

# *Handouts for Activities*

## *Session One*



*“Strengthening Children’s Social and Academic Skills”  
Session #1*

## *Home Activities for the Week*



### **To Do:**

- **CHILD-DIRECTED PLAY** for at least 10 minutes a day. Practice academic, persistence and social coaching. Use the social and academic coaching checklists for ideas for things to say during your play interactions.
- **KEEP TRACK** of your play times during the week on your play record sheet. Try to determine a regular schedule for this play time.



### **To Read:**

- Handouts and Chapter 1 from the *Incredible Years* book

## *REFRIGERATOR NOTES*

### **PARENTS' CHILD-DIRECTED PLAY TOOLS FOR BUILDING CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SKILLS AND SELF-DISCOVERY**

- Encourage your child's curiosity to explore new objects and activities
- Follow your child's lead
- Pace at your child's level—give your child time
- Be an attentive and appreciative audience
- Avoid competing with your child
- Don't focus on the "correct" way or specified rules for a game
- Model cooperation by doing what your child asks you to do
- Observe and respond to your child's initiations and try not to ask questions
- Praise and encourage your child's self-discovery and creativity; don't criticize
- Engage in pretend and make-believe with your child
- Give your preschooler choices when possible
- Allow your child to change her mind; be process oriented vs. product oriented
- Curb your desire to give too much help—give just enough support to avoid frustration but not so much you take over your child's exploration
- Reward quiet play with your attention
- Laugh and have fun



**Child-Directed Play**

# Facilitating Children's Academic Learning: Parents as "Academic Coaches"



"Descriptive commenting" is a powerful way to strengthen your children's social skills, emotional literacy, and academic skills. The following is a list of academic concepts and behaviors that can be commented upon when playing with your child. Use this checklist to practice describing academic concepts.

Academic Skills	Examples
<input type="checkbox"/> colors <input type="checkbox"/> number counting <input type="checkbox"/> shapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "You have the red car and the yellow truck."</li> <li>• "There are one, two, three dinosaurs in a row."</li> <li>• "Now the square Lego is stuck to the round Lego."</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> sizes (long, short, tall, smaller than, bigger than, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> positions (up, down, beside, next to, on top, behind, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "That train is longer than the track."</li> <li>• "You are putting the tiny bolt in the right circle."</li> <li>• "The blue block is next to the yellow square, and the purple triangle is on top of the long red rectangle."</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> working hard <input type="checkbox"/> concentrating, focusing <input type="checkbox"/> persistence, patience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "You are working so hard on that puzzle and thinking about where that piece will go."</li> <li>• "You are so patient and just keep trying all different ways to make that piece fit together."</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> following parent's directions <input type="checkbox"/> problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> trying again <input type="checkbox"/> reading <input type="checkbox"/> thinking skills <input type="checkbox"/> listening <input type="checkbox"/> working hard/ best work <input type="checkbox"/> independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "You followed directions exactly like I asked you. You really listened."</li> <li>• "You are thinking hard about how to solve the problem and coming up with a great solution to make a ship."</li> <li>• "You have figured that out all by yourself."</li> </ul>

# Facilitating Children's Social Learning: Parents as "Social Skills Coaches"



Describing and prompting children's friendly behaviors is a powerful way to strengthen your children's social skills. Social skills are the first steps to making lasting friendships. The following is a list of social skills that you can comment on when playing with your child alone or when your child is playing with a friend. Use this checklist to practice your social skills coaching.

