

Handouts & Refrigerator Notes

Child-Directed Play



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These handouts are also available on our website, www.incredibleyears.com (in *Group Leader Resources* section).

Child-Directed Play Promotes Positive Relationships



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **PLAY** for 10 minutes each day with your child. Be child directed and follow your child's lead. Try some pretend play, express your joy to your child when playing, and sing with your toddler.
- **KEEP TRACK** of play periods on the "Record Sheet: Play Times" handout or in play journal and bring to the next session.
- **RECORD** your child's developmental milestones on the "Things I Can Do" checklist (pg. 72-75).
- **COMPLETE** Toddler Proofing checklist for Part 1 & Part 2 (pg. 61-66 in book) and Toddler Temperament (pg. 67-68)



To Read:

Chapter 1, *Toddler Directed Play*, in *Incredible Toddlers*.

How I am Incredible!

Child's Name and Age: _____

Adults that Support My Growing and Learning:

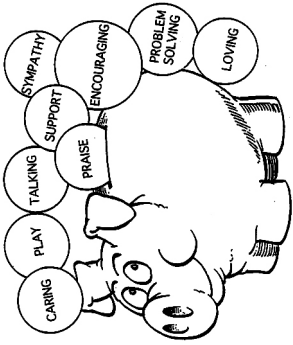
My Temperament (*e.g., activity level, adaptability, physical sensitivity, intensity, distractibility, persistence, predictability, quiet, anxious, angry*):

My Play and Language Level (*e.g., play alone, anxious or withdrawn, want to initiate play with others but don't know how, initiate but my social interactions are inappropriate, very few words, lots of language, inappropriate language*):

My Favorite Activities (*e.g., reading, soccer, games, music, cooking, building activities, drawing, pretend play*):

Social, Emotional, Persistence, Language and Academic Skills I am Learning (*e.g., helping others, calm down methods, speaking politely, taking turns, listening*):

My Parent's Goals for Me: (*e.g., helping my child follow directions, to better at school, improve his/her academic success, reduce my own anger and stress*):



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

Home Activities



RECORD SHEET: 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

Parents Thinking Like Scientists



Identified Problems



Child's Strengths



Goals

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing the goals derived from the identified problems and child's strengths.

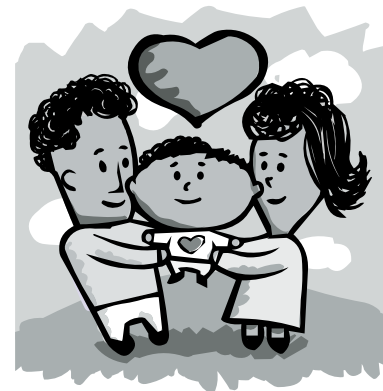


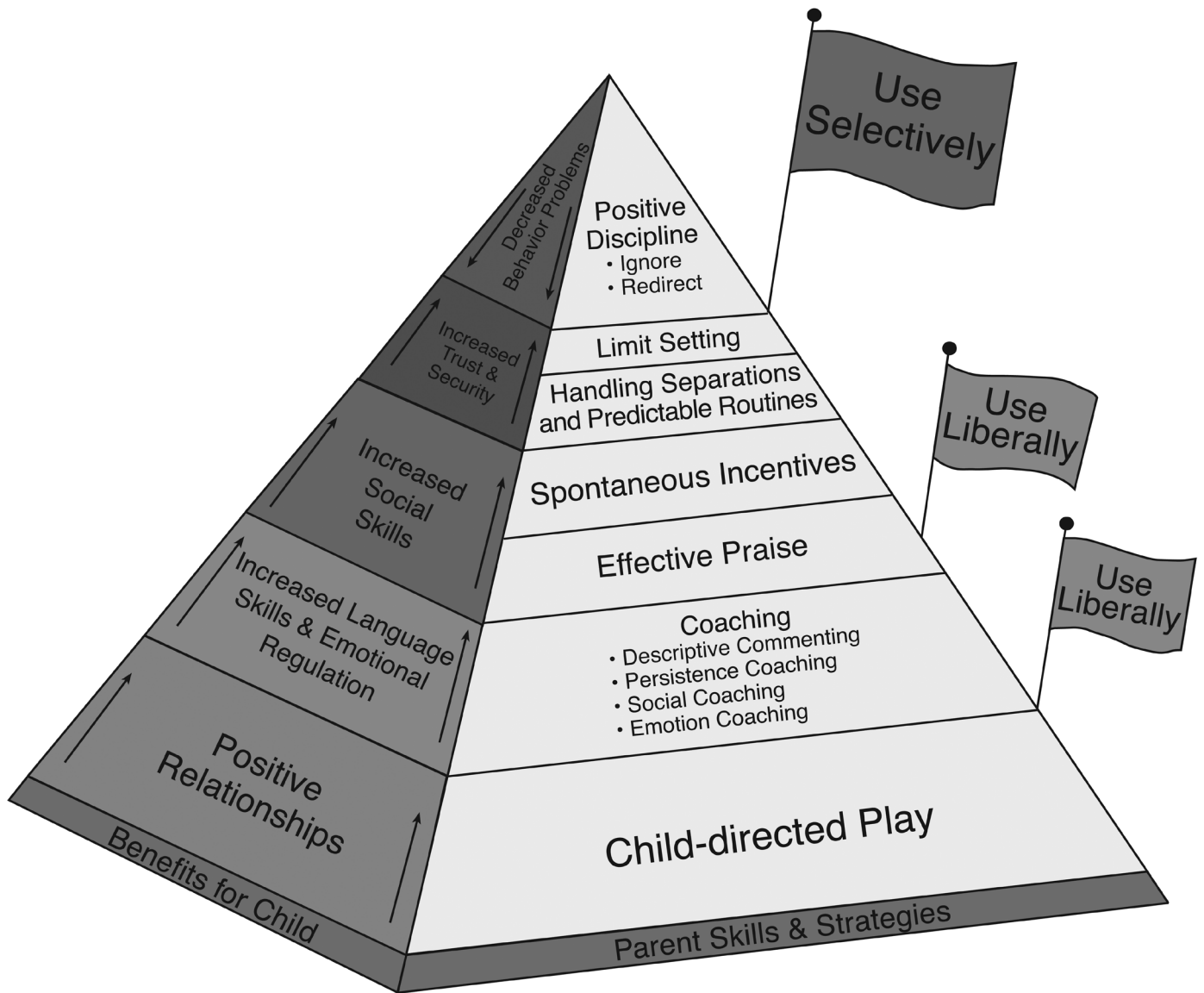
CHILD-DIRECTED PLAY



- Encourage your child to explore new objects, settings & people
- Follow your child's lead
- Pace at your child's level
- Don't expect too much—give your child time
- Don't compete with your child
- Praise and encourage your child's self-discovery and creativity; don't criticize
- Engage in pretend and make-believe with your child
- Be an attentive and appreciative audience
- Give your toddler 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 toddler's exploration
- Reward quiet play with your attention
- Laugh and have fun

I practice
child-directed
play





Parenting Pyramid[®]

Toddlers (1 - 3 years)



Parents and Children “Having Fun”

What is the value of play? Why is play important for children?

1. The most obvious benefit from play is that it aids physical development. When children run, jump, skip, yell, and laugh, it contributes to their good health and the development of gross motor skills as well as perceptual motor skills.
2. Play is a learning situation for children and parents. Play is an opportunity for children to learn who they are, what they can do, and how to relate to the world around them. Through play, children are able to discover and explore, use their imagination, solve problems, and test out new ideas. Through these experiences children gradually learn how to gain control over their environment, and they become more competent and self-confident. How often have you heard a child proudly say, “See what I did?” Play allows children to push the limits in a positive way, to extend what they’ve learned as far as they can. It gives children the freedom to fail and make mistakes, and the opportunity to explore the limits of their skills.
3. Play is a means of emotional expression. Children live in a world where they have little power and few legitimate opportunities to express emotions such as anger or dependency. Fantasy play can reduce feelings of fear, anger, and inadequacy, and provides experiences which enhance children’s feelings of enjoyment, control, and success.
4. Through play, children can communicate thoughts, needs, satisfactions, problems, and feelings. An adult can learn a lot about a child’s feelings of joy, hope, anger and fear by watching, listening to, and talking with a child at play.
5. Play is a place for children to try out roles such as mother, father, aunt, teacher, and doctor. Role playing gives children a chance to see the world from other points of view, and helps them become less egocentric.
6. When children play in a supportive environment, they can be creative. They are free to try out their imagination, explore the impossible and the absurd, and develop confidence in the value of their thoughts and ideas. During make-believe play, boxes, blocks, and articles of furniture can become houses, palaces, or entire kingdoms; doll figures can turn into mothers, children, and even monsters.
7. Play develops the basic skills for social interaction. Children learn how to cooperate, share, and be sensitive to the feelings of others during play.

**I follow my
child’s lead
in play**



For the child, play is not frivolous—it is an opportunity for growth and development in almost every area. But it takes practice for children to become competent, creative, and self-confident in their play. It is important for adults to actually participate in play activities with children, and to create a supportive environment so that children will engage in a variety of play experiences.



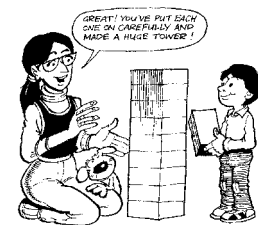
Properties of Play Toys



Toys are an important part of fostering good play in children. However, it is not necessary to buy expensive, commercially approved, or “educational” toys. Children are marvelously inventive and, if their imaginations are not squelched by an overly restrictive atmosphere, they can turn almost any object such as a saucepan and spoon into an interesting plaything or dirt and water into a mud pie.

Basically, good play material and equipment should be:

1. Safe, without sharp edges or lead-based paint.
2. Unstructured and as free of detail as possible. Toys such as blocks, play dough, and paints elicit more imaginary play from children.
3. Responsive and versatile. Toys should stimulate children to do things for themselves. Equipment that makes the child a spectator, such as a mechanical duck which waddles and quacks after being wound up, may entertain for a moment but has no play value. The more things a toy does, the less the child does. If a toy renders the child passive, it is undesirable.
4. Large and easily manipulated. Toys that are too small can be a great source of frustration for young children, because the child’s muscular coordination is not yet developed enough to handle the smaller forms and shapes.
5. Pleasurable to touch, durable and simple in construction. For example, maple hardwood is warm and pleasant to touch, as well as durable.
6. Something that encourages cooperative play. Household/kitchen equipment, such as a broom and a dustpan, pots and pans, old cereal boxes encourage imitation of social interaction.
7. Within the child’s level of skill, and should fit in with the child’s personality and present interests. However, also take into consideration your own likes and dislikes so that you will enjoy sharing the toys with your child (a loud toy drum may be great fun for a child, but annoying to adults).





Supplemental Home Activity

These three pages are not required activities, but they may be helpful as you think about your interactions with your toddler.

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING ADULT/CHILD PLAY INTERACTIONS



A. When you play with your child, how often do you encourage your child to:

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Almost Never
1. Explore?	_____	_____	_____
2. Make her own choices?	_____	_____	_____
3. Be creative and curious?	_____	_____	_____
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 your child, how often do you:

1. Direct or structure the activity?	_____	_____	_____
2. Create the rules of the activity?	_____	_____	_____
3. Criticize and correct your child's mistake?	_____	_____	_____
4. Force your child to finish the project?	_____	_____	_____
5. Allow participation only in sex-appropriate activities?	_____	_____	_____
6. Feel uncomfortable with your child's expression of fear or helplessness?	_____	_____	_____



CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING ADULT/CHILD PLAY INTERACTIONS, Page 2

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Almost Never
7. Compete with your child	_____	_____	_____
8. Become engrossed with your own play, and ignore your child's play?	_____	_____	_____
9. Ask a lot of questions?	_____	_____	_____
10. Impose your own ideas?	_____	_____	_____
11. Give too much help?	_____	_____	_____
12. Ignore or fail to engage in pretend play?	_____	_____	_____
13. Demand perfection?	_____	_____	_____
14. Place emphasis on the ultimate product of play rather than effort?	_____	_____	_____

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



CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING YOUR TODDLER'S PLAY



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

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Almost Never
1. Seem joyful?	_____	_____	_____
2. Show curiosity?	_____	_____	_____
3. Cooperate with other children?	_____	_____	_____
4. Try out new ideas?	_____	_____	_____
5. Get frustrated easily?	_____	_____	_____
6. Seem passive?	_____	_____	_____
7. Display independence rather than dependence?	_____	_____	_____
8. Have short attention span and act impulsively?	_____	_____	_____
9. Show self-confidence?	_____	_____	_____
10. Rarely interact or seem interested in other children?	_____	_____	_____
11. Initiate interactions with peers?	_____	_____	_____
12. Initiate your actions and words?	_____	_____	_____

After you have completed this checklist, think about what you have observed.



