

# Butterfly Parent Training

Welcome and Introductions

Revision of last week

Review of Homework

The value of praise

Catching children being good

Purpose of play and skills developed through play

Homework - reflecting on playing together and catching your child being good and praising them

## The Value of Praise

On the whole society tends to have a very negative approach towards children. Adults are keen to tell them what to do, what not to do and to point out what they are doing wrong. **BUT**

When children do get it right they are often ignored until they commit another 'misdemeanor' - at which point they get told off again! Because it is unusual to overhear children being praised it can feel strange when you begin to do it yourself. With practice it will begin to feel more comfortable. Here are some phrases to give you some ideas and to get you started:

"Good boy, you were listening to me"

"I'm pleased you're sitting quietly while we wait"

'Well done, you're really trying hard to do this puzzle"

"You've done a good job wiping the table, thank you"

"That was kind of you to share your sweets with Joe"

**For younger children, praise may need to be simpler:**

"Good boy, you got your shoes"

"Well done for holding my hand"

The language you use will need to take your child's level of understanding into consideration. If they are only able to understand two or three word sentences use simple and clear words to praise. Remember to smile and look at your child!

# Praise

Praise involves all the following steps:-

- ❖ Looking at the child
- ❖ Saying the child's name
- ❖ Moving closer
- ❖ Smiling
- ❖ Showing a sign of approval (putting a hand on his shoulder, or your arm around her)
- ❖ Saying you approve of the behaviour - telling the child why you're pleased - be specific
- ❖ Praising the child within five seconds of seeing the good behaviour - if you delay your praise the child will not easily be able to make the connection between what s/he has done and the praise given.
- ❖ Praising behaviour - not the child. Don't just say "Good boy": Explain why you are pleased - be specific: "I'm pleased you're colouring your picture carefully inside the lines."

## Praise

**P**raise must be immediate

**R**emember to SMILE

**A**lways be specific

**I**t is important to move closer to your  
child

**S**ound sincere

**E**ye contact is essential



THINK ABOUT USING MEGAPHONES  
WHEN YOU PRAISE YOUR CHILD

## Catching Children Being Good

Too often children get most of their attention by misbehaving. When they are doing well, or being good, we tend to leave them be and make the most of the opportunity to see to the other children. Consequently to get our attention children revert to 'bad' behaviour. They get more and more attention for bad behaviour and less and less for good. The more we entice, tell off and try to punish, the worse they get. They have been shown that **negative** behaviour brings the attention they crave.

- ❖ It is better to concentrate on finding **positive** behaviours to increase, rather than always to be looking for the negative behaviours to criticise or punish.
- ❖ How many times have you said to your child "I like the way you are playing quietly"?

To begin with you may need clues or reminders to help you to remember to praise when you see your children being good. These ideas may help:

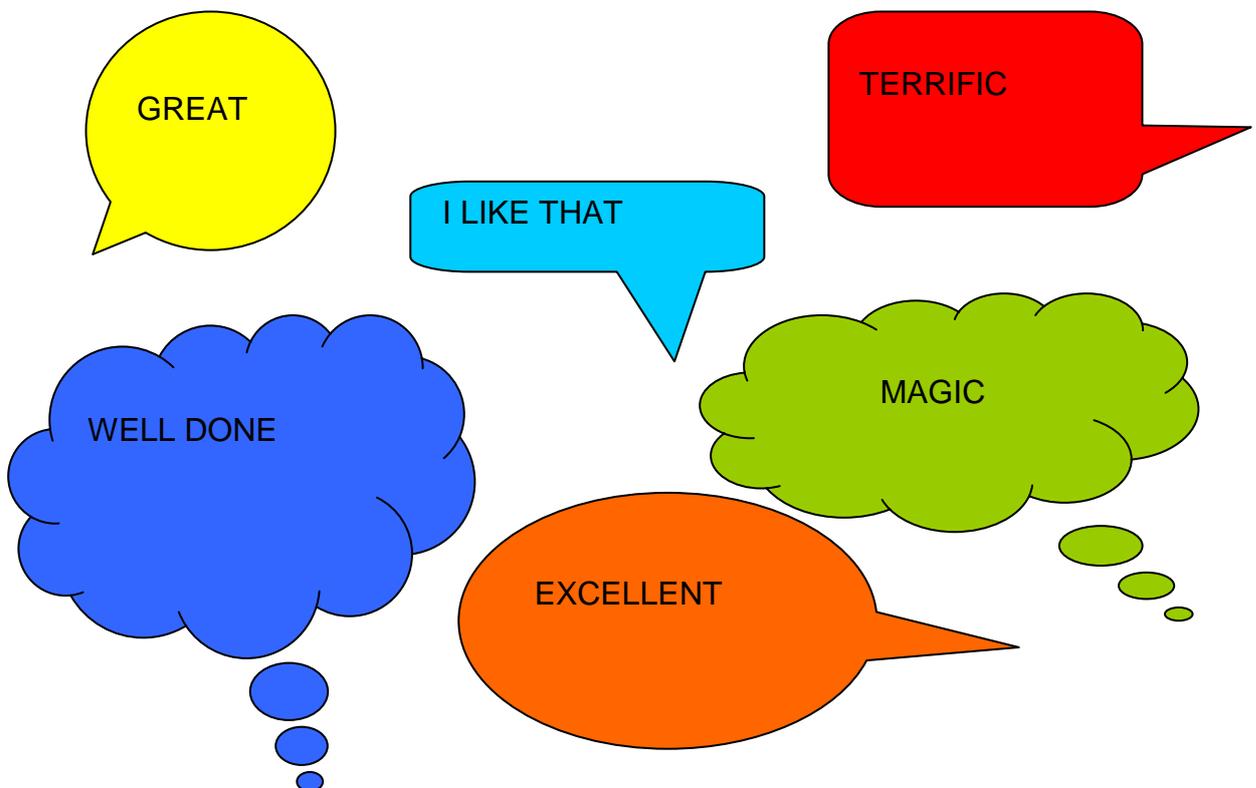
- ❖ **Set up a daily practice time - 30 minutes will be fine.**

Stop what you are doing every five minutes and find one thing to praise and reward them for. Another good time is during a meal - there may be others present and you can praise every one for good behaviour! This will illustrate the value of positive role-models.

❖ **Put up signs to remind you to praise.**

Have them on the fridge, doors and walls. Display different phrases, in case you get stuck in a rut!

Give them attention when they are behaving as you want them to **-Catch them being good!**



❖ **Give out rewards - stickers, smiley face charts, food etc.**  
Remember to use praise when you pass out the tokens. Make sure you mean it - **SMILE** and look pleased!

You have probably been using rewards all along to teach and manage your children. To make rewarding most effective you need to use it systematically. Following the above rules can help you to use it more effectively and to strengthen the desirable **positive** behaviours you are looking for, and not to strengthen by mistake the **negative** undesirable ones.

## Playing Together

Playing together can be a rewarding experience for both parents and their children. It can be a way of spending positive time together and strengthening the parent-child bond. Unfortunately playing does not always come naturally to grown ups – sometimes it is difficult to join in with a child's game or avoid taking over completely. Here are some ideas for playing in a child centred way:

- ❖ Choose a time when you are able to give your child your full undivided attention. Turn the television or radio off so you will not be distracted.
- ❖ Let your child choose the activity. To encourage this offer three choices and suggest they choose one. If they are already playing ask to join in!
- ❖ Forget about being a 'teacher'. Parents often feel pressurised into sitting down and 'teaching' their child academic skills. Children learn other equally important skills through play.
- ❖ Describe aloud what your child is doing in their play, for example:
  - "You're building a house"
  - "You're giving her a smiley face"This shows your child that you are interested in what they are doing, but does not put pressure on them to respond.
- ❖ Avoid unnecessary questions. Lots of people talk to children in questions. It is easily done, though must be very annoying. Avoid for example:

- “Where does the bed go?”
- “Is it time for her to go to sleep now?”