Social/Friendship Skills	Examples
<input type="checkbox"/> helping <input type="checkbox"/> sharing <input type="checkbox"/> teamwork <input type="checkbox"/> using a friendly voice (quiet, polite)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "That's so friendly. You are sharing your blocks with your friend and waiting your turn."</li> <li>• "You are both working together and helping each other like a team."</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> listening to what a friend says <input type="checkbox"/> taking turns <input type="checkbox"/> asking <input type="checkbox"/> trading <input type="checkbox"/> waiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "You listened to your friend's request and followed his suggestion. That is very friendly."</li> <li>• "You waited and asked first if you could use that. Your friend listened to you and shared."</li> <li>• "You are taking turns. That's what good friends do for each other."</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> agreeing with a friend's suggestion <input type="checkbox"/> making a suggestion <input type="checkbox"/> giving a compliment <input type="checkbox"/> using soft, gentle touch <input type="checkbox"/> asking permission to use something a friend has <input type="checkbox"/> problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> cooperating <input type="checkbox"/> being generous <input type="checkbox"/> including others <input type="checkbox"/> apologizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "You made a friendly suggestion and your friend is doing what you suggested. That is so friendly."</li> <li>• "You are helping your friend build his tower."</li> <li>• "You are being cooperative by sharing."</li> <li>• "You both solved the problem of how to put those blocks together. That was a great solution."</li> </ul>

## Prompting

- "Look at what your friend has made. Do you think you can give him a compliment?" (praise child if s/he tries to give a compliment)
- "You did that by accident. Do you think you can say you are sorry to your friend?"

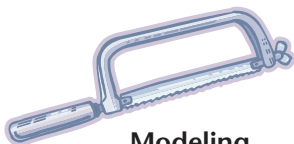
## Modeling Friendly Behavior

- Parents can model waiting, taking turns, helping, and complimenting, which also teach children these social skills.

*REFRIGERATOR NOTES*



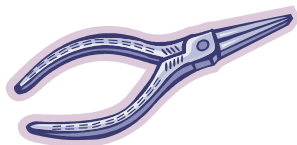
Child Directed Play



Modeling



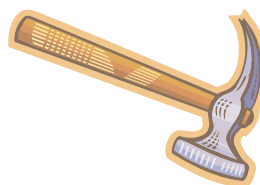
Fun Principle



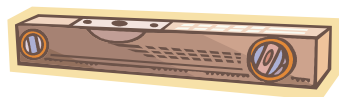
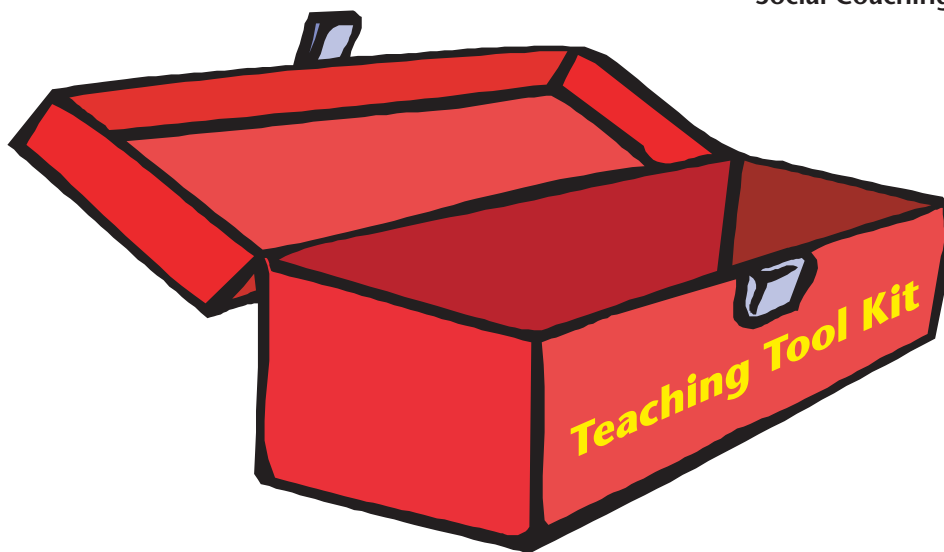
Attention Rule



