

Catching Your Child Behaving Well – The Power of Praise

In addition to discouraging negative behaviors, it is important to encourage positive behaviors. While your child will receive points for completing tasks, your praise and encouragement is very important to them – even when they are simply not misbehaving. Some children have a history of misbehaving and parents sometimes develop a blind spot, having a hard time observing and identifying good behavior. The principles of behavioral psychology inform us that by praising your child for behaving well, this will increase the frequency of positive behaviors.

The Parenting by Numbers™ System allows you to record your child behaving well and as a result they are reward both in points as well as positive attention from you. Further there is often a great imbalance between parents providing far more negative attention pointing out negative behaviors and almost no attention paid to commenting on the absence of common misbehaviors (often irritants to parents). As a parent you may find this task difficult.

The standard Positive Behaviors, “Caught behaving well”, is an important transaction that should be used liberally. It can also be used to reward compliance with the system. To help, here are some ideas for catching them behaving well:

1. Sitting quietly or playing nicely with a sibling
2. Getting something or doing something for someone – (passing the butter, getting the door, etc.)
3. Picking up after themselves
4. Putting the cap back on the mustard
5. Child not interrupting or disturbing you

Be sincere about your praise. Do not be sarcastic or make fun of your child’s behavior. Don’t get upset or angry if your child is sarcastic or annoyed at the attention. Don’t be discouraged, it make take a while for them to get used to new parents!

Unless you are told otherwise, try and catch your child behaving well at least once a day. Even if your child has misbehaved earlier, ESPECIALLY if they have misbehaved earlier, catch them behaving well.

Don’t forget to continue catching them behaving well day after day, week after week. This is an important reinforcer! It is so important that the system may send you an email notice automatically if it does not see that you have recorded this transaction for a couple of days.