

Supporting Positive Behaviour – Effective Praise

The idea of giving praise seems simple enough... but for praise to be effective, we must go beyond a simple compliment such as "good job" or "well done". It is also worth considering that for some children praise can be difficult to understand, accept and process.

Direct Praise

Some children will thrive when given direct praise, in front of others.

Show appreciation for a child's actions both verbally and through your body language. For example, say, "Great work" to a child while giving them a thumbs up.

Describe the behaviour you have seen saw: For example, "I like how you helped Jim pick up his crayons when they fell on the floor."

Finally, explain why their behaviours benefits them or others. For example, "When you help your brother, it shows them that you care and makes them feel good. You should feel proud of yourself as well."



Indirect Praise

Other children can find direct praise uncomfortable, and this can cause them to enter a state of anxiety and shut down. In this instance you could try:

Jim has tried really hard today to help tidy up. (To another key adult/parent).

I'm so glad I had help from ... (Said within earshot of child).

Remember...

- RECOGNISE, PROMOTE, DESCRIBE.
- You can praise a child at any age!
- Give praise immediately.
- Look pleased.
- Smile and give direct eye contact if direct.
- Recognise small steps of progress.
- Give praise for effort and trying.

Impact of Praise

- Promotes positive self-image.
- Builds confidence.
- Supports behaviour management within the home as a form of positive re-enforcement.
- Increases motivation.