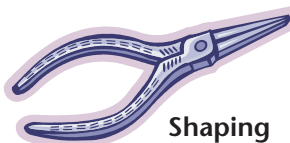
Emotion Coaching



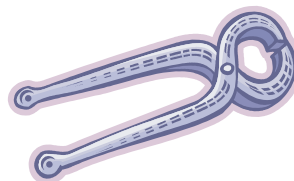
Social Coaching



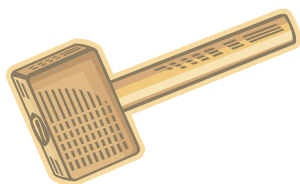
Labeled Praise



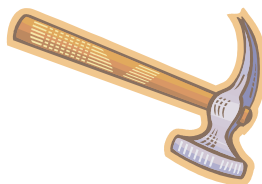
Shaping



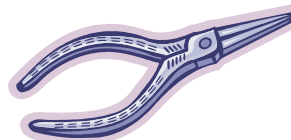
Scaffolding



Give Choices



Respect Rule



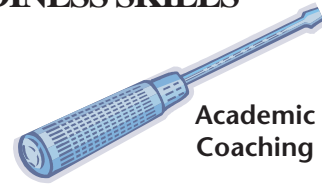
Use Patience

## *REFRIGERATOR NOTES*

### **ACADEMIC AND PERSISTENCE COACHING TOOLS TO BUILD CHILDREN'S SCHOOL READINESS SKILLS**

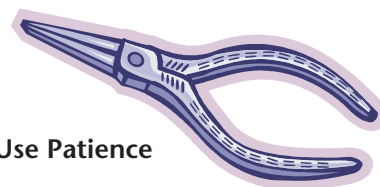
#### *Academic and Language Coaching Tools*

- Use many more descriptive comments than questions
- Describe your preschooler's actions and body parts
- Listen to your preschooler and imitate, or mirror, your preschoolers' words
- Notice what your preschooler is interested in and talk about it
- Describe the objects, shapes, numbers, letters and colors of toys and things your preschooler plays with
- Talk about positions of objects (e.g., inside, under, beside, next to)
- Prompt your preschooler to communicate by modeling and suggesting words for him to repeat
- Use new and more complex words to expand your child's vocabulary even if you know s/he won't understand at first
- Chant, sing rhymes and teach your child body movements that go with the words
- Describe your own actions to your child (e.g., "I'm folding three shirts and two pairs of red socks now)
- Talk about simple every day stories and events
- Use make believe games such as toy telephones or hand puppets to encourage language interactions and make up stories



#### *Persistence Coaching Tools*

- Coach with comments when your child is working hard, concentrating, being calm, staying patient when doing an activity
- Describe your child's persistence with a frustrating activity by trying again, sticking with it, thinking of a new way to do it, staying focused
- Listen carefully and try to understand what your child is telling you about his thoughts, ideas and discoveries
- Comment and praise your child for listening to peers or an adult
- Encourage your child to discover, explore, experiment and provide support when mistakes are made
- Try not to give too much help; encourage your child's problem solving



## *REFRIGERATOR NOTES*

### **SOCIAL COACHING TOOLS TO BUILD CHILDREN'S SOCIAL COMPETENCE**

#### *One-on-One Parent-Preschooler*

- During play, model social skills for your preschooler such as offering to share, waiting, giving a compliment, taking turns, asking for help
- Prompt your preschooler to ask for help, take a turn, share something, or give a compliment and then praise him if it occurs. Let it go if your preschooler does not respond to your prompt
- Praise your preschooler any time s/he offers to share with you or help you
- Participate in pretend and make-believe play with your child by using a doll, action figure, or puppet to model skills such as asking to play, offering to help, taking a turn, giving a compliment, calming down with a deep breath and waiting
- Model and prompt your child with a suggestion of the appropriate words to say
- Try to give enough help; so children are successful but not so much help that you take over

#### *Peer Social Coaching*

- Occasionally prompt your child to notice what another child is doing or to help him or her in some way
- Help your preschooler understand that when he shared, the other person felt happy so he can see the connection between his behavior and another's feelings
- Encourage play dates with friends
- Praise and encourage children's ideas and creativity; avoid criticism
- Use descriptive comments instead of asking questions
- Prompt, coach, and praise children's friendly behaviors whenever you see them (e.g., sharing, helping, taking turns, being polite)





