

Examples of Labeled Praise

WAYS TO PRAISE IT...

PRAISABLE BEHAVIORS

You did a great job of...

sitting still

I like the way you're...

talking in your inside voice

That's an excellent way to...

staying at the table

That's a good idea to...

working quietly

I'm proud of you for...

raising your hand quietly

I think it's wonderful that you...

waited quietly in line

You are smart to...

do what I asked you

You're terrific for...

accepting help from teacher/another student

I like it when you're...

working carefully

Thank you for...

sharing

Good girl/boy for...

trying hard

Nice job of...

doing it all by yourself

You should be proud of yourself for...

listening carefully, using good manners, playing nicely

Labeled Praise Worksheet

<u>PROBLEM BEHAVIOR</u>	<u>OPPOSITE BEHAVIOR</u>	<u>LABELED PRAISE</u>
Defiance	Minding	Thank you for minding right away
Hitting	Playing gently with the other children	Good job of playing gently with the other children
Screaming		
Wandering		
Stripping		
Cussing		
"Deaf"		
Inattentive		
Constant Controlling		
Excessive Talking		
Aggressive		
Killing Small Animals		
Whining		

99 Ways to Say "Very Good!"

- 1) You're on the right track now!
- 2) You're doing a good job!
- 3) You did a lot of work today!
- 4) Now you've figured it out.
- 5) That's RIGHT!!!
- 6) Now you have the hang of it!
- 7) That's the way!
- 8) You're really going to town!
- 9) You're doing fine.
- 10) Now you have it!
- 11) Nice going!
- 12) That's coming along nicely.
- 13) That's great!
- 14) You did it that time!
- 15) GREAT!
- 16) FANTASTIC!
- 17) TERRIFIC!
- 18) Good for you!
- 19) GOOD WORK!
- 20) That's better.
- 21) EXCELLENT!
- 22) Good job.
- 23) You outdid yourself today!
- 24) Well done!
- 25) That's the best you have ever done.
- 26) Good going!
- 27) Keep it up!
- 28) That's really nice!
- 29) WOW!
- 30) Keep up the good work!
- 31) Much better!
- 32) Good for you!
- 33) That's very much better!
- 34) Good thinking!
- 35) Exactly right!
- 36) SUPER!
- 37) Nice going!
- 38) You make it look easy!
- 39) I've never seen anyone do it better.
- 40) You are doing that much better today.
- 41) Way to go!
- 42) Not bad.
- 43) Superb!
- 44) You're getting better every day.
- 45) WONDERFUL!
- 46) I knew you could do it.
- 47) Keep working on it, you're getting better.
- 48) You're doing beautifully.
- 49) You're really working hard today.
- 50) That's the way to do it!
- 51) Keep on trying!
- 52) That's it!
- 53) Nothing can stop you now!
- 54) You've got it made!
- 55) You are very good at that.
- 56) You are learning fast.
- 57) I'm very proud of you.
- 58) You certainly did well today.
- 59) You've just about got it.
- 60) That's good
- 61) I'm proud of the way you worked today.
- 62) I'm happy to see you working like that.
- 63) That's the right way to do it.
- 64) You are really learning a lot.
- 65) That's better than ever.
- 66) That's quite an improvement.
- 67) That kind of work makes me very happy.
- 68) MARVELOUS!
- 69) Now you've figured it out.
- 70) PERFECT!
- 71) That's not half bad!
- 72) FINE!
- 73) You've got your brain in gear today!
- 74) That's IT!
- 75) You figured that out fast.
- 76) You remembered!
- 77) You're really improving.
- 78) I think you've got it now.
- 79) Well look at you go!
- 80) You've got that down pat.
- 81) TREMENDOUS!
- 82) OUTSTANDING!
- 83) I like that.
- 84) Couldn't have done it better myself.
- 85) Now that's what I call a fine job.
- 86) You did that very well.
- 87) Congratulations!
- 88) That was first class work.
- 89) Right on!
- 90) SENSATIONAL!
- 91) That's the best ever.
- 92) Good remembering!
- 93) You haven't missed a thing.
- 94) It's a pleasure to teach when you work like that.
- 95) You really make my job fun.
- 96) you must have been practicing.
- 97) You've just about mastered that!
- 98) One more time and you'll have it.
- 99) Congratulations, you got that right!