This intrudes into your child’s game and directs it along our own train of thought. Instead try to continue to describe what they are doing:

- “You’re putting the bed in the garage”.

❖ Reflect appropriate speech. Repeat back a little of what your child says, for example:

- Child: “The man fell down”
- Parent: “Yes – the man fell off the tree”

This shows a child you are really listening to what they have to say. It is also helpful to language development that the correct version of what a child has said is repeated, as opposed to making them repeat it themselves, for example:

- Child: “Doggie in here”
- Parent: “Yes – the dog is in there”

❖ Imitate appropriate play – ask to play. When your child has shown s/he is happy to let you join in with her/his play, ask him what he would like you to do, or imitate what he is already doing, for example:

- Child: “I’m drawing a cat”
- Parent: “I’ll put a cat in my picture too”

This lets the child take the lead and teaches him how to play with others and how to take turns.

❖ Avoid instructing. It is easy to begin to take over your child’s game by giving instructions, for example:

- “Take the tractor and put the trailer on it, move the pig and put it here”

Imagine how annoying we would find it to be constantly told what to do.

A child’s game is their own – follow it but don’t direct it! It is better to make an observation, e.g. “Oh, you’ve put the trailer on the other side of the barn” and let your child get on with enjoying the game.

- ❖ Praise. Play is a wonderful opportunity to practise praise.
  - “Well done, you’ve fixed the trailer on”
  - “I like the way you’ve dressed dolly”

Remember – praise the smallest thing and this will increase the good, positive behaviour and also help your child’s self esteem and confidence to blossom

- ❖ Avoid criticism. Try not to criticise your child or his game. He might have a very good reason for putting the pig down the chimney!! Even a few words of criticism can destroy a child’s confidence, particularly if he is called “silly” or “stupid”. Try to find something to praise instead, stroke his hair and give a cuddle.
- ❖ When time is nearly up remind your child that play time has nearly finished. Give a few minutes warning, for example:
  - “In five minutes it will be time for us to tidy away”

When it is time to end the game tell your child how much you have enjoyed playing with her and how much you're looking forward to the next time.

### **Playing Together: some activities**

#### **Books and stories**

An opportunity to be physically close and share thoughts and feelings. Also aids listening skills and language development. Helps your child to gain an understanding of others, of other cultures and countries. Can provide an opportunity to discuss concerns and worries. Helps children to understand their own feelings and those of others.

#### **Physical play**

All physical play helps to develop good co-ordination and spatial awareness. Play that involves touch also stimulates the neuro-chemistry necessary for emotional well-being. Gentle rough and tumble is thought to be essential for frontal lobe development and so helps with the management of stress and difficult emotions in later life.

#### **Painting, Drawing and Picture-making.**

Aids eye-hand co-ordination. Allows exploration of colours, textures and contrasts.

Allows children to develop pre-writing skills in an enjoyable way.

An opportunity for children to imaginatively explore and express their feelings. Children feel proud of concrete objects they create that you appreciate.

#### **Music, Songs, rhymes and instruments.**

Music and songs provide another way of communicating and sharing, for example singing a song together or dancing to a favourite song. Physical co-ordination and listening skills can also be practiced this way.

#### **Imaginative play**

Helps children to think things through and to see things from others point of view. Children learn to co-operate and negotiate in this type of play. Children can process some of their concerns and build self-esteem by acting out difficult feelings.

### Constructive Play

Helps with the development of hand-eye co-ordination, balance, visual-spatial problem solving. It also encourages learning through trial and error, and persistence. Construction is an opportunity for practicing patience and sharing. Building and re-building may also be therapeutic for some children at times.

### Puzzles

An opportunity for sequencing, sorting and matching as well as the practicing of fine-motor skills. Some children respond to the opportunity to engage in non-verbal reasoning tasks.