## Coaching Children in Cooperative Play With Peers

Join children and their friends when they are playing and “coach” them in good play skills by noticing and commenting on their cooperative efforts. For example:

**Making Suggestions:** “Wow, that was a helpful suggestion to your friend.”

**Expressing Positive Feelings:** “That’s a friendly way to show how you are feeling.”

**Waiting:** “Super! You waited your turn and let him go first, even when you wanted to be first.”

**Asking Permission:** “That’s very friendly to ask him if he wants to do that first.”

**Complimenting:** “What a friendly compliment. I can see she feels good about that.”

**Taking Turns:** “You let her take a turn—how very helpful.”

**Sharing:** “You are both doing it together. I can see you are team players.”

**Agreement:** “You agreed with her suggestion—what a friendly thing to do.”

**Using Soft Touch:** “You are using gentle and soft touch with him. That is friendly.”

**Asking for Help:** “Wow! You asked him to help you—that is what good friends do for each other.”

**Caring:** “I can see you really care about her ideas and point of view. You’re a thoughtful person.”

**Problem-Solving:** “You both worked out that problem in a calm way. It looks like it feels good for both of you.”

**Being Polite:** “You were so polite in the way you asked her to wait—that’s very friendly.”



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

Home Activities

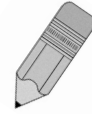


## RECORD SHEET: CHILD-DIRECTED PLAY TIMES

Record times you spent playing with your child, what you did, and any reaction you noticed in yourself or your child.

Date	Time Spent	Activity	Child's Response	Parent's Reaction

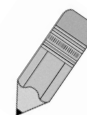
## CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING YOUR CHILD'S PLAY



When you observe your child's play, how often does he or she:

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Almost Never
1. Solve problems with peers?	_____	_____	_____
2. Show creativity?	_____	_____	_____
3. Cooperate and interact with peers? (versus solitary play)	_____	_____	_____
4. Take risks and try out new ideas?	_____	_____	_____
5. Feel comfortable making mistakes?	_____	_____	_____
6. Show initiative rather than acting passive	_____	_____	_____
7. Show interest in playing with others?	_____	_____	_____
8. Express positive emotions?	_____	_____	_____
9. Show self-confidence rather than fear	_____	_____	_____
10. Engage in fantasy or imaginary play?	_____	_____	_____
11. Make suggestions and talk about ideas with peers?	_____	_____	_____

## CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING ADULT/CHILD PLAY INTERACTIONS



**A. When you play with your child and his/her friends, how often do you encourage them to:**

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Almost Never
1. Attempt to solve problems?	_____	_____	_____
2. Play cooperatively?	_____	_____	_____
3. Be creative and inventive?	_____	_____	_____
4. Express feelings and ideas?	_____	_____	_____
5. Engage in pretend or make-believe play?	_____	_____	_____
6. Participate in both boys' and girls' play activities?	_____	_____	_____

**B. When you play with children, how often do you:**

1. Direct or structure the activity?	_____	_____	_____
2. Create the rules of the game?	_____	_____	_____
3. Criticize and correct the children's mistakes?	_____	_____	_____
4. Force the children to finish the project?	_____	_____	_____
5. Allow participation only in sex-appropriate activities?	_____	_____	_____
6. Feel uncomfortable with a child's expression of negative emotions? (e.g., fear, helplessness, anger)	_____	_____	_____
7. Compete with the children?	_____	_____	_____

## CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING ADULT/CHILD PLAY INTERACTIONS, Page 2

	<b>Almost Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>
8. Become engrossed with your own play, and ignore the children's play?	_____	_____	_____
9. Ask a lot of questions?	_____	_____	_____
10. Avoid expressing your own emotions?	_____	_____	_____
11. Give too much help?	_____	_____	_____
12. Prohibit pretend play?	_____	_____	_____
13. Demand perfection?	_____	_____	_____
14. Place emphasis on the ultimate product of play rather than effort?	_____	_____	_____
15. Ignore children's expression of feelings?	_____	_____	_____