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Social & Emotional Developmental Landmarks 12–18 months

- Gesture, point and babble (12 months)
- Wave bye-bye (10–12 months)
- Use two words skillfully (13 months)
- Enjoys looking at self in mirror (13–14 months)
- Holds out arm or leg to help with dressing (13–14 months)
- Combines gestures with words to make needs known (14 months)
- Imitates others (14 months)
- Initiates games (14–15 months)
- Responds to instructions (14–15 months)
- Uses spoon (14–15 months)
- Drinks from a cup with assistance (14 months)
- Uses three words (15 months)
- Adopts “no” as favorite word (15–16 months)
- Becomes attached to object such as a blanket (16 months)
- Switches from two naps to one (16–17 months)
- Uses some common consonants (t, d, n, w) (16 months)
- Uses six words regularly (17 months)
- Enjoys pretend games (17 months)
- Enjoys music and dances to music (17 months)
- Says please and thank you (18 months)
- Will look at pictures in a book, point to pictures and can turn pages on own (18 months)
- Responds to questions with pointing and sounds to indicate some conversation (18 months)
- Looks at object that parent points to rather than parent’s finger (18 months)
- Understands about 100–150 words but cannot say them (18 months)
- Is immensely curious to examine objects (12–18 months)

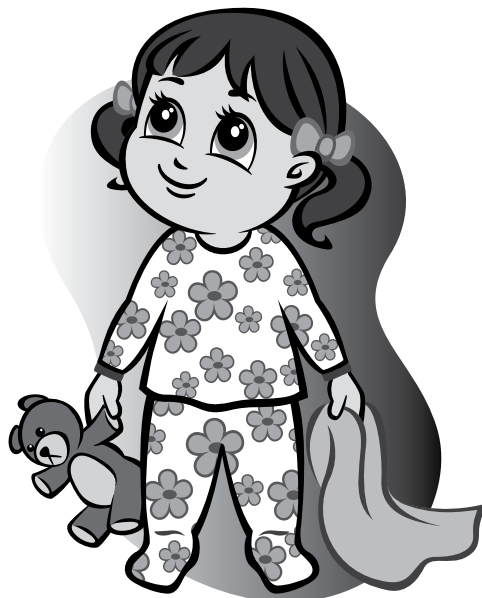




REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Physical Developmental Landmarks 12–18 months

- walk and cruise
- holds out arm or leg to help with dressing (13-14 months)
- toddles well (14 -15 months)
- runs (15-16 months)
- increased hand movements—can turn pages of a book (16 months)
- enjoys climbing (16-17 months)
- stacks blocks (16-17 months)
- throws a ball (18 months)
- scribbles (18 months)





THINGS I CAN DO! • 12-18 months

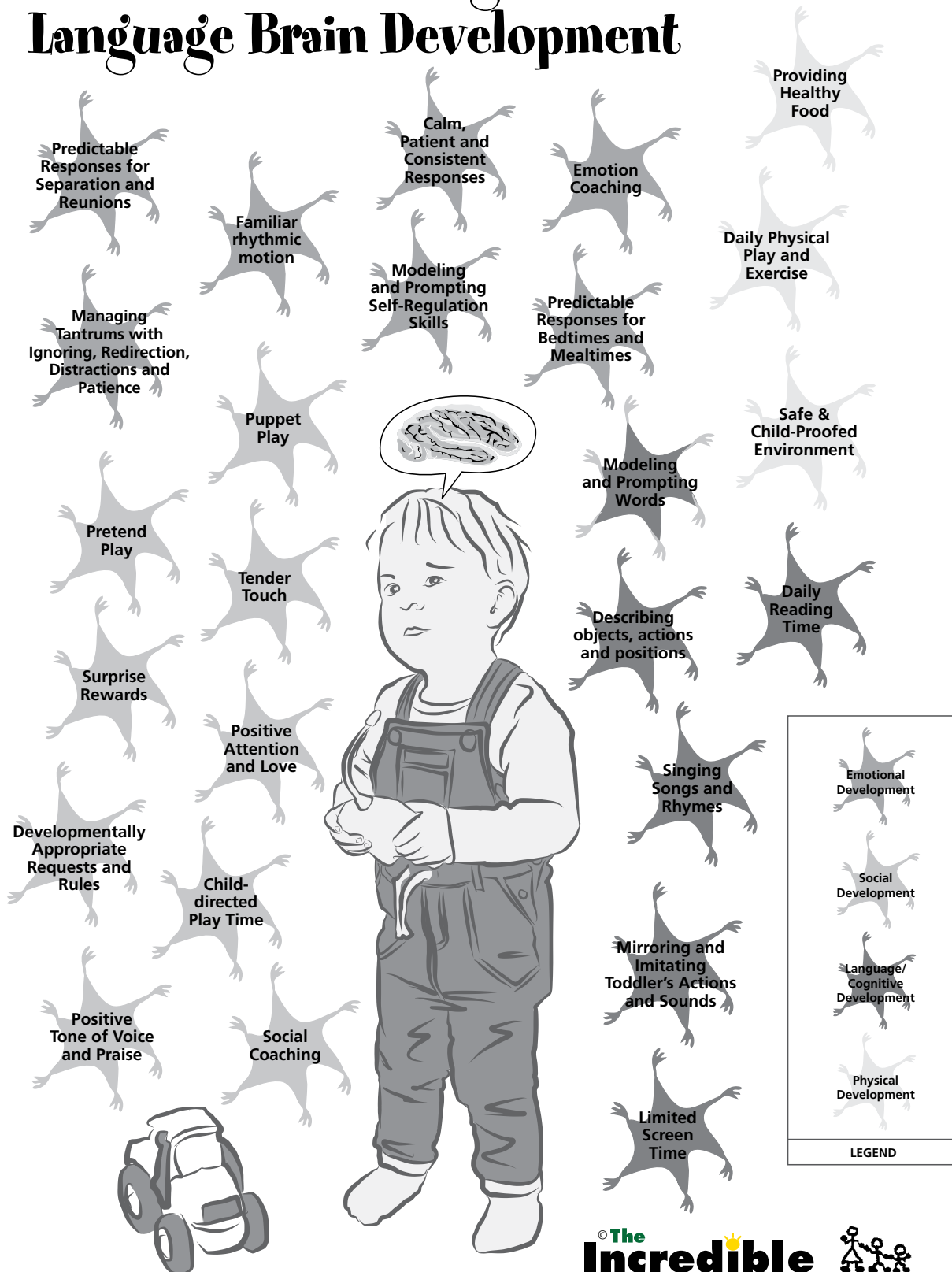


Activity	Date	Observations
I can point at things		
I can wave bye bye		
I can say two words		
I like looking at myself in the mirror		
I can imitate adults		
I can use a spoon		
I can make my needs known with sign language		
I like to play games such as hide and seek		
I like to push or pull a toy		
I respond to instructions		
I love to say "no"		
I am attached to _____ (blanket or stuffed animal)		
I am thinking about switching to one nap a day		
I can say 3-4 words now		
I love pretend games		
I like to dance to music		
I like to look at pictures in a book		
I can turn pages now by myself		
If you point at something I will follow		
I understand quite a bit of what is said		
I can scribble		
I am so curious		
I am cruising now		
I am learning how to run		
Wow I am starting to climb		
I can stack blocks –guess how many?		
I can throw a ball, try me!		

**I am learning
the Toddler
dance**



Promoting Your Toddler's Optimal Emotion, Social, Cognitive and Language Brain Development



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Handouts & Refrigerator Notes ***Coaching to Promote Toddler's Language Skills***



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Promoting Toddlers' Language Development



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **PLAY** with your child being child-directed and using descriptive commenting, modeling & repetition
- **READ** with your toddler or color using interactive reading
- **RECORD** your child's developmental landmarks (complete "Things I Can Do" checklist 19–24 months, pg. 121-124)
- **COMPLETE** checklists for reflecting on toddler play (pg. 114-115)



To Read:

Chapter 2, *Promoting Toddlers' Preschool Readiness with Academic and Persistence Coaching*, in *Incredible Toddlers*

Promoting Toddler's Language Development



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **PLAY** with your child being child-directed and using persistence coaching (avoid question-asking)
- **READ** with your toddler or color using child-directed coaching
- **RECORD** in your academic & persistence coaching journal (pg. 120)
- **COMPLETE** checklist for reflecting on my parent-toddler play interactions (pg. 116-118) and bring to next meeting
- **CALL YOUR BUDDY** and share a play experience



To Read:

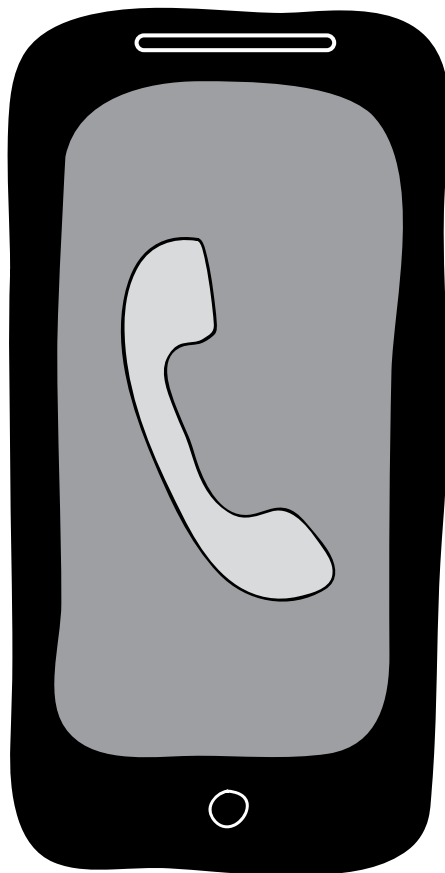
Chapter 2, *Promoting Toddlers' Preschool Readiness with Academic and Persistence Coaching*, in *Incredible Toddlers*

Calling Your Buddy

From now until the final week of the Parenting Program you will be asked to call, text, or e-mail a person from your group. The purpose of these calls is to share ideas and “hot tips” about how the home activities are going.

If you are phoning, these calls need last no more than five 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 on one another!





Refrigerator Notes

Facilitating Children’s Language & Pre-School Readiness Skills: Parents as “Coaches”

“Descriptive commenting” is a powerful way to strengthen children’s language skills. The following is a list of actions, behaviors and objects that can be commented upon when playing with your child. Use this checklist to practice descriptive commenting concepts.

Objects, Actions	Examples
_____ colors _____ number counting _____ shapes _____ names of objects _____ sizes (long, short, tall, smaller than, bigger than, etc.,) _____ positions (up, down, beside, next to, on top, behind, etc.,)	“You have the red car and the yellow truck.” “There are one, two, three dinosaurs in a row.” “Now the square Lego is stuck to the round Lego.” “That train is longer than the track.” “You are putting the tiny bolt in the right circle.” “The blue block is next to the yellow square, and the purple triangle is on top of the long red rectangle.”
Persistence	
_____ working hard _____ concentrating, focusing _____ stay calm, patience _____ trying again _____ problem solving _____ thinking skills _____ reading	“You are working so hard on that puzzle and thinking about where that piece will go.” “You are so patient and just keep trying all different ways to make that piece fit together.” “You are staying calm and trying again.” “You are thinking hard about how to solve the problem and coming up with a great solution to make a ship.”
Behaviors	
_____ following parent’s directions _____ listening _____ independence _____ exploring	“You followed directions exactly like I asked you. You really listened.” “You have figured that out all by yourself.”

Brainstorm



Personal Thoughts About Play

Before continuing, think about these two questions:

1. What are the potential benefits for your toddler when you play with him/her?
2. What gets in the way of playing with your toddler?

Write down the benefits of playing with your child and your difficulties in doing it. See if you can find any solutions to your barriers to playing with your child.

Benefits of My Playing and Spending Time With My Child	Difficulties in Doing This

Goal:

I will commit to playing with my child _____ times this week for _____ minutes.



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Promoting Toddlers' Language and Pre-School Readiness Skills

- Prompt your toddler to communicate by modeling the words for him to repeat
- Praise your toddler's use of words
- Chant and sing rhymes and teach your child body movements that go with the words
- Use many more descriptive comments than questions
- Describe your toddler's actions
- Praise and give positive feedback to your toddler (that's right!)
- Describe your toddler's body parts and feelings
- Listen to your toddler and imitate, or mirror, your toddler's words
- Notice what your toddler is interested in and talk about it
- Describe the objects, shapes, numbers, letters and colors of toys your toddler plays with
- Describe what your own actions to your toddler (e.g., "I'm going to the kitchen now")
- Tell your toddler you love him or her and share feelings of joy
- Notice when your toddler is working hard, concentrating, being calm, staying patient with a frustrating activity, trying again and name or describe this persistence
- Read to your toddler often
- Give your child opportunities to color and describe his actions
- Talk about positions of objects (e.g., inside, under, beside, next to)
- Talk about simple every day stories and events
- Use puppets to make up stories with your toddler
- Use make believe such as pretend phones to encourage talking
- Try to really understand what your toddler is saying
- Use new words to expand her vocabulary even if you know she won't understand at first





REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Reading with Your Toddler

- Read at a quiet time when you are relaxed and comfortable—with TV and music turned off (this prevents over stimulation)
- Hold your toddler in comfortable position on your lap when reading
- Read for a few minutes each day when your toddler seems calm and alert. (Reading at bedtime is a great routine to have established because it helps your toddler calm down.)
- If you have other children, read to them as well
- Use “parent-ese” language when reading, because this is preferred by toddlers over regular communication. Parent-ese sounds like this:
 - singsong, higher pitched, slower voice
 - clear articulation (not baby talk)
 - pause longer after speaking to wait for response
 - words repeated often
 - reader uses an exaggerated facial expression (big smiles) when responding
 - expressive voice using sound effects (for animals, cars, actions)
- Point to pictures in the book and talk about them or make up stories
- Re-read books your toddler likes many times
- Chant and sing rhymes
- Use hand movements with words
- Praise and give positive feedback (that’s right!)
- Slide your finger under the words or letters on the page and show left to right movement
- Encourage your toddler to turn the pages
- Read the names of the author and illustrator to your toddler as you begin reading
- Go to the library together for story time or just to browse. Let your child pick several books to take home





REFRIGERATOR NOTES

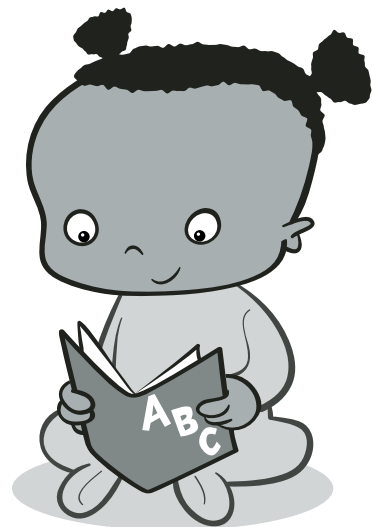
Reading with Your Toddler

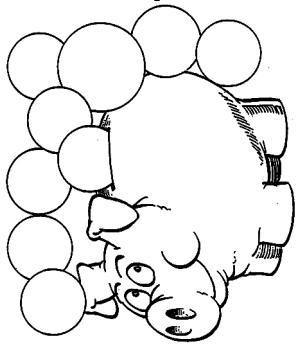
- For 12-18-month-old toddlers—read books that encourage your toddler to chime in and repeat words; books that label objects and parts of the body; books that illustrate action words such as walking or running; and books with flaps or noises.
- For 18-24 month old toddlers—read books about your toddler’s interests (boats, trucks); books that include hand movements; books with numbers, colors, shapes; books with stories that show feelings.
- Read books that reflect your toddler’s experience such as having a bath, putting on boots for the rain; books that use phrases such as good-bye, thank you; books that ask questions; books with rhymes and songs with hand movements;
- Keep reading each day.

Remember, toddlers have a wide range in attention span, that will vary daily. Don’t worry if your toddler seems restless and gets off your lap. Keep reading and ask him questions about the story to see if he is still interested. If he responds keep reading, if he seems more interested in another activity, wait and try to read again later.

Most toddlers will want to have the same book read over and over again—this is important to them because it provides security and allows them to memorize the book so they get a feeling of mastery over the book. Then they may even read the book back to you! It is an important pre-reading skill.