### Playing with natural materials

Wood, sand clay, dough and water can all be soothing and restful to children and adults. There is no right or wrong way to play with these materials and the materials can be re-used and transformed creatively. You might make something together outside with materials you find on a walk or on the beach or collect things to bring home. Through this you are co-operating and enjoying the world together. Through conversation you might explore scientific knowledge at a level that was interesting to your child.

### Playful games and playful moments.

**Some of the games described below would be expected to calm and quieten, some to challenge and excite. Some are likely to make your child feel close to you and special. When you are playing you can use games to match your child's mood or change their mood. (the following are taken from Theraplay 2007)**

**Bean Bag Game:** Place beanbag or soft toy on your head, give a signal and drop the beanbag into your child's hand by titling your head towards the child.

**Drawing around hands.** Feet or body: Gentle touch and chat describing where your drawing etc. They could then do the same for you.

**Peanut butter and Jam:** Say 'peanut butter' and have child say 'jam' in just the same way. Repeat five to ten times in varying loudness and intonation.

**Pop the bubble:** Blow a bubble and try to catch it on the wand. Have the child burst bubble with different body parts.

**Funny ways to cross the room:** Take turns in choosing how you you the other to cross the room eg like an elephant, a fairy, a mouse, a happy puppy, etc

**Beep and honk:** Press a child's nose and say 'beep' and press their chin and say 'honk'. Then have them do it to you and invent different noises for different parts of your face/body.

**Pop cheeks:** Inflate your cheeks with air and help the child to pop them with his hands or feet. Child inflates their cheeks and you pop them in turn.

**Special handshake:** Make a special handshake together, taking turns and adding new gestures, for example, high five, claps hands, wiggle fingers etc. You could build this up and develop your own special hello/goodbye ritual.

**This little pig:** Wiggle each toe as you chant, 'This little pig went to market/This little pig stayed at home/This little pig had roast dinner, /this little pig had none/This little pig cried wee wee wee' all the way home.

**Blanket swing:** Spread a blanket on the floor and have the child lie down in the middle. The adults gather up the corners and give a gentle swing while singing a song. At the end bring him down for a soft landing. Parents need to make sure they can see their child's face so that they can see that they are happy. If the child is fearful they can be rocked while remaining in contact with the floor.

**Soft and floppy:** Have your child lie on the floor and have him go al 'soft and floppy'. Gently jiggle each arm and leg and let it flop gently to the floor. To help him get floppy have him go 'stiff as a board' before letting himself go. Once the child is relaxed have him wiggle different parts of his body one by one.

### ***Games with challenge and excitement***

**Balancing pillows:** Have the child lie with feet in the air and lay a pillow on their feet for them to balance. Gently add the pillows one on top of the other. Get them to estimate how many pillows they can balance.

**Balloon tennis:** Try to keep a balloon in the air, hitting it between you with any body parts.

**Crawling race:** you and your child chase each other crawling around a stack of pillows, trying to catch each others feet as you do so.

**Newspaper punch and Basket toss:** Stretch a single sheet of newspaper in front of your child. Hold it tautly and get them to punch a hole through it on your signal. Try with several layers of paper. Have them scrunch the paper and toss the paper balls into the basket you make with your arms.

**Straight face challenge:** Child has to try and keep a straight face while you try to make him laugh either by gently touching him (tiny tickle) or by making a funny face. Then swap roles.

**Pillow push:** Place a large pillow between you and your child. Have the child push against the pillow trying to push you over.

**Pick something up with your toes:** Perhaps using a cotton wool ball have your child pick it up between your toes and then perhaps hop around the room with it.

# Homework Task

This week concentrate on "Catching Your Child Being Good"

AND

REMEMBER TO PRAISE using all the important steps.

Praise must be immediate

Remember to SMILE

Always be specific

It is important to move closer to your child

Sound sincere

Eye contact is essential

Your role-modeller will help you.