**C. What interferes with your ability to play with your child?  
How often do you play with your child alone?  
Do you feel this play time is valuable?**

Evaluating your responses to the items on this checklist will highlight some of the ways you can improve your play interactions with your child. For example, if you checked "Almost Never" on some of the items in Part A, you should make a deliberate effort to encourage these behaviors in the future. If you checked "Almost Always" or "Sometimes" on some of the items in Part B, you should try to eliminate these behaviors. Your responses in Part C may indicate that you need to schedule more play time with your child, or that you need to change some of the circumstances or attitudes that are interfering with your ability to participate in play activities.



*Handouts for Activities*  
*Session Two*



*“Strengthening Children’s Emotional Regulation Skills”*

*Session #2*

*Home Activities for the Week*



**To Do:**

- **CHILD-DIRECTED PLAY** for at least 10 minutes a day. Practice emotion coaching as well as academic and social coaching. Use the emotion coaching checklist for ideas for things to say during your play interactions.
- **KEEP TRACK** of your play times and praise statements during the week on your play and praise record sheets. Try to determine a regular schedule for this play time.
- **CALL** your buddy to share your favorite play activities.



**To Read:**

- Handouts and Chapter 2 from the *Incredible Years* book





## HOME ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

**TO DO:** 

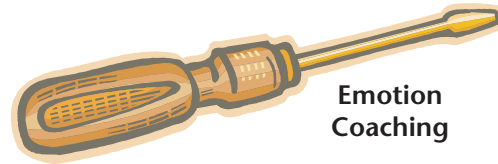
**READ or LISTEN TO CD:**



## *REFRIGERATOR NOTES*

### **TOOLS FOR BUILDING CHILDREN'S EMOTION SELF-REGULATION SKILLS**

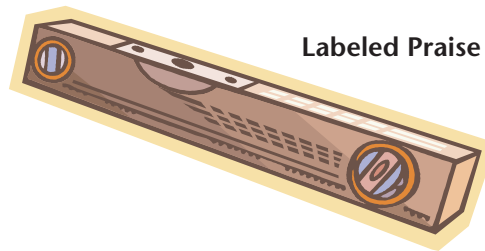
- Try to understand what your preschooler is feeling and wanting
- Describe your child's feelings (don't ask him what he is feeling because he is unlikely to have the words to tell you)
- Label your preschooler's positive feelings more often than his negative feelings
- When naming negative feelings such as frustration or anger, point out and praise the coping strategy your child is using: "You look frustrated, but you are staying calm and trying again"
- Praise your child's self-regulation skills such as staying calm, being patient, trying again when frustrated, waiting a turn, and using words
- Support your preschooler when he is frustrated, but recognize when he is too upset to listen and just needs space to calm down
- Encourage your child's expression of emotion (e.g., being curious, excited, calm, frustrated, brave)
- Model and give your preschooler the words to use to express his needs and feelings (e.g., "you can calmly ask her for the truck")
- Help your preschooler learn ways to self-regulate such as using special stuffed animal or blanket, taking deep breaths, telling himself he can calm down, waiting, solving a problem
- Cuddle and soothe your preschooler when she is hurt or frightened. Stay calm yourself to provide extra reassurance



## *REFRIGERATOR NOTES*

### **PRAISE TOOLS**

- Catch your child being good—don't save praise for perfect behavior
- Don't worry about spoiling your children with praise
- Increase praise for difficult children
- Model self-praise
- Give labeled and specific praise for behaviors you want to see more of
- Make praise contingent on positive behavior
- Praise with smiles, eye contact, and enthusiasm
- Don't combine praise with a correction
- Praise immediately
- Give pats, hugs and kisses along with specific praise
- Use praise consistently to build a new behavior
- Praise in front of other people