Session 8 – Caregiver Group

Giving Instructions to Oppositional Children

When giving instructions to children who mind well, it is most appropriate to ask them nicely whether they would like to do something (e.g., “could you be a big helper and pick up that toy that fell off the table?”). However, oppositional children often will interpret these nicely-stated instructions as meaning that the parent is flexible about the command and that the limits can be tested. To increase the chances that the oppositional child will mind an instruction, commands should be:

1. **Direct not Indirect**

Use commands that make it clear that the child is expected to do what has been requested. Commands such as “Let’s clean up now” or “how about getting in line?” should be eliminated because the child may interpret them as meaning the she/he has a choice in the matter when in fact there is none. If the oppositional child thinks that the parent/caregiver is merely suggesting that she/he do something that she/her doesn’t want to do, compliance is unlikely. Direct commands should be used when it is important that the child do the requested behavior.

2. **Positively Stated**

Try to tell the child what **TO DO**, rather than what **NOT TO DO**. Replace “Don’t...” and “Stop...” commands with instructions requiring the child to do something incompatible with the problem behavior (e.g., instead of saying “Don’t climb on the furniture”, parents/caregiver should say “Please keep your feet on the floor”).

3. **Single Rather Than Compound**

Give commands one at a time rather than stringing several together (e.g., avoid commands like “Go put your coat in your closet, your books on the table, and then come to the kitchen.”). Also, break large commands down into smaller parts (e.g., instead of “Get ready for bed”, use a series of smaller commands such as “Put your pajamas on.”, “Please brush your teeth.”, and “Please wash your face.”. You can then describe what all of the behaviors “mean”. “Thank you for putting on your pajamas, brushing your teeth, and washing your face, now you are ready for bed.”

4. **Specific not Vague**

Tell the child specifically what is expected. Replace commands such as “Be good” or “Straighten up” with more specific instructions such as “Use your indoor voice” or “Keep your hands to yourself”.

5. **Given in a Neutral Tone of Voice**

Because the oppositional child tests the limits, the parent/caregiver can easily get into a pattern of raising the voice to get the child's attention. Unfortunately, yelling is a trap. Once a parent/caregiver begins to use yelling as the signal that she/he means business, the oppositional child realizes that they can get away with ignoring instructions given in a neutral tone of voice. All instructions should be given in a neutral but firm tone of voice, with no indications of pleading.

6. Polite and Respectful

Commands can be direct, clear, and firm without being disrespectful to the child. It is helpful to preface commands with "Please".

7. Given for Things the Child is Developmentally Capable of Doing

If the parent/caregiver is unsure whether a child can do something, the instructions should be given in an indirect fashion. Direct, firm commands should be reserved for things within the child's physical and cognitive capabilities.

This is particularly important when giving commands to children who have a diagnosed Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. The nature of hyperactivity is that they have a neurological deficit of attention. They are physically incapable of sitting still and concentrating as long as same-age peers. For example, assignments should be broken down into small enough units that the teacher is sure that the child is neurological capable of performing the task. In the home, a child should not be requested to maintain concentration with a particular activity such as a video for the entire film. Alternative activities may need to be available to a child with this diagnosis.

8. Used Only When Really Necessary

Direct, firm commands should be reserved for times when it is important that the child obey. The parent/caregiver can provide choices or suggestions at other times.

As hyperactive children typically need 5 times as many commands as calmer children, unnecessary commands should be eliminated through ignoring or physically prompting the child (e.g., physically lead