**I read the
same book
over and over**





Home Activities



RECORD SHEET: PLAY TIMES

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

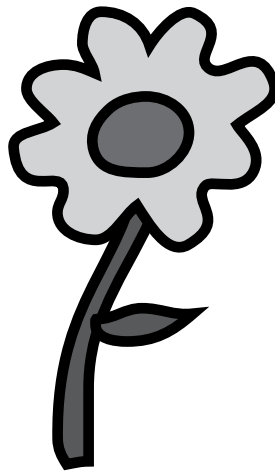
Date	Time Spent	Activity	Child's Response	Parent's Reaction



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Social & Emotional Developmental Landmarks 19–24 months

- Enjoys helping around the house (19 months)
- Understand most of what you say—about 200 words (19–20 months)
- Still loves rhymes and songs repeated (all months)
- Recognizes when something is wrong (19–20 months)
- Captivated by visual illustrations in books (20 months)
- Points to picture when you name it (20 months)
- Can say 50-100 or more words—learns at a rate of 10 or more per day! (20–24 months)
- Imitates expressions (even swear words!)
- Imitates what you do (clean table, wash dishes) (20 months)
- Does pretend play such as feed baby doll (20 months)
- Can identify and name several body parts (20 months)
- Learns how to form a question—“why” (21–22 months)
- Starts using action words (e.g., more, eat)
- Name simple picture in book (22 months)
- Sings simple tunes (23–24 months)
- Begins to be interested in playing with other children (24 months)
- Half of speech can be understood (24 months)
- Can make 2–3 word phrases (“me go”) (24 months)

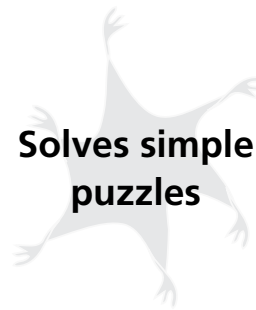




REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Physical Developmental Landmarks 19–24 months

- Uses fork and spoon (19 months)
- Can take off clothes (20 months)
- Can walk up but not down stairs (20–21 months)
- Stacks 6 blocks (21–22 months)
- Does simple puzzles (22–23 months)
- Puts on loose clothing (23–24 months)





THINGS I CAN DO! • 19–24 months



Activity	Date	Observations
Ask me to help, I love it		
I understand most of what you say		
I love songs and rhyming		
I know when you are upset		
I love to look at pictures in a book		
If you point to a picture I can name it		
I am good at imitating expressions		
I like to do pretend play		
My fantasy play doesn't involve others		
I know some parts of my body		
I am beginning to form a question		
I can sing a simple tune		
I can make 2-3 word phrases		
I can use a fork now		
I can take off my clothes		
I can walk up but not down stairs		
I can try a simple puzzle		
I can try to dress myself		
I am very active		
I can throw a ball		
I can jump		
I love to read with you		



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

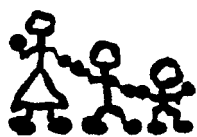
Building Blocks for Reading With CARE



- C** Comment, use descriptive commenting to describe pictures. Take turns interacting, and let your child be the storyteller by encouraging him/her to talk about the pictures.
- A** Ask open-ended questions.
"What do you see on this page?" (observing and reporting)
"What's happening here?" (storytelling)
"What is that a picture of?" (promoting academic skills)
"How is she feeling now?" (exploring feelings)
"What is going to happen next?" (predicting)
- R** Respond with praise and encouragement to your child's thinking and responses.
"That's right!"
"You are really thinking about that."
"Wow, you know a lot about that."
- E** Expand on what your child says.
"Yes, I think he's feeling excited, too, and he might be a little scared as well."
"Yes, it is a horse; it's also called a mare."
"Yes, that boy is going to the park. Do you remember going to the park?"

I read with
CARE to my
child





Your Child's Temperament

Temperament is a behavioral style that refers to the natural way a person reacts or behaves in response to their environment. In the late 1950s, researchers Thomas, Chess, Birch, Hertzog and Korn identified nine traits or characteristics that are present at birth and are felt to influence development in important ways throughout life. While environment can modify these physical traits to some extent, the basic traits of a person are felt to be inborn and stable and do not result from the way a child is parented.

Here are nine traits proposed by Thomas *et al.* that describe a baby or child's reactivity to his or her environment. Think about where your child is on each of these traits. Each trait is a continuum so your child may be very much like one of the traits, but he or she may also be in the middle:

My Child's Temperament

My child's activity level:

This is the amount s/he moves or wiggles or is on the go versus how much s/he relaxes or sits still or prefers quiet activities.

Very Active

1

2

3

4

5

Quiet and Relaxed

The regularity of my child's bodily functions:

This is the predictability of his or her sleep times, appetite, and bowel movements.

Mostly Regular/Predictable

1

2

3

4

5

Mostly Irregular/Unpredictable

My child's adaptability:

This is how s/he adapts to changes in routine, new food, new people, or new places.

Adapts Quickly

1

2

3

4

5

Slow to Adapt

My child's approach:

This is how eager s/he is to try something new versus how fearful or shy s/he is when presented with a new situation or person.

Eager Initial Approach

1

2

3

4

5

Initial Withdrawal or Reluctance

My child's physical sensitivity:

This is how sensitive s/he is to noise, tastes, textures, bright lights, touch or temperature.

Not Sensitive

1

2

3

4

5

Very sensitive

My child's intensity:

This is how intensely he or she reacts emotionally to things, even minor events.

High Emotional Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

Mild Calm Reaction

My child's distractibility:

This is the degree to which s/he is distracted by sounds, sights, or things in the environment versus how much s/he can shut out external stimuli and pay attention.

Very Distractible

1

2

3

4

Not Distractible

5

My child's mood:

This is the degree to which s/he is happy or positive versus negative.

Positive Mood

1

2

3

4

Negative Mood

5

My child's persistence:

This is the degree to which s/he can persist or sustain his or her attention versus how easily s/he gives up in the face of obstacles.

Long Attention Span

1

2

3

4

Short Attention Span

5

Easy and Flexible Temperament Child

If your child is mostly regular, adaptable, positive, calm and has a moderate activity level you have an easy temperament child; about 40% of children fall into this category.

Slow to Warm Up and Cautious Child

If your child is slow to adapt, initially withdraws and has moderate activity and intensity, your child will have a slow to warm up temperament; about 15% of children fall into this category.

Challenging Temperament Child

If your child has a high activity level, is unpredictable, poor adaptability, and is intense and negative you have a more challenging temperament child; about 10% of children fall into this category.

About 35% of children are a combination of these patterns.



Parenting Approaches: A Temperament Focus

Since parents can't change their child's temperamental style, parenting approaches must be accepting and responsive to the unique temperament or cues of each child. It is important for parents to try to get a reasonable "fit" between their child's temperament and their parenting style. This can be done by parents observing and learning about their children's behavioral style and then altering or adapting their parenting expectations, encouragement and discipline to suit their child's unique needs.

Remember, it is important not to label your child as easy, shy or difficult. These labels can damage your child's self-esteem and perhaps set up a self-fulfilling prophecy that prevents your child from expanding his or her behavioral repertoire. On the other hand, knowing what kind of temperament your child has may make the difference between a happy or a troubled child and between an accepting or a frustrated parent. Understanding your child's temperament can improve your relationship with your child because you will learn how to bring out the best in your child. It is within your power as a parent to help your child cope with his temperament, to build his self-esteem and eventually come to understand himself better.

For example, parenting the easy or flexible temperament child will demand less parental time or attention because the child will adapt easily to changes in routines, and may not express his or her individual wants. Because of this easy style, parents will need to make special efforts to find out about their child's frustrations and hurts and interests and assess what he or she is thinking and feeling. Otherwise, such a child may become invisible in the family, insecure and not be helped to develop her uniqueness.

On the other hand, the inflexible, hyperactive, inattentive, unpredictable, or easily frustrated child may seem to have an insatiable need for attention. Children with these challenging temperaments often leave their parents exhausted because of the amount of monitoring and attention that they require. These children will need predictable household routines, help in preparing for transitions, and outlets for their high level of energy. Parents can work to recognize cues and triggers for their child's intense emotions and be proactive by using humor to diffuse intensity, prompting a self-calming activity, or changing to a soothing activity such as a story or warm bath. Parents of intense children will strive to be tolerant, patient, and model appropriate responses. If the child is negative, they will need try to encourage positive responses. If the child is very distractible, parents should try to keep instructions clear and tasks simple. It is important to remove competing distractions when possible, provide frequent breaks, and redirect the child without shame or anger. These

children will need frequent praise and encouragement for completing small steps of a task. Likewise, parents of such energetic children will need to get support for themselves so they can rest and refuel their energy.



On the other hand, the cautious, slow to warm up child, will be relatively inactive and may withdraw or react negatively to new situations. These children will also need clear routines as well as encouragement to try new activities and ample warm up time to meet new people or enter new situations such as day care or preschool. These children will need discussions to prepare them for change in routines and warnings a few minutes before transitions to new activities. They will need time to close one activity before going to the next. It is also helpful to keep the number of transitions to a minimum. They may need additional time to finish tasks. Avoid criticism for their slow pace or resistance.



Refrigerator Notes

Goodness of Fit—Managing Your Child's Temperament

Even if parents have different temperaments than their children, they can still strive for a good fit with their child. A good fit is when parent's demands and expectations are compatible with their child's temperament, abilities and characteristics. The goal is always to manage rather than to squelch or change temperament.

Here are some tips for achieving a good fit and managing your child's temperament.

- Realize that your child's temperament style is not your "fault" because temperament is something biological and innate, not something that is learned from parents. Your child is probably not purposely trying to be difficult or irritating. Don't blame him or yourself.
- Respect your child's temperament without comparing to other siblings or trying to change his or her basic temperament.
- Consider your own basic temperament and behavior and tailor your parenting responses when they clash with your child's responses to encourage a better fit.
- Remember what you model for your children is what they learn from you.
- Try to consider and anticipate your child's adaptability, activity level, sensitivity, biological rhythms and ability to sustain attention when planning activities that are most suitable for your child.
- Try to focus on the issues of the moment. Do not project into the future.
- Review your expectations for your child, your preferences and your values. Are they realistic and appropriate?
- Anticipate high risk situations and try to avoid or minimize them.
- Enjoy the interactions and the differences in each of your children.
- Avoid labeling your child as bad or difficult as this may lead to negative self-image and further compound his difficulties.
- Try to distinguish between a tantrum that is temperamentally induced (reaction to disappointment) versus one that is manipulative (designed to get parent to give in).
- Help your child develop a positive self-esteem – that is, to have a fair sense of his strengths and weaknesses.
- Find a way to get relief for yourself and your child by scheduling some time apart.

Remember above all temperament qualities can be shaped to work to a child's advantage if they are sensibly managed.



Handouts & Refrigerator Notes Social and Emotion Coaching



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These handouts are also available on our website, www.incredibleyears.com (in *Group Leader Resources* section).

Social and Emotion Coaching



Home Activities for the Week



Core:

- **CONTINUE** playing with your toddler one-on-one using social, emotion and persistence coaching
- **RECORD** your child's developmental landmarks ("Things I Can Do" checklist pg. 170-173)
- **CALL YOUR BUDDY** to share coaching experiences



To Read:

Chapter 3, *Coaching Toddlers' Social and Emotional Competence*, in *Incredible Toddlers*

Social and Emotion Coaching



Home Activities for the Week



Core:

- **PLAY** with your toddler and another child using social, emotion and persistence coaching during play
- **ENGAGE** in some pretend or imaginary play with your child
- **TRY** using coaching in other settings such as the grocery store, or at a playground, or at mealtimes or bath time
- **RECORD** on your social and emotional coaching journal (pg. 169)
- **CALL** your buddy to share imaginary play experiences



To Read:

Chapter 3, *Coaching Toddlers' Social and Emotional Competence*, in *Incredible Toddlers*

Brainstorm



Personal Thoughts About Play

Before continuing, think about these two questions:

1. What are the potential benefits for your toddler when you play with him/her?
2. What gets in the way of playing with your toddler?

Write down the benefits of playing with your child and your difficulties in doing it. See if you can find any solutions to your barriers to playing with your child.

Benefits of My Playing and Spending Time With My Child	Difficulties in Doing This
<p>Goal: I will commit to playing with my child _____ times this week for _____ minutes.</p>	

Refrigerator Notes

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



Describing children's feelings is a powerful way to strengthen your child'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 a child. Use this checklist to practice describing your child's emotions.

Feelings/Emotional Literacy	Examples
_____ happy	"That is frustrating, and you are staying calm and trying to do that again."
_____ frustrated	
_____ calm	"You look proud of that drawing."
_____ proud	"You seem confident when reading that story."
_____ excited	
_____ pleased	"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."
_____ sad	
_____ helpful	
_____ worried	
_____ confident	"You look like you are having fun playing with your friend, and he looks like he enjoys doing this with you."
_____ patient	
_____ having fun	"You are so curious. You are trying out every way you think that can go together."
_____ jealous	
_____ forgiving	"You are forgiving of your friend because you know it was a mistake."
_____ caring	
_____ curious	
_____ angry	
_____ mad	
_____ interested	
_____ embarrassed	

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."

Refrigerator Notes

Facilitating Children’s Social Learning: Parents as “Social Skills Coaches”



Describing and prompting children’s friendly behaviors is a powerful way to strengthen 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 a child or when a 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)	<p>“That’s so friendly. You are sharing your blocks with your friend and waiting your turn.”</p> <p>“You are both working together and helping each other like a team.”</p>
<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	<p>“You listened to your friend’s request and followed his suggestion. That is very friendly.”</p> <p>“You waited and asked first if you could use that. Your friend listened to you and shared.</p> <p>“You are taking turns. That’s what good friends do for each other.”</p>
<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	<p>“You made a friendly suggestion and your friend is doing what you suggested. That is so friendly.”</p> <p>“You are helping your friend build his tower.</p> <p>“You are being cooperative by sharing.”</p> <p>“You both solved the problem of how to put those blocks together. That was a great solution.”</p>

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

Promoting Your Toddler's Self-regulation Skills

- Try to understand what your toddler is feeling and wanting
- Describe your toddler's feelings (don't ask him what he is feeling because he is unlikely to have the words to tell you)
- Label your toddler's positive feelings more often than his negative feelings
- Praise your child's self-regulation skills such as staying calm, trying again when frustrated, waiting a turn, and using their words
- Support your toddler when he is frustrated
- Model and give your toddler the words to use to express his needs (e.g., "you can ask her for the truck")
- Help your toddler learn ways to self-soothe such as using a pacifier or blanket
- Praise and encourage your toddler when he stays calm in a frustrating situation
- Cuddle and soothe your toddler when she is hurt or frightened. Stay calm yourself to provide extra reassurance.