**Labeled Praise**



**Self Praise**

## *REFRIGERATOR NOTES*

### TOOLS FOR ENCOURAGING CHILDREN'S LEARNING EFFORTS

- Do a play activity with your child every day
- Praise and encourage your child's ideas
- Be enthusiastic about your child's school projects
- Collaborate with your child's teacher and attend school functions
- Start with easy learning activities and gradually increase the challenge as your child seems ready
- Be realistic about your expectations—follow your child's lead in terms of what s/he is developmentally ready for
- Focus on your child's strengths not his/her weaknesses
- Share something that was hard for you to learn
- Project a positive image of your child's ability in the future
- Volunteer in your child's classroom



Fun Principle



Academic Coaching

# Facilitating Children's Emotion Learning: Parents as "Emotion Coaches"



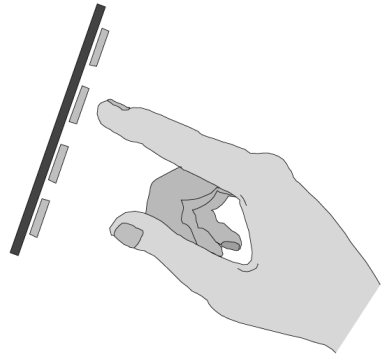
Describing children's feelings is a powerful way to strengthen your children's emotional literacy. Once children have emotion language, they will be able to better regulate their own emotions because they can tell you how they feel. The following is a list of emotions that can be commented upon when playing with your child. Use this checklist to practice describing your child's emotions.

Feelings/Emotional Literacy	Examples
<input type="checkbox"/> happy <input type="checkbox"/> frustrated <input type="checkbox"/> calm <input type="checkbox"/> proud <input type="checkbox"/> excited <input type="checkbox"/> pleased <input type="checkbox"/> sad <input type="checkbox"/> helpful <input type="checkbox"/> worried <input type="checkbox"/> confident <input type="checkbox"/> patient <input type="checkbox"/> having fun <input type="checkbox"/> jealous <input type="checkbox"/> forgiving <input type="checkbox"/> caring <input type="checkbox"/> curious <input type="checkbox"/> angry <input type="checkbox"/> mad <input type="checkbox"/> interested <input type="checkbox"/> embarrassed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "That is frustrating, and you are staying calm and trying to do that again."</li> <li>• "You look proud of that drawing."</li> <li>• "You seem confident when reading that story."</li> <li>• "You are so patient. Even though it fell down twice, you just keep trying to see how you can make it taller. You must feel pleased with yourself for being so patient."</li> <li>• "You look like you are having fun playing with your friend, and he looks like he enjoys doing this with you."</li> <li>• "You are so curious. You are trying out every way you think that can go together."</li> <li>• "You are forgiving of your friend because you know it was a mistake."</li> </ul>

## Modeling Feeling Talk and Sharing Feelings

- "I am proud of you for solving that problem."
- "I am really having fun playing with you."
- "I was nervous it would fall down, but you were careful and patient, and your plan worked."

