

How should I notice my child? Why does it work?

When we notice what our child is doing, they feel SEEN, CONNECTED to us, and like they are UNDERSTOOD. That's a powerful and encouraging feeling for everyone.

Encouragement literally means to inspire with courage, spirit, or confidence.

In parenting terms, this is a way of speaking and interacting with your child that tells her that you have faith in her and in her abilities. It helps your child develop a 'can do' attitude and a desire to cooperate.

So how do we do this as a parent?

Consider these phrases as a way to start..

Notice what your child is doing without judging it.

"I see you're wearing your favorite t-shirt today."

"You were jumping so high!"

"I saw you and your brother having fun playing hide and seek together."

Thank them for doing something helpful.

"Thank you for helping carry the groceries."

"I noticed you held your little sister's hand to help her go up the stairs."

"Wow, look at all of those toys in the bin! You cleaned that all up by yourself."

Be specific about what you see.

"You used three different green colors... looks like you're a fan of green! Tell me about that."

"You used so many colors in your drawing. Let's count how many."

"Last week, you climbed halfway up the stairs, and today you got to the top!"

Note their strengths. Be specific!

"Something you do that I appreciate. . . "

"Did you see the baby giggle when you were dancing? He really loves watching you."

Separate the behavior from the child.

"I love you and I cannot let myself or anyone else get hurt. We do not kick/hit/spit/say mean things to each other in this family."

"Looks like we need to take a break from our friends. We'll have another chance to play on another day."