**I label
positive
feelings**





REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Promoting Your Toddler's Social Competence

- During play model social skills for your toddler such as offering to share, wait, give a compliment and take turns, ask for help and agree to wait.
- Prompt your toddler to ask for help, or take a turn, or share something, or give a compliment and then praise if it occurs. Don't make an issue out of it if your toddler does not respond to your prompt.
- Praise your toddler any time s/he offers to share with you or help you.
- Participate in pretend play by taking your doll or action figure and using them 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 use.
- Help your child occasionally notice what another child is doing and to help them in some way.
- Help your toddler understand that when s/he shared, the other person felt happy.



I model
social skills





REFRIGERATOR NOTES

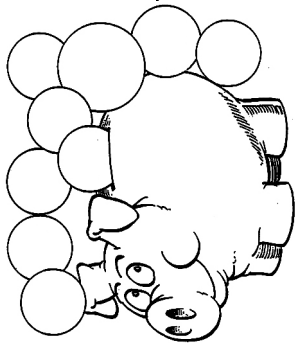
Picky Eating

Eating solids is a new learning experience for your toddler. Your child will need time to explore the tastes, textures and smell of each new food. Remember repeated learning trials will be needed before your toddler will come to like a new food.

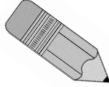
- Try to make mealtimes a relaxed and a fun time for your toddler
- Minimize distractions during mealtimes by turning off TV or taking the phone off the hook
- Provide your toddler with a choice of foods to allow for independent decision making
- Introduce one new food at a time in a small amount; for example, offer the new food along with your toddler's favorites
- Try to offer a meal with at least one food choice you know your toddler likes
- Offer toddler-size portions—which are much smaller than adult portions
- Resist the urge to offer sugary foods, or your toddler will learn to prefer these foods over others
- Don't expect your toddler to like a whole lot of foods—let your toddler make his own decisions on the food he chooses to eat. Forcing your child to eat will only make your toddler more stubborn and less open to new foods in the future.
- You don't need to become a short-order cook. If you provide some choices of foods your toddler often likes, you don't need to cook an entire new dinner to meet his demands.

**I provide some
food choices and
independent
decision-making**





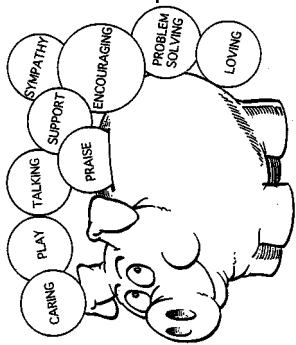
Home Activities



RECORD SHEET: 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



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

Home Activities



RECORD SHEET: PRAISE

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



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

CHILD-DIRECTED PEER PLAY

- Encourage play dates with friends.
- Describe children's play activities (e.g., colors, shapes, numbers, position of objects).
- Praise and encourage children's ideas and creativity; avoid criticism.
- Engage in role play and make-believe with children (e.g., puppets, pretend phone calls).
- Prompt children to notice each other's activities.
- Use descriptive comments instead of asking questions.
- Try to give enough help; so children are successful but not so much help that you take over
- Prompt, coach, and praise children's friendly behaviors (e.g., sharing, helping, taking turns, being polite).
- Provide positive support for children's emotional regulation skills (e.g., being patient or calm, waiting, using words).
- Encourage and describe children's expressions of emotion (e.g., being excited, frustrated, curious, calm).
- Laugh and have fun.

Remember to be realistic about what is developmentally appropriate to expect for toddlers!

**I help my toddler
see the connections
between behavior and
another's feelings**





REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Social & Emotional Developmental Landmarks 25–30 months

- Talks about self (“me”) (25 months)
- Uses pronouns (e.g., I, me, you) (26 months)
- Uses 3-word sentences (25 months)
- Speaks clearly (27 months)
- Can answer some questions (26 months)
- Vocabulary increases to 300 words (30 months)
- Understands descriptions (28 months)
- Starts to recognize ABCs
- Brushes teeth with help (29-30 months)
- Aware of need to pee or poop (25-30 months)
- Names a color (30 months)



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Physical Developmental Landmarks 25–30 months

- Can walk downstairs (25 months)
- Learns to jump (25 months)
- Washes and dries own hands (26 months)
- Draws a circle (30 months)
- Puts on shirt (30-32 months)

**I monitor
milestones**



THINGS I CAN DO! • 25–30 months



Activity	Date	Observations
I can talk about myself		
I speak pretty well		
I am starting to recognize ABCs		
I can brush my teeth with help		
I am aware when I need to pee or poop		
I can name a color		
I can walk downstairs		
I am learning to jump		
I like to run		
I love to act out songs and do finger plays		
I love sandboxes with water		
I love things that can be taken apart and put back together		
I can wash and dry my own hands		
I can draw a circle		
I can put on a shirt by myself		
My attention span is short		
I am beginning to involve others in pretend play		
I love play with dolls, dress-up clothes, toy phones		
I have trouble knowing what is real and what is pretend		
I can express my feelings		
I love painting, crayons, and chalk		
I can sing simple songs		
I like to be given choices		

Parents Promoting Emotional and Social Competence in Young Children



Parent-Child Social Coaching: Child Developmental Level 1

Parent-Child Play: Parents can use social coaching in one-on-one interactions with their children to help them learn social skills and emotional language before they begin to play with peers. A great deal of the child's learning will occur by modeling and by your descriptive commenting, which will enhance your child's language skills as well as help them recognize their social skills.

Social/Friendship Skills	Examples
Parent Models: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sharing ❖ Offering to Help ❖ Waiting ❖ Suggesting ❖ Complimenting ❖ Behavior-to-Feelings 	<p>"I'm going to be your friend and share my car with you."</p> <p>"If you want, I can help you with that by holding the bottom while you put another on top."</p> <p>"I can use my waiting muscles and wait until you're finished using that."</p> <p>"Could we build something together?"</p> <p>"You are so smart in figuring out how to put that together."</p> <p>"You shared with me. That is so friendly and makes me feel happy."</p> <p>"You helped me figure out how to do that. I feel proud that you could show me that."</p>
Parent Prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Self-Talk ❖ Asking for help Parent Response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Praise child when s/he shares or helps you ❖ Ignore or model acceptance when child does NOT share or help 	<p>"Hmm, I really wish I could find another piece to fit here."</p> <p>"Hmm, I'm not sure I know how to put this together."</p> <p>"Can you help me find another round piece?"</p> <p>"Can you share one of your cars with me?"</p> <p>"That was so helpful and friendly to share with me."</p> <p>Continue to use descriptive commenting.</p> <p>"I can keep trying to find that round piece." (model persistence)</p> <p>"I can wait until you're finished playing with the cars." (model waiting)</p> <p>"I know it is hard to give up that car, so I will wait to have a turn later."</p>
Puppet or Action-Figure Models: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Entering Play ❖ Being Socially Friendly ❖ Ignoring Aggression 	<p>"Can I play with you?"</p> <p>"That looks like fun. Can I do that with you?"</p> <p>"I'm being friendly. I'd like to play with you."</p> <p>"I want to play with a friendly person. I think I will find somebody else to play with."</p>

Parents Promoting Emotional and Social Competence in Young Children



Parent-Child Social Coaching: Child Developmental Level 2

Children in Parallel Play: Young children start out playing with other children by sitting next to them and engaging in parallel play. In the beginning, they do not initiate interactions with other children or seem to notice they are even there. They may not talk to them or offer an idea or interact with them in any way. Parents can help promote peer play by prompting their children to use social skills or to notice their friends' activities or moods. Providing children with the actual words for interactions, or modeling social behaviors will be important since children may not yet have these skills in their repertoire.

Social/Friendship Skills	Examples
Parent Coaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Asking for What They Want ❖ Asking for Help ❖ Asking a Friend to Wait 	<p>"You can ask your friend for what you want by saying, 'Please can I have the crayon?'"</p> <p>"You can ask your friend for help by saying 'Can you help me?'"</p> <p>"You can tell your friend you are not ready to share yet."</p> <p>If your child responds to your prompt by using his or her words to repeat what you said, praise this polite asking or friendly helping.</p>
Parent Prompting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Noticing Other Child ❖ Initiate Interaction With Other Child ❖ To Give Child a Compliment 	<p>"Wow, look what a big tower your friend is building." "You are both using green markers."</p> <p>"Your friend is looking for small green pieces. Can you find some for him?" "Your friend has not cars and you have 8 cars. He looks unhappy. Can you share one of your cars with your friend?"</p> <p>"Wow! You can tell your friend his tower is cool." If you child does repeat this, you can praise him or her for a friendly compliment. If your child does not respond, continue descriptive commenting.</p>
Parent Praising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Behavior-to-Feelings ❖ Playing Together 	<p>"You shared with your friend, that is so friendly and makes her feel happy." "You helped your friend figure out how to do that, she looks very pleased with your help."</p> <p>"Your friend is enjoying playing with these Legos with you. You look like you are having fun with your friend. You are both very friendly."</p>
Puppet or Action-Figure Models: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sharing or Helping 	<p>"Wow! Do you see the tower that Nancy is building?" "Can either of you help me find a red block to make this truck?" "Could I help you build that house?" "Do you think we could ask Freddy if he'll share his train?"</p>



Brainstorm

Brainstorm words you use to praise your child to increase behavior you want to see more of. Write them below.

Behaviors I want to see more of:

Praise words to use:

I like it when you...

Good for you!

Wow! What a wonderful job you've done!



Goal:

I will commit to increasing the number of praises I give my child to _____

per hour. The behaviors I will praise include: (e.g., sharing) _____

Handouts & Refrigerator Notes Effective Praise and Encouragement



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Effective Ways to Praise and Encourage Your Toddler

“Bringing out the Best in Your Child”



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **CONTINUE PLAYING** (and reading) with your child every day for at least 10 minutes.
- **PRACTICE** using praise during play time.
- **CHOOSE** one behavior you would like to see your child engage in more frequently, and systematically **PRAISE** it every time it occurs during the following week; for example: playing quietly, going to bed when requested, picking up toys, and sharing with others. (See pg. 224)
- **INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PRAISES** you give and observe what effect this has on your child.
- **RECORD** of the results in your journal.
- **LIST** the behaviors you want to see more of on the Behavior Record hand-out.
- **PRACTICE** praising yourself for your parenting efforts (see pg. 225)
- **CALL YOUR BUDDY** to share your praise efforts



To Read:

Chapter 4, *Positive Attention, Encouragement and Praise*, in *Incredible Toddlers*.



Brainstorm

Brainstorm possible self-praise you can use to encourage yourself as a parent. Write these statements on your notepad.

Positive Self-Praise

I can do it...

I am working hard as a parent...

I can stay calm...



Goal:

I will commit to thinking about what I am doing well as a parent each day and using two of the above examples.

Brainstorm



Brainstorm words you use to praise your child to increase behavior you want to see more of. Write them below.

Behaviors I want to see more of:

Praise words to use

I like it when you...

Good for you!

Wow! What a wonderful job you've done!



Goal:

I will commit to increasing the number of praises I give my child to _____ per hour. The behaviors I will praise include: (e.g., sharing) _____



Examples of Ways to Give Praise and Encouragement

- "You do a good job of . . ."
- "You have improved in . . ."
- "I like it when you . . ."
- "Good for you for . . ."
- "Good idea for . . ."
- "You've done a good job of . . ."
- "See how _____ has improved in . . ."
- "You're doing very well."
- "Look how well he/she did . . ."
- "That's a perfect way of . . ."
- "Wow, what a wonderful job you've done of . . ."
- "That's correct, that's the perfect way to . . ."
- "I'm so happy you . . ."
- "It really pleases me when you . . ."
- "You're such a big girl for . . ."
- "Good boy for . . ."
- "Thank you for . . ."
- "What a nice job of . . ."
- "Hey, you are really sharp; you . . ."
- "That's great, it really looks like . . ."
- "You're doing just what Mommy wants you to do."
- "My, you are minding Daddy so well."
- "My! That . . . was so nice."
- "That's very nice (or good) for . . ."
- "Mommy's very proud of you for . . ."
- "Beautiful! Fine! Great! Gorgeous! Tremendous!"
- "How thoughtful of you to . . ."

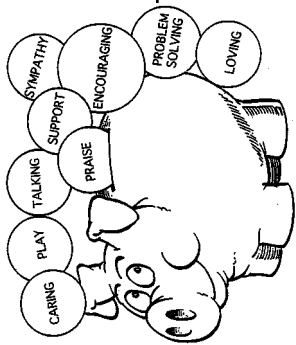
Some Physical Rewards

- A pat on the arm or shoulder
- A hug
- Head rubbing
- Squeezing the arm or waist
- Giving a kiss



Examples of Behaviors to Praise and Encourage

- Sharing
- Talking with a friendly voice
- Complying with requests
- Good eating behavior at dinner
- Going to bed after the first request
- Playing quietly
- Solving a problem
- Putting things in garbage
- Doing a chore (e.g. cleaning up toys)
- Sponging the table
- Getting up promptly in the morning
- Making it through the night without wetting the bed
- Help make the bed
- Picking up clothes
- Putting toys away
- Walking slowly
- Reading or looking at a book
- Getting dressed
- Being friendly
- Being patient or staying calm
- Being kind to another child or adult



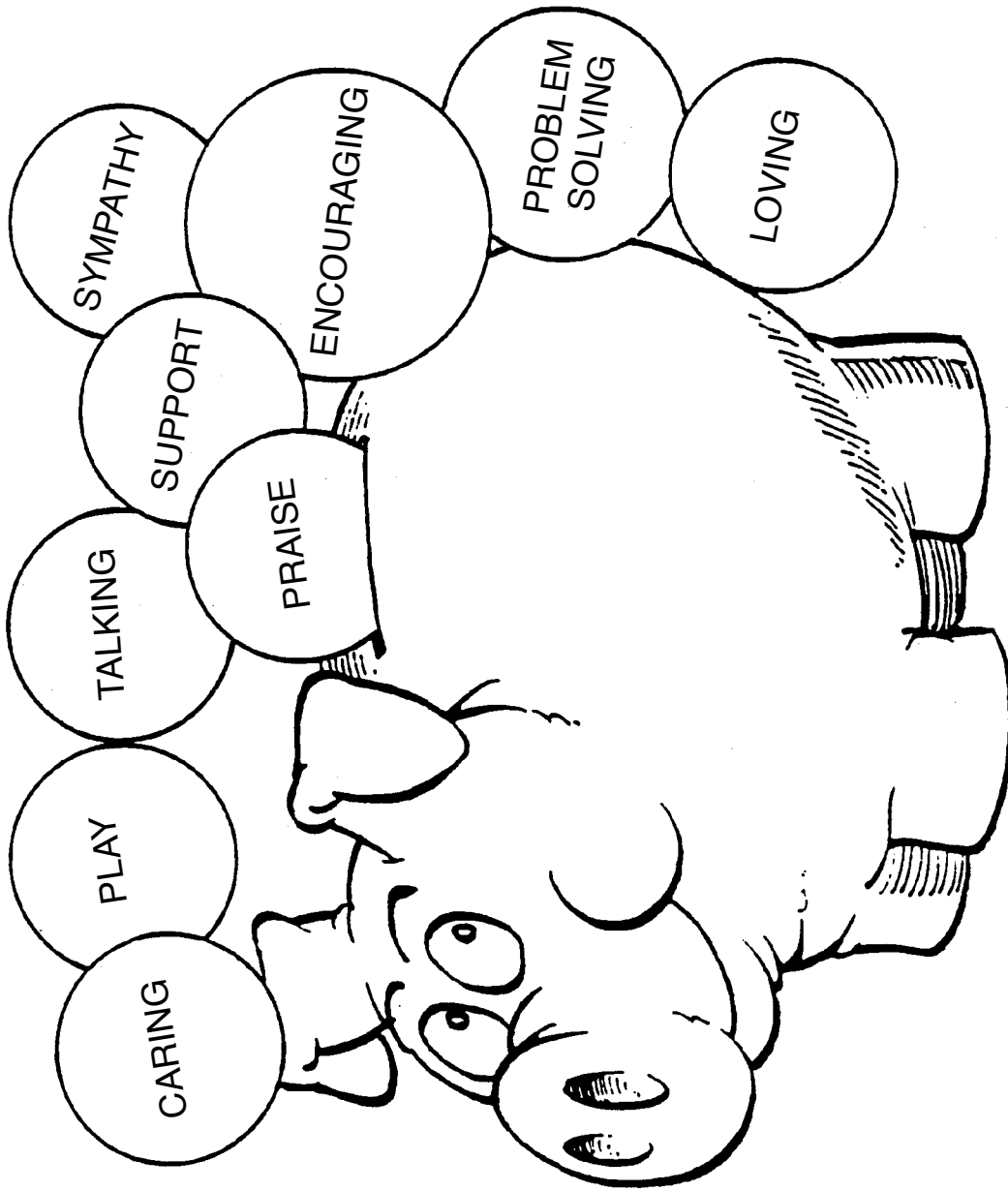
Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

Home Activities

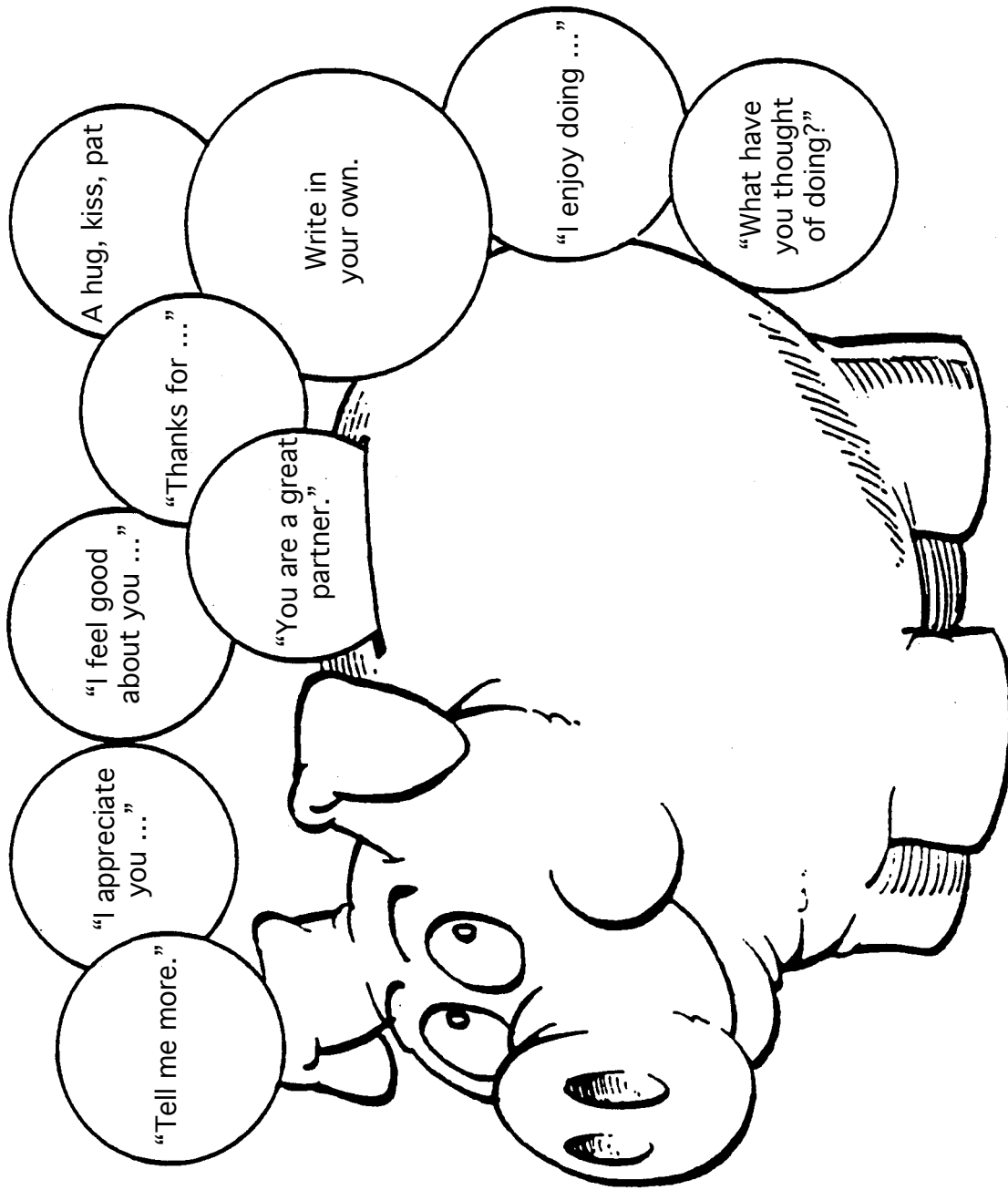


RECORD SHEET: PRAISE

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



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account
With Your Child



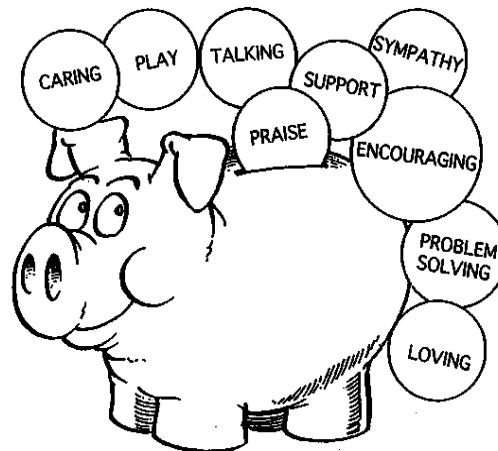
Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account
With Other Family Members



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

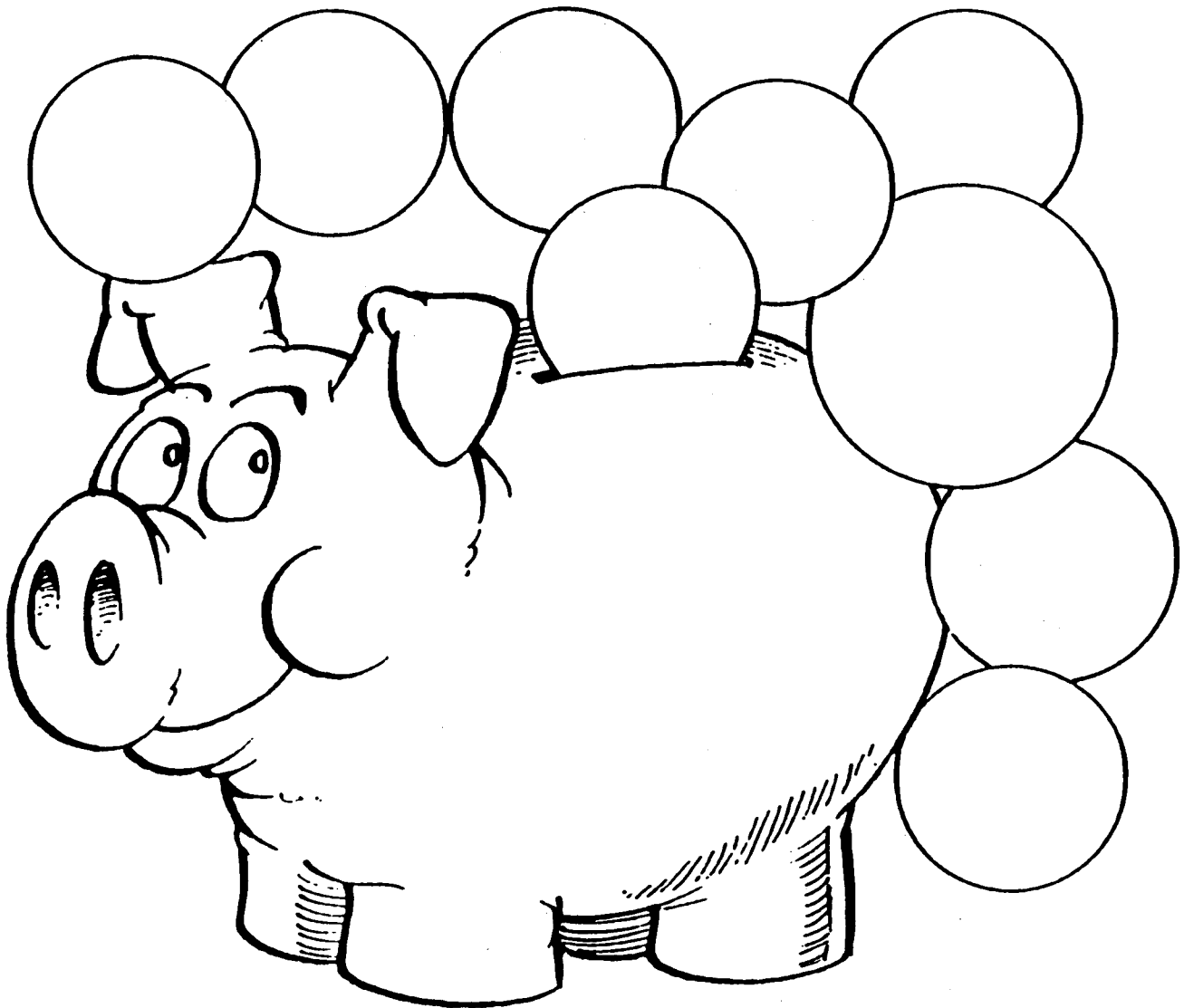
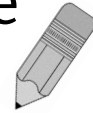
ABOUT PRAISING YOUR CHILD

- 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 behavior you want to see more of
- Make praise contingent on behavior.
- Praise with smiles, eye contact, and enthusiasm.
- Give positive praise.
- Praise immediately.
- Give pats and hugs and kisses along with praise.
- Use praise consistently.
- Praise in front of other people.



Remember to Build Up
Your Child's Bank Account

Write in your own personal praise statements.



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account



Handout

“POSITIVE OPPOSITES” BEHAVIOR RECORD

**Behaviors I want to see less of:
e.g., hitting**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

**For each negative behavior, put its
positive opposite behavior below:
e.g., staying calm and using words**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

Handouts & Refrigerator Notes Spontaneous Incentives for Toddlers



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These handouts are also available on our website, www.incredibleyears.com (in *Group Leader Resources* section).

Spontaneous Incentives for Toddlers



Home Activities For The Week



To Do:

- **CONTINUE PLAYING** with your child every day for at least 10 minutes, and **INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PRAISES** given to your child.
- **TRY** giving a spontaneous sticker or hand stamp for a social behavior you want to encourage.
- **PRAISE** another family member or child care provider for something you appreciate.
- **RECORD** your positive opposite behaviors in your journal (pg. 226-227)
- **GIVE** yourself a special treat for your parenting work (see pg. 228).



To Read:

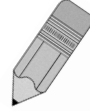
Chapter 5, *Separations, Reunions, Bedtime and Routines*, in *Incredible Toddlers*



Brainstorm

Brainstorm possible positive self-statements you can use to encourage yourself as a parent. Write these statements on your notepad.

Encouraging Positive Self-Statements



I can do it...

I am working hard as a parent...



Goal:

I will commit to thinking about something positive I have done each day as a parent. (e.g., layed with my child, talked to my child's teacher, made a fun meal, praised my child)



REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT TANGIBLE REWARDS

- Define positive child behavior you want to see more of.
- Make the steps small–be realistic.
- Choose no- or low-cost rewards.
- Get the appropriate behavior first, then reward.
- Give the reward immediately after the behavior.
- Reward everyday achievements.
- Gradually replace rewards with social approval.
- Predict success for your child.
- Don't mix rewards with punishment.



NOTE: For young children (2–3 years) surprise or spontaneous rewards such as a hand stamp or special sticker is all that is needed. More complex sticker charts can wait until 5–6 years of age.





Brainstorm

Reward yourself!

Think about rewarding yourself. Have you ever used an incentive system to reward yourself for accomplishing difficult tasks or goals, like completing a difficult project, or working hard as a parent? Think about ways you could reward yourself for your hard work as a parent.

Good Incentives for Me



A walk in the park

Tea/coffee with a friend

Warm bubble bath

Buy myself a good book

Goal:

I will commit to doing something positive for myself this week. This will include:



***Examples of behaviors
to reward with stars and stickers:***

- Getting dressed before the timer goes off
- Eating food on the plate before the timer goes off
- Making it through the night without wetting the bed
- Staying calm when frustrated
- Putting dirty clothes in hamper
- Using polite & friendly words
- Going to bed when asked
- Complying with a parents' request
- Sharing with sibling
- Looking at a book quietly
- Using the toilet
- Turning off the TV
- Brushing teeth
- Staying by the side of the grocery cart
- Sleeping in own bed all night
- Being gentle with animals



Examples of Teacher Behaviors to Praise:

- Being kind to my child
- Being kind to me, especially when I've had a bad day
- Helping me get my child into or out of the classroom when I'm running late
- Sending a note home saying that my child had a good day
- Helping my child learn new things
- Helping my child get along with other children
- Giving me suggestions about how to help my child learn
- Making the classroom a friendly place to come to
- Proudly putting my child's pictures up on the wall
- Helping my child feel good about himself or herself
- Teaching my child social skills
- Setting up an incentive program for my child
- Calling me at home to tell me about my child's progress
- Inviting me to participate in the class
- Keeping me informed about the curriculum



Practice Praising Yourself And Others!

