?'* or *'Do you think your idea will work? Why?'*
8. Reinforce problem solving skills by saying things like, *'As a group you decided who would be responsible for each part of the project. You worked well together to make these decisions.'*