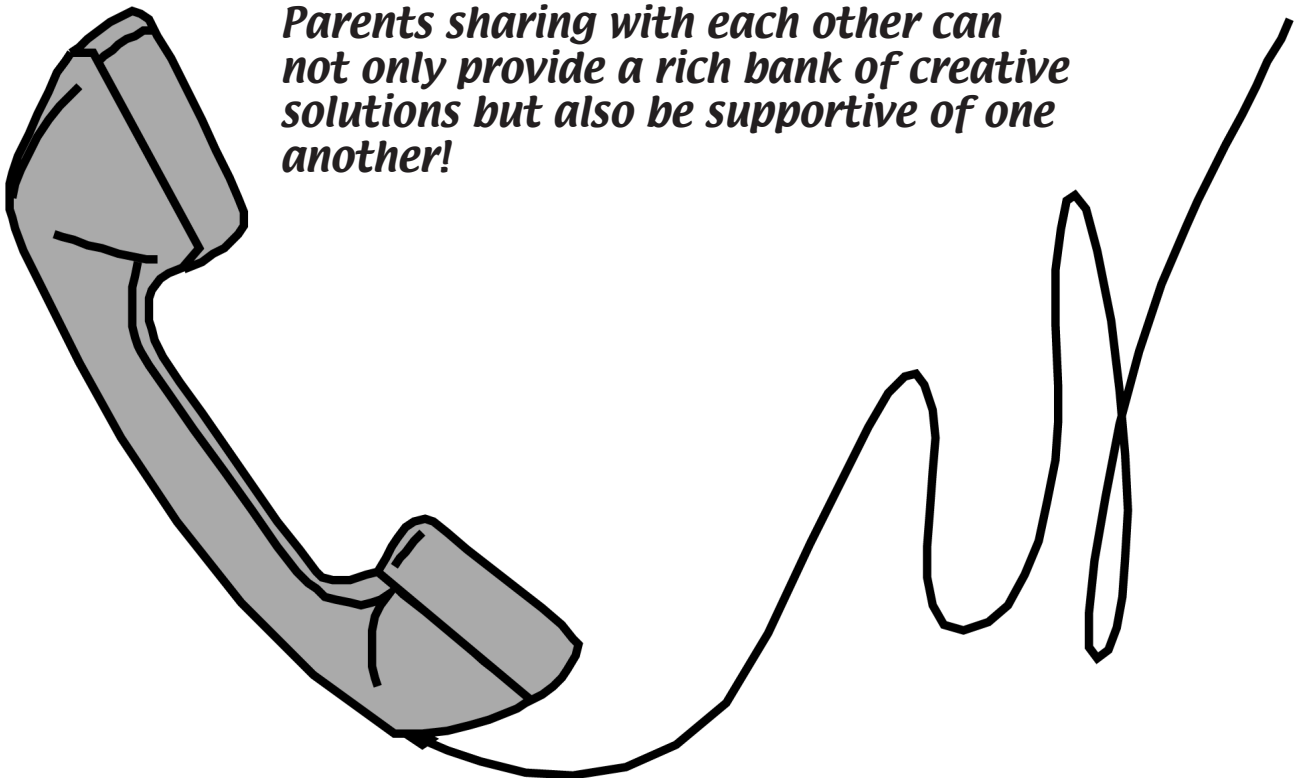
# Calling Your Buddy

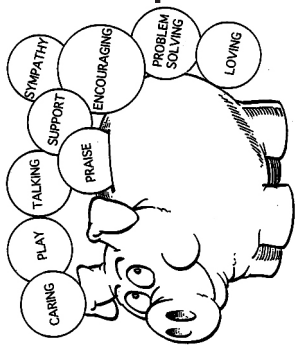


*During the Parenting Course you will be asked to call a person from your group—preferably a different person each time. The purpose of these calls is to share ideas and “hot tips” about the home activities, such as how one of your play times went or to share ideas about reading books.*

*These calls need last no more than 5 minutes and can be scheduled at your own and your buddy’s convenience.*

*Parents sharing with each other can not only provide a rich bank of creative solutions but also be supportive of one another!*





Home Activities

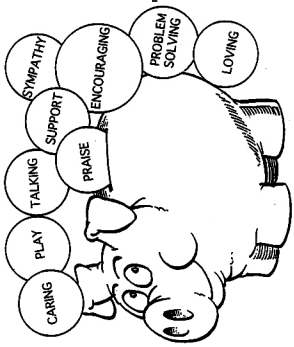


## RECORD SHEET: PLAY TIMES

Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

Record times you spent playing with your child, what you did, and any reaction you noticed in yourself or your child.

Date	Time Spent	Activity	Child's Response	Parent's Reaction



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

Home Activities



## RECORD SHEET: PRAISE

		Number of Praises and Examples of Praise Statements	Types of Child Behaviors Praised	Child's Response