- Send a note to your child's teacher telling what you like about your child's classroom and learning experiences.
- Praise another parent or family member
- Give yourself a compliment

Caring Days

Strengthening Support Between Partners

Marital conflict can make it very difficult for parents to be effective in managing their children's behavior. The following exercise is designed to strengthen your relationship.

Identify 10 to 20 "caring" behaviors that your spouse could do that you would enjoy. Ask your spouse to do this also. List these behaviors on a piece of paper and post them. Each day you and your spouse should try to select one or two items from the list and do them for one another. These caring behaviors should be (a) positive, (b) specific, (c) small, and (d) something that is not the subject of a recent conflict.

Examples: Ask how I spent the day and listen.
Offer to get the cream or sugar for me.
Listen to "mood music" when we set the clock radio to go to sleep.
Hold my hand when we go for walks.
Massage my back.
Arrange for a babysitter and go out.
Let me work late one night without a hassle.
Have a quiet dinner without the children.
Offer to watch the children while I make dinner, read the newspaper, etc.
Allow me to sleep in one morning on the weekend.

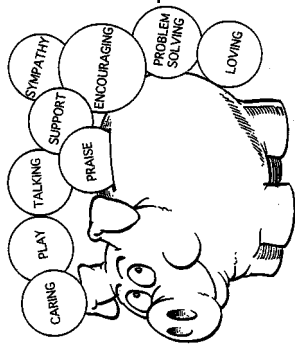
By doing this exercise, you will obtain a record of each other's efforts and become more observant of how the other person tries to please. We have noticed that parents are often quite willing to please their partner if they understand precisely what their partner wants and know that their efforts will be recognized.

Support for Single Parents

If you do not have a partner, it is important to arrange some "caring days" for yourself. You could do this by developing a list of pleasurable things you would like to do for yourself. Each week pick some of the items from your list to give yourself.

Examples: Have dinner with a friend.
Go to a movie.
Arrange for a back rub.
Take a piano lesson.
Walk to the park.
Have a bubble bath.
Buy and read a fun magazine.

It is also important for single parents to set up a support system. This might be done by meeting regularly with other parents, close friends, or family members. Organizations such as Parents Without Partners, church groups, recreational groups, and political groups can be sources of support and stimulation.



Home Activities



RECORD SHEET: PRAISE

Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

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



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Toilet Training

Most children are trained by three years but don't worry if your 3-year-old isn't trained; some children aren't ready until they are four years old. If your child shows signs of readiness you can begin toilet training about 2-½ years. Avoid rushing or getting into power struggles over this. Do this training when you have the time and patience and don't have too many other family pressures.

Signs of Readiness

- your child can stay dry for 3 hours or more
- your child recognizes the signs that she has to go
- your child can pull down her pants down and up by herself
- your child seems interested or motivated to become potty trained
- your child is imitating others going to the bathroom
- your child can follow simple instructions



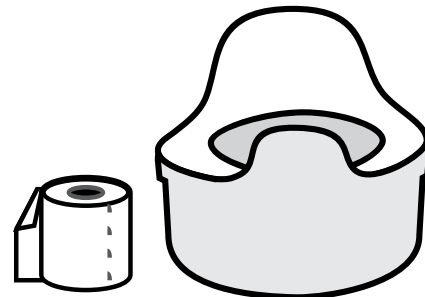


REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Starting Toilet Training

- Dress your child in clothes that are easy to get undone such as elastic-wasted pants
- Use a child-sized potty chair or special adaptor seat with a stool
- Create a routine for sitting on potty—start by seating your child fully clothed once day, whenever s/he is most likely to have a bowel movement
- Progress to sitting your child on the potty bare-bottomed. Don't restrain or force your child to sit there
- Let your child watch you or older sibling go to the bathroom
- Show your toddler how you use the toilet paper, flush the toilet and wash your hands
- Praise your child every time she uses the potty seat, or you check and she has dry pants
- Set up a schedule for going to the bathroom
- Make sure your child knows it's okay to ask for help to go to the potty anytime
- Teach your child how to clean and wash hands after going to the potty
- Expect set backs; don't make a big deal out of mistakes such as wet beds or accidents—stay calm and positive, "it's okay, next time I bet you will use the potty chair"
- Once training is established, consider using training pants as this allows a toddler to undress by himself; introduce them gradually maybe for a few hours at a time
- Keep using diapers at night; even though your toddler is dry during the day, it can take months or years before children are dry at night

I expect accidents



Handouts & Refrigerator Notes Handling Separation and Reunions



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Handling Separations & Reunions



Home Activities For The Week



To Do:

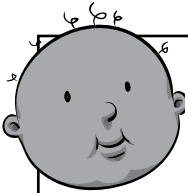
- **ESTABLISH** your routine for saying good-bye when you leave your child
- **RECORD** your routines for bed time, mornings, toilet time and reading in your journal (bring it to next session)
- **REVIEW** your toddler-proofing safety checklist (pg. 61-66)
- **CALL** your buddy to share one of your routines



To Read:

Read Chapter 5, *Separation, Reunions, Bedtime and Routines* in *Incredible Toddlers*.

Remember to keep playing every day!



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Handling Separations and Reunions

Most children will have mastered separation anxiety by three years; but temporary episodes of separation anxiety are normal. Toddlers vacillate between wanting to be independent and needing the security of a parent. Especially if your toddler is shy or timid, you will find that helping your toddler cope with separations will result in a more secure and confident preschooler. But don't worry, there are still many years left before independence is fully achieved.

- Let your child know you are leaving in a predictable, routine way—don't sneak away to avoid a tantrum or lie about where you are going, as this will only increase your toddler's insecurity.
- Say good-bye briefly with a hug and say something positive about your expectations for your child's time away from you. Reassure him in a positive way that he will have a good time when you are gone and that he's safe.
- Encourage your child's growing independence.
- If you are leaving your child at day care, let him know when you will see him again and when he will be picked up and by whom.
- If you are leaving him at home and going out for the evening, let him know who will be taking care of him and when you will be back. For example, "Grandma is coming to play with you tonight while I go out for dinner. I'll be home after you are in bed, but I'll come in and kiss you good night."
- Leave and avoid giving too much attention to the child's normal protests.
- When you return greet your child with love and joy—let him know you are happy to see him.
- Give your child some transition time to move from his current play experience to leaving with you.



OUR FAMILY ROUTINES



Write out your routine for leaving your child at daycare.

Refrigerator Notes

Ensuring Your Toddler's Safety: Part 1

Toddlers are driven to explore and are curious about everything—they have no inhibitions and don't understand danger! Therefore one of the biggest challenges for parents is doing as much as possible to keep your child safe. Do this checklist and see how toddler-proof you are.

Action	yes	no
Monitor and supervise my toddler at all times; am vigilant about this.		
Toddler-proofed every room in my house		
Keep emergency numbers next to the phone (including a poison control number)		
Keep curtain and blind cords out of reach		
Ensured all my windows are lockable and use window guards		
Put plastic covers on electrical outlets		
Unplug electrical appliances when not in use		
Put latches on cupboard doors and drawers		
Keep chairs and cribs away from windows		
Keep small objects such as coins, marbles, batteries and purses out of reach of my toddler		
Keep toilet seat closed at all times. If my toddler is attracted to water, keep the bathroom door closed/locked or use a toilet seat lock		
When bathing child, I do not leave a filling/filled tub unattended. I keep my toddler with me while tub is filling. Once my child is in tub, I do not leave, even for a second. I drain water as soon as my child is out of bath		
Do not leave my toddler alone with my pet and keep litter box in walled off area		
Made sure my plants are not dangerous (called poison control center)		
Installed baby gates at the top and bottom of stairs		
Use fire-retardant sleepwear		
Turned down the temperature on my hot water heater		
Locked all medications (including vitamins) in lockable medicine cabinet or cash box that can be stashed on a top shelf		
Keep all products such as shampoo, cosmetics, nail polish remover, household cleaners, scissors, razors out of my toddler's reach		
Keep electrical hair dryers out of my toddler's reach		
Keep stuffed animals away from cooking area		
Turn pot handles toward back of stove & secure oven door		

Refrigerator Notes

Ensuring Your Toddler's Safety: Part 2

Toddlers are driven to explore and are curious about everything—they have no inhibitions and don't understand danger! Therefore one of the biggest challenges for parents is doing as much as possible to keep your child safe. Do this checklist and see how toddler-proof you are.

Action	yes	no
Never leave my toddler unattended while eating; do not give them popcorn or peanuts		
Have a play area in kitchen—give him his own cupboard with plastic containers, wooden spoons etc.		
Avoid latex balloons—stick to Mylar		
Put fireplace guards around fireplaces or heaters		
Supervise my toddler when he's using a riding toy		
Use a helmet when my child is riding a tricycle (to get in habit)		
Keep my toddler in a car seat and strapped in facing the rear. (Children should be rear facing until they weigh at least 20 lbs AND are one year of age.)		
Use a government-approved car seat. I never ride in the car with my toddler in my arms. I will keep my toddler in a car seat until he is at least 40 lbs and then in a booster seat until he is 4'9".		
Never leave my child unattended in car, even if dashing to the store for a minute.		
Put sunscreen on and sun hats on my children when in the sun		
I have taken a first aid and infant/toddler CPR class		
I stay within arm's reach of my toddler near traffic, water, or other dangerous situations.		
I am teaching my toddler to "stop" for traffic and to hold my hand as we cross the street		
In very dangerous or crowded situations (near water, near traffic, in a busy airport) I keep my toddler safe in a backpack, stroller or harness.		
When I buy toys I will check their safety rating.		

OUR FAMILY ROUTINES



Write out your bedtime routine here.

OUR FAMILY ROUTINES



Write out your morning routine here.



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Tips to Establishing Your Toddler's Healthy Sleep Habits

- Set bedtime and regular nap times to regulate sleep patterns.
- Choose a bedtime that fits your family schedule and stick to it as much as possible.
- Establish a bedtime routine such as:
playtime, bath, pajamas, tooth brushing, story, song and kiss good night.
- Praise your child for staying in his own bed all night.



Handouts and Refrigerator Notes Positive Discipline-Effective Limit Setting



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Positive Discipline: Effective Limit Setting

“The Importance of Being Clear, Predictable, and Positive”



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **DECREASE** the number of commands you give to those that are most important.
- When necessary, **GIVE RESPECTFUL AND SPECIFIC COMMANDS.**
- **PRACTICE** giving “first-then” and “when-then” commands.
- **USE** distractions & redirection & give choices when possible.
- **MONITOR** and record the frequency and type of commands you give at home for a 10-minute period. Rewrite any negative commands to positive commands (pg. 321-323)
- **PRAISE** your child every time he or she complies with an instruction.
- **CALL** your buddy to talk about your household rules, effective distractions & redirections and how you limit TV watching.

To Read:



Chapter 6, *Positive Discipline and Effective Limit Setting*, in *Incredible Toddlers*.

Remember to keep playing every day!

Positive Discipline: Effective Limit Setting

“The Importance of Being Clear, Predictable, and Positive”



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **DECREASE** the number of “no’s” you give – try redirecting and distractions when possible.
- When necessary, **GIVE RESPECTFUL AND SPECIFIC COMMANDS**. Avoid using question commands, “let’s” commands, negative commands, vague commands, and chain commands. Give children transition time when possible.
- **RECORD** some positive coping thoughts you will use to stay calm (pg. 318).
- **CALL** your buddy to talk about your household rules, effective distractions & redirections and how you limit TV watching.

To Read:



Chapter 6, *Positive Discipline and Effective Limit Setting*, in *Incredible Toddlers*.

Remember to keep playing every day!

Brainstorm



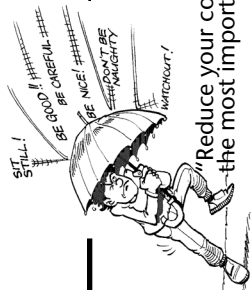
- 1. What are the possible benefits for your children having clear limits in your home?
- 2. What gets in the way of setting limits?

Write down the benefits of having clear limits and your difficulties in doing it. See if you can find any solutions to your barriers to setting clear limits.

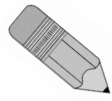
Benefits of Setting Limits	Difficulties in Doing This

Goal:

I will commit to reducing the number of commands or requests to those that are most important. Instead, I will focus on giving choices when possible, using distractions and when-then commands.



Home Activities



RECORD SHEET: COMMANDS

"Reduce your commands to the most important ones."

Date	Time	Example of Commands Given	# of Commands	Child's Response	Parent's Response
Example	5-5:30 p.m.	"Put the toys away."		Child puts toys away	"Thank you for putting the toys away."
1st Day					
2nd Day					
		Example of First/Then Command or Distraction			



REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT LIMIT SETTING

- Don't give unnecessary commands.
- Give one command at a time.
- Be realistic in your expectations and use age-appropriate commands.
- Use "do" commands.
- Make commands positive and polite.
- Limit use of "stop" or "no" commands.
- Give children ample opportunity to comply.
- Give warnings and helpful reminders.
- Don't threaten children; use "when-then" commands.
- Give children choices whenever possible.
- Make commands short and to the point.
- Support your partner's commands.
- Praise compliance or provide consequences for noncompliance.
- Strike a balance between parent and child control.
- Use distractions and redirection when possible.





REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Promoting Your Child's Healthy Media Diet (2 to 6 years)

Excessive screen time can interfere with children's development of friendships, impact their physical fitness, contribute to obesity and lack of sleep, and decrease their interest in reading and their motivation for school success. Violent screen time content has been shown to increase children's aggressive behavior and hostility. Here are some tips for helping your child develop healthy screen time habits, while minimizing their negative effects.

Set household rules regarding how much screen time your child is allowed. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the following:

- For children under 2 years, discourage all screen time.
- For children 2-5 years, limit to one hour/day of high quality programming
- For children 6-12 limit to 90 minutes/day

Supervise and monitor the content children are consuming. Decide which program, games, or sites are healthy as well as those that cannot be viewed or played. Websites such as Common Sense Media <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/> can provide a guidance on media content that is appropriate for children of different ages.

Take an active role in your children's media education by watching TV programs with them and participating in their computer games so you can mitigate their negative effects and enhance their use as a way to promote interaction, connection and creativity. For example you can promote your child's social skills and empathy by talking about movie characters who are sensitive and caring, or in other cases, you can discuss a bad decision or disrespectful behavior of a character. When watching commercials, have discussions about the purpose of commercials and the messages that they send about unhealthy food or consumerism.

Keep all screens in common rooms of your house so that you can monitor or track your child's screen time use. Help your child turn off the screen when he or she has reached the daily limit. Praise and reward your child for healthy viewing habits and following the screen time rules.

Set a bedtime that is not altered by screen time activities and avoid screen time 1 hour prior to bedtime. Don't put computers, smartphones or TVs in your child's bedroom.

Strive for balance between screen time activities and other activities involving social interactions, making friends, physical activity, reading or some other special play time. Have some designated time periods or days that are "screen time-out" times for all family members. Promote a healthy media diet that encourages social, emotional and physical health.

Set a good example by modeling healthy screen time habits.

See <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx> for a tool developed by American Academy of Pediatrics to develop your own family media plan.

REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Promoting Children's Healthy Life Style and Well Being

- Help your children understand the health benefits of being physically active every day. During child directed play, offer options of playing tag or Frisbee, jumping rope, swimming, dancing, playing soccer or taking a walk to the park with you.
- Avoid making comments about weight (your own or your child's). Instead, use language that focuses on healthy choices and strong bodies that allow you to be active (walk, play, climb, dance, etc.).
- Limit your child's total screen time to no more than 1 hour a day. Avoid screen time for children under 2 years of age.
- Provide healthy snacks: for example fruit or vegetables to dip in yogurt or hummus. Avoid continuous snacking, and instead, offer food at predictable meal and snack times. Limit high-fat, high-sugar, or salty snacks.
- In the context of otherwise healthy eating, offer moderate amounts of "treat" foods to help children learn to regulate their intake of sweets.
- At mealtimes provide a variety of health foods; fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meats; avoid foods high in trans fats and/or saturated fats.
- Allow your child to serve him/herself. Do not require children to clean their plates and do allow them to have more of anything healthy that is being served. This will help them learn to pay attention to their own hunger signals.
- Do not put your child on a weight reduction diet unless your physician supervises. For most young children, the focus is maintaining current weight, while growing in height.
- Offer children water or low/non-fat milk. Limit soda and juice intake.
- Have predictable family meals together where you have time to talk and enjoy the meal together. Establish dinner as a "no screen" time.
- Involve children in food planning, shopping, and meals preparation.
- Check that your child care providers are encouraging healthy eating and limiting junk food.
- One of the most powerful ways your children learn to be healthy is by observing you. Therefore, model being physically active, buy and eat healthy foods, express your enjoyment of food and family meals, and model positive talk about your family's healthy bodies.



HOUSEHOLD RULES

Some Examples:

1. Bedtime is at 7:30 p.m.
2. No hitting allowed.
3. Must sit in back of car in car seat.
4. Trike riding is only allowed on the sidewalk, not in the street.

Your List of Household Rules:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

***Every home needs a limited number of “house rules.”
If the list gets too long, no one will remember the rules.***

OUR FAMILY RULES



Write out your list of household rules



Brainstorm

Rewrite the following ineffective commands into positive, clear, respectful commands.



Ineffective Commands	Rewrite
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shut up• Quit shouting• Stop running• Watch it• Why don't we go to bed?• Let's clean up the living room• Cut it out• What is your coat doing there?• Why are your shoes in the living room?• Don't shove salad in your mouth like a pig• Why is your bike still in the driveway?• You look like a mess• Stop bugging your sister• You are never ready• Your clothes are filthy• This room is a mess• Don't whine• You are impossible• Stop dawdling• Hurry up• Be quiet• Why are you riding on the road when you've been told not to?• I'll hit you if you do that again	

Handouts & Refrigerator Notes ***Positive Discipline-Handling Misbehavior***



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Handling Misbehavior: Ignoring

Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **CONTINUE PLAYING** with your child every day for at least 10 minutes
- **USE A DISTRACTION** or a diversion when possible to pre-empt a problem (Or divert yourself!)
- **IGNORE** one misbehavior you want to decrease & journal your goal (pg. 372-373)
- **PRAISE** your child for the “positive-opposite” behavior to the negative behavior you want to decrease
- **RECORD** using self-praise and challenging negative thoughts with positive, coping thoughts (pg. 375)

To Read:



Chapter 7, *Positive Discipline - Handling Misbehavior*, in *Incredible Toddlers*.

Helping Children Learn to Calm Down



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **DO** emotion coaching during play times and focus on times your child is calm, patient and peaceful
- **USING** puppets or books, talk about ways to calm down by taking a deep breath and going into your shell or using a thermometer picture
- **MODEL** using calm down strategies yourself for you child to see.
- **COMPLETE** Parents Thinking Like Detectives handout (pg. 381-384)
- **REVIEW** IY Problem Solving worksheet (pg. 385-388)

To Read:

Chapter 8, *Putting it All Together*, in *Incredible Toddlers*.

Brainstorm



Behaviors such as throwing tantrums, whining, pouting, sulking, and screaming, are good candidates for ignoring. These behaviors are annoying, but they never really seem to hurt anyone, and the behaviors will disappear if they are systematically ignored. The ignoring technique should not be used, however, with behaviors that could lead to physical injury or property damage, or intolerable disruption of an ongoing activity.

Parents often have trouble controlling their anger when dealing with misbehavior, and find it hard not to criticize the child. This emotional involvement can make it difficult to ignore your child's arguments or to praise compliance when it finally does occur. However, ignoring is one of the most effective strategies you can use.

Child Behaviors I will Ignore



e.g., whining

Goal: I will commit to ignoring _____
behavior whenever it occurs. I will praise _____
behavior, the positive opposite of the behavior I am ignoring.



Brainstorm

When you first start ignoring misbehavior, the behavior will get worse before it gets better. It is important to be prepared to wait out this screaming period. If you give in to the tantrum, this behavior will be reinforced and your child will learn that by crying and screaming loudly, he or she can get his/her own way.

It is important to stay calm while ignoring. Try to think ahead and brainstorm ways to remain calm when ignoring misbehavior.

Ways to Stay Calm While Ignoring



- deep breaths
- relaxation techniques
- positive thoughts
- walk away
- turn on some music
- put angry thoughts in parking lot!

Remember, all young children cry, bite and hit to get what they want. This is not personal but a reflection of their lack of verbal skills and inability to use social skills to get what they want.

Goal: I will commit to tell myself the following _____

when my child misbehaves.

Brainstorm: Using Differential Attention



Sometimes, children will show positive and negative behaviors during the same activity. For example, a child might follow directions (positive behavior) while whining or fussing (negative behavior). *Differential attention* is the technique where a parent praises the positive behavior while ignoring the negative behavior. For example, a parent might praise the child for following directions, and pay no attention to the whining or fussing behavior. This way, the child learns that she will receive positive attention for some behaviors, but will not receive attention for other behavior (e.g., whining).

Think about some situations where this kind of differential attention could be effective.

When Would Differential Attention be Effective?



e.g., when child is following directions and fussing at the same time I will praise his cooperation and ignore his fussing.

Goal: I will commit to praising _____
behavior while ignoring _____
behavior.

Record Sheet: Ignore and Praise

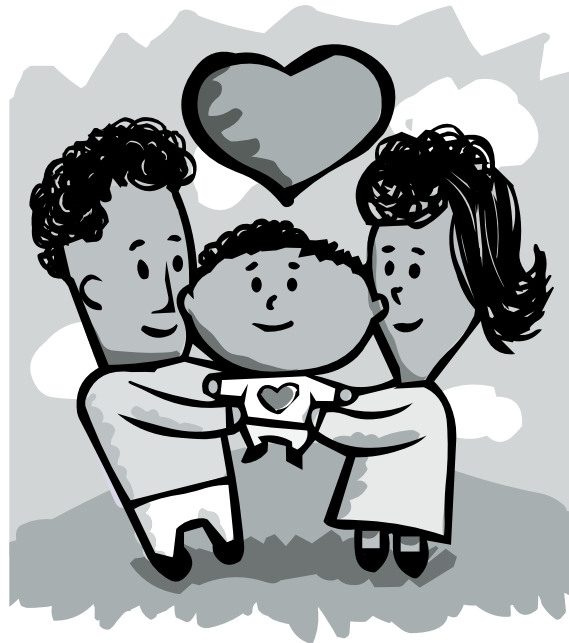
Behavior Ignored	Child's Response
e.g. Yelling	
Monday _____	_____
Tuesday _____	_____
Wednesday _____	_____
Thursday _____	_____
Friday _____	_____
Saturday _____	_____
Sunday _____	_____
Behavior Praised	Child's Response
e.g. Talking Nicely	
Monday _____	_____
Tuesday _____	_____
Wednesday _____	_____
Thursday _____	_____
Friday _____	_____
Saturday _____	_____
Sunday _____	_____



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Positive Discipline Helps My Toddler Feel Loved and Secure

- Play frequently and provide social and emotional coaching
- Label and reflect your toddler's feelings—even negative feelings
- Structure your toddler's day with a predictable routine for mornings, naps, meals and bedtime
- Set clear limits when needed to keep your toddler safe
- Help your toddler prepare for transitions or changes in routine
- Have a predictable routine for leaving your child and reuniting
- Give your toddler choices when possible
- Share your love and praise and tell your toddler how special he is
- Give your toddler attention and praise for positive behavior
- Redirect your toddler's negative behavior
- Allow your toddler independence when possible
- Help your toddler explore while giving appropriate support
- Ignore tantrums and give back attention as soon as tantrum stops
- Take care of yourself by getting support from others and doing things for yourself





REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT IGNORING

- Avoid eye contact and discussion while ignoring
- Physically move away from your child but stay in the room
- Be prepared for testing
- Be consistent
- Return your attention as soon as misbehavior stops
- Combine distractions and redirections with ignoring
- Choose specific child behaviors to ignore and make sure they are ones you can ignore
- Limit the number of behaviors to systematically ignore
- Give more attention to the positive opposite behaviors you want to encourage



**Stay calm
and in control**



**Be prepared for
testing**



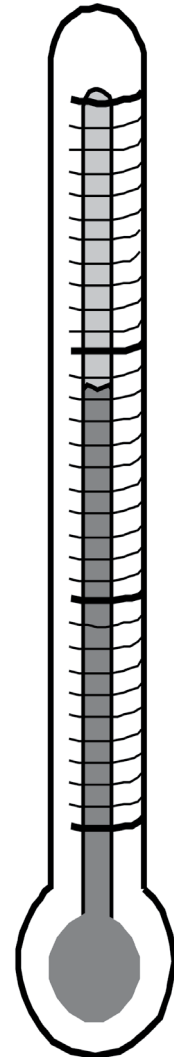
**I can stay
calm**



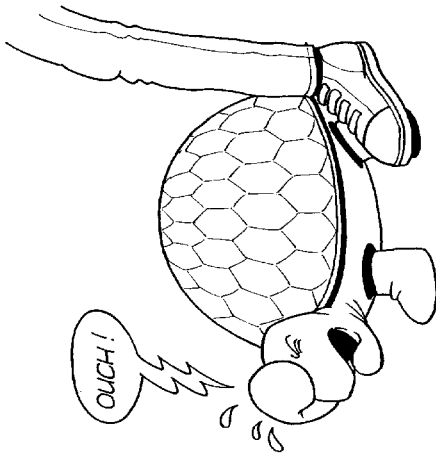
REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Teach Calm Down Strategies

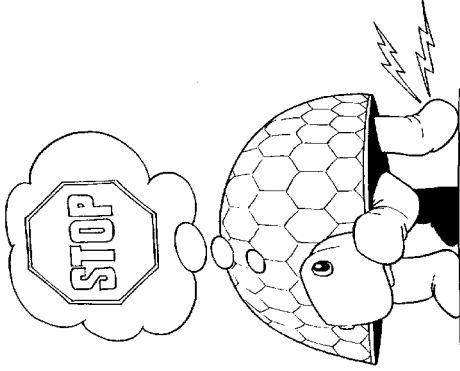
- When your child is calm practice taking deep breaths and praise your child by telling him he is very strong at calming down
- Notice times when your child stays calm in a frustrating situation and praise her for her patience and calmness
- Use emotion coaching and comment on times your toddler is happy, excited, curious, calm, angry or frustrated. Try to comment on more happy feelings than angry or sad ones
- Model staying calm yourself in frustrating situations—take a deep breath—say, “I can calm down” in front of your child



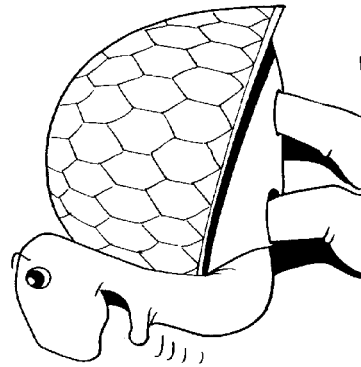
Tiny's Anger Management Steps



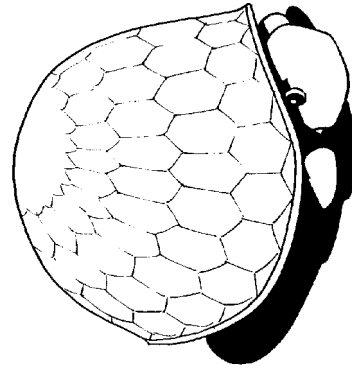
#1



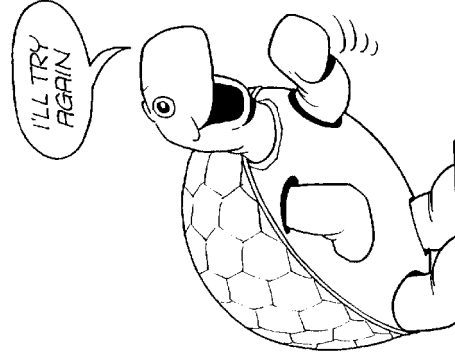
#2. Think Stop



#3. Take a Slow Breath



#4. Withdrawing into Shell



#5. Try again!



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Managing Biting and Hitting

If your child bites or hits another child:

- Separate the children immediately
- Use kind but firm limit setting “no biting,” “no hitting”
- Stay calm
- Help child who was bitten or hit to say “I don’t like that”
- If possible, provide your child with words to resolve the conflict that led to the biting or hitting; “e.g., looks like you want a truck too, you can say, “I want a truck, please.” (even if your child can’t say these words, you have still modeled a better coping strategy).

If your child bites or hits you:

- Do your best to stay calm, even though the bite or hit may startle you and hurt
- Use kind but firm limit setting “no biting” and briefly put your child down or move away just a foot or two
- Tell your child that the biting hurt
- Ignore child for 1–2 minutes
- Redirect and reengage your child in a new activity, or provide her with words to communicate the reason for the bite.



REFRIGERATOR NOTES

Handling Tantrum Storms



Daily tantrums are a normal part of the toddler years. They occur because developmentally toddlers lack the verbal skills to communicate their feelings or wants, and have an immature emotional self-regulation system. This coupled with a strong drive to explore and be independent is a recipe for frustration for your toddler.

- Stay calm in the face of your toddler's storm—including kicking, screaming, throwing things or hitting.
- Don't try to reason or use a distraction with your toddler in the middle of a storm- the more you reason or yell, the worse the storm will rage.
- Stay in the room with your toddler while the storm occurs, but ignore the tantrum; do something else.
- Wait for the storm to subside and then return your attention immediately; praise your child's calm behavior and distract him to some other activity.
- No matter how long the storm lasts, don't give in or negotiate—even when you are in public. This short-term solution will lead to longer-term consequences of escalating tantrums and using these to get what he wants.
- Stay calm and in control—a tantruming child is feeling out of control and needs to feel that his parent is in control.
- If your toddler's tantrum escalates to hitting people or pets, or breaking objects, pick him up and carry him to a safe place. Then stay with him but ignore the tantrum.
- Think about why your child might be tantruming.
- Try to pre-empt storms when possible.

Think about why and when your child's tantrums occur—is it when your child is hungry? Or, tired? Or, involved in a transition to some other activity? Or, can't have something s/he wants? This might mean keeping snacks on hand, or, setting an earlier nap time, or preparing your child for a transition in advance which will give him a chance to adjust. If your child is grappling with control or independence issues, try offering choices when possible. Monitor how often you are saying "no" —are your limits necessary? Keep your battles for the important issues.

Remember—even with all your prevention strategies—toddlers will still tantrum and need to develop the self-regulation skills to calm down.

Parents Working Like Detectives: See What You've Learned!

Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

Make a list of what strategies you would use for the following problem behaviors. Add other problem behaviors you are wanting to manage.

Problem Behavior	Discipline Strategy
1. Hitting peers	_____
2. Refusing to do what parent asks	_____
3. Biting others	_____
4. Dawdling	_____
5. Picky eating	_____
6. Aggressive with animals	_____
7. Throwing tantrums	_____
8. Soiling pants	_____
9. Stomach aches and headaches	_____
10. Inattentiveness and impulsivity	_____
11. Wetting bed at night	_____

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Parents Working Like Detectives: See What You've Learned!

Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

Make a list of what strategies you would use for the following problem behaviors. Add other problem behaviors you are wanting to manage.

Problem Behavior	Discipline Strategy
12. Running away in grocery store	_____
13. Refusing to sit in car seat	_____
14. Crying when left in child care	_____
15. Refusing to share toy with peer	_____
16. Not sitting at dinner table	_____
17. Watching too much TV	_____
18. Getting into parents' bed at night	_____
19. Refusing to go to bed at bedtime	_____
20. Taking a toy from a peer	_____
21. Throwing food on the floor	_____
22. Crying, whining	_____

Parents Working Like Detectives: See What You've Learned!

Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

Make a list of what strategies you would use for the following problem behaviors. Add other problem behaviors you are wanting to manage.

Problem Behavior	Discipline Strategy
1.	<hr/>
2.	<hr/>
3.	<hr/>
4.	<hr/>
5.	<hr/>
6.	<hr/>
7.	<hr/>
8.	<hr/>
9.	<hr/>
10.	<hr/>
11.	<hr/>



Incredible Years® Problem Solving Worksheet For Managing Toddlers' Challenging Behaviors!

Problem Definition:

1. My child's challenging behavior: _____

2. What are the triggers/precipitants of my child's misbehavior? (developmental problem, not enough sleep, not getting what he wants, a family transition or stress, low frustration tolerance, etc.)

3. How do I usually respond to this misbehavior? (Do I give it attention? Do I get angry?)

Goals:

4. What is my goal? What positive opposite behavior do I want to see instead? _____

Solutions:

5. What skills/strategies can I use from the bottom of the Pyramid to support this positive behavior?
Play/Special Time: What kind of play or special time might best help my child here? (Remember, it is best if it is child-led.) (persistence, academic, social, or emotion coaching) _____

Praise: What behaviors can I praise and how? (Remember they should be the "positive opposites" of the behaviors you want to decrease.) _____

Stickers and Rewards: How can I reward this good behavior? What incentives will motivate my child? _____

6. Choose from the list below those responses from the top of the pyramid than can be used to reduce this misbehavior.
Routines: Do I have a predictable routine for this problem? _____

Distraction/Redirection: How can I distract or redirect my child before misbehavior escalates? _____

Ignore: What part of this behavior could I ignore? _____

What will I say to myself while I ignore it? _____

Consequence: What natural or logical consequence can I use to teach my child to change this behavior? _____

Calm Down Strategies: What calm down strategies can I teach my child? (use of turtle shell, deep breathing, positive self-talk "I can do it, I can calm down," use of the calm-down thermometer) _____

Carrying Out my Plan:

7. To whom should I communicate this plan? (teachers, grandparents, partners, etc.) _____

8. Who can I call for support and to check in? _____

9. How will I take care of myself while this is going on? _____

Evaluating the Success of Solutions

10. How will I know I am making progress? What will be different? _____

11. How will I celebrate my child's success? As well as my own? _____

***Congratulations! You have a plan to change your child's behavior!
Remember, it can take three weeks or more to see changes,
so don't give up!***



Brainstorm

Think about ways to stay calm, assertive and patient when frustrated with your child.

Practice challenging negative self-talk and substituting positive self-talk and coping statements. On your notepad, write down some self-talk that you can use when you feel anger mounting.

Positive Self-Talk



I can handle this...

I can control my anger...

I will take a brief Time Out myself...



Challenge irrational thoughts



Handout

“POSITIVE OPPOSITES” BEHAVIOR RECORD

**Behaviors I want to see less of:
e.g., hitting**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

**For each negative behavior, put its
positive opposite behavior below:
e.g., staying calm and using words**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

Handout

Learning Self-Control

Many family members find that in stressful situations they cannot maintain their self-control. Others report they suffer from chronic anger, anxiety or depression, and they are easily set off by the slightest event. However, when parents allow themselves to become so overwhelmed that they overreact, the consequences can be unfortunate. Parents may say or do something they will regret. After they calm down, they may feel guilty and avoid dealing with the child for fear of repeating the episode. It is frightening and anxiety-provoking for a child to see a parent lose control. Also, the child learns to imitate these aggressive behaviors in other situations. These cycles of parental overreaction and avoidance make it difficult to deal with the child in a consistent manner. The best approach is to achieve a middle ground—not be so overwhelmed that you can't respond or so upset that you overreact.

Upsetting Thoughts

"That child is a monster. This is getting ridiculous. She'll never change."

"I'm sick of being his maid. Things are going to change or else!"

"He's just like his father."

"I can't handle it when she's angry."

Calming Thoughts

"This child is testing to see if he can have his own way. My job is to stay calm and help him learn better ways to behave."

"I need to help organize her toys and only bring out 1 or 2 toys at a time. I can help her learn to pick up."

"I can handle this. I am in control. She has just learned some powerful ways to get control. I will teach her more appropriate ways to behave."

Thought Control

Researchers have demonstrated that there is a relationship between how we think and how we behave. For example, if you view the child in hostile terms ("He is misbehaving because he hates me — he likes to get me upset"), you are likely to become very angry. On the other hand, if your thoughts emphasize your ability to cope ("I'm going to have to help him learn to control himself"), this will help to bring about rational and effective responses. One of the first steps for improving the way you think about your child is to replace upsetting thoughts and negative self-statements with calming thoughts.

Write your own positive coping statements and practice them during the week.

A large, empty speech bubble outline with a thick grey border, intended for writing positive coping statements. The bubble has a rounded top and a pointed tail at the bottom right.

Handout

Self-Talk in Problem Situations

Identify a problem situation and the upsetting thoughts you have at the time. Write down some alternative calming thoughts that you might use to redefine the situation. Next time you find yourself using negative self-talk, give yourself some time to think positively and consider the alternatives available to you for dealing with the situation.

Problem Situation: _____

Upsetting Thoughts

Calming Thoughts

**I am a
problem
solver**



Self-Talk in Problem Situations

Identify a problem situation and the upsetting thoughts you have at the time. Write down some alternative calming thoughts that you might use to redefine the situation. Next time you find yourself using negative self-talk, give yourself some time to think positively and consider the alternatives available to you for dealing with the situation.

Problem	Situation	Upsetting Thoughts	Calming Thoughts



Handout

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Identify and label your emotions when they first occur. Pay attention to how your body feels (for example, tenseness, fidgeting, anger, headaches).
2. Decide what events make you feel frustrated.
3. Choose the most effective way to control yourself, and do it.

Non-constructive Thoughts

"John never helps. All I get is work, work, work. I fix the food, take care of the house, the kids, everything. Boy, would I like to throw this at him!"

"After working 10 hours, I'm tired and frustrated. When I get home, all I get are hassles. The kids interrupt and yell, and Joan criticizes me. This place is a mess. What does she do all day? I feel like screaming or walking out of here."

Constructive Thoughts

"I'd better watch it and calm down before I do something I'll regret. What I need is help. Maybe if I ask John in a nice way, he'll give me some help. That's the best way. Then maybe I can have a relaxing bath."

"Take it easy now. Take a few breaths. What I really need is a few minutes of peace to relax and read the paper. Maybe if I ask Joan nicely to play with the kids while I read, then I could give her a break and play with the kids later. She needs a rest too. That's the most helpful way. I can already feel myself relaxing."

"I can handle this. I can stay in control. She's just testing the limits. My job is to stay calm and help her learn better ways."

Feelings

Furious
Contemptuous
Angry

Defensive
Guilt
Withdrawn
Frustrated
Depression

Irritated
Anxious
Worried

Alert/Interested
Receptive/Open to
Influence/Flexible
Calm
Happy
Confident
Content
Loving/Affectionate

Physiological Signs

Heart racing
Neck muscles tight
Chest Tight
Clenched fists
Teeth clenched
Headache

Shallow rapid breathing
Increased perspiration
Muscles tense

Pacing
Headache developing

Behaviors

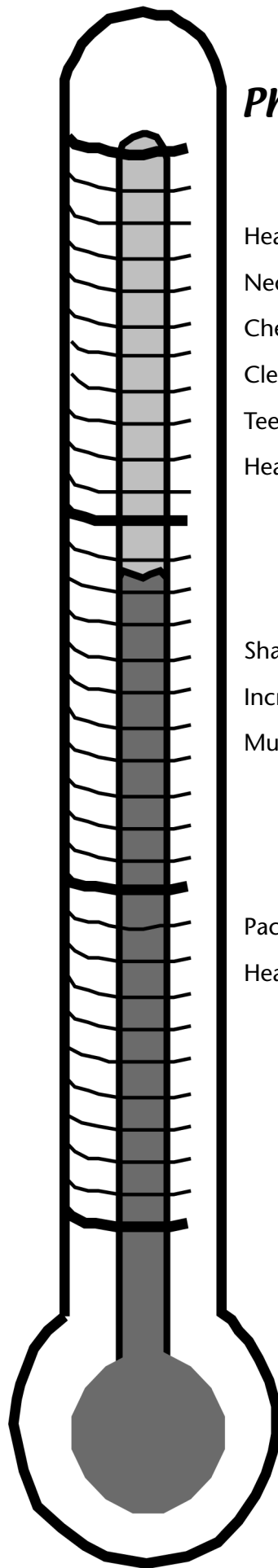
Yelling
Hitting

Threatening
Withdrawing
Stonewalling

Criticizing

Difficulty listening
Thinking narrow
Less open to new ideas

Calm
Pleasant
Able to problem-solve
Able to listen



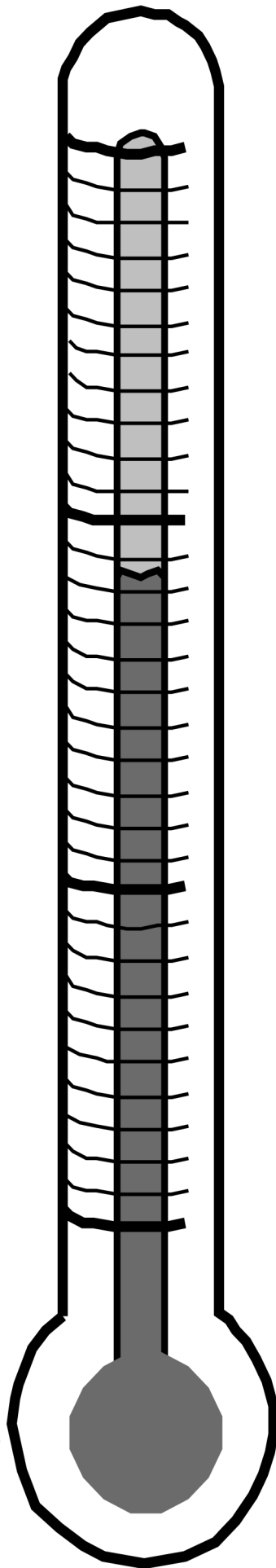
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Depression

Irritated
Anxious
Worried

Alert/Interested
Receptive/Open to
Influence/Flexible
Calm
Happy
Confident
Content
Loving/Affectionate



Self-Talk

I'm so mad I could hurt...
S/he deserves to be...
S/he is no good/rotten.
What did I do to deserve...
It's not my fault; it's his/hers.
S/he's just like...
I was never like this.
I think s/he'll end up in jail.
I don't have time to deal with this.
I'm a bad parent (partner). I'm hopeless
Why me? This is too stressful.

It's not working to stay calm.
It's useless...
There's no point in doing anything for him/her.
It never helps.
No matter what I do, nothing changes.
S/he just throws it back at me.
I deserve this for what I did when...

My parents told me I was...(a criticism)
What's going to happen when s/he's a teenager?
I'm getting stressed; I need to take a personal Time Out.
Maybe this is too much for me to handle.
Maybe I'm not a good parent/spouse.
I'm not sure I can do this.

When change occurs, it's supposed to get worse
before it gets better.
I can make a difference to our future.
Stress is a normal part of any relationship.
This stage won't last forever. Things will get better.
I can handle this; I can control my anger.
I can teach him to...
Problems occur so we can all learn to manage conflict.
I can talk to him about...and come up with some solutions.
We'll manage; we all need learning trials.
Everyone makes mistakes.
I can help by...
His/her positive qualities are...
I'm a caring parent/partner because I'm trying by...
I stay calm most of the time.
I enjoy being with him/her, especially when we...
I love (appreciate)...



Congratulations!

You have finished the Parent Program! Take a moment to congratulate yourself and reward yourself for all of your hard work.

We also recommend that you read the other chapters in the *Incredible Years* book to prepare yourself for the next phase of your child's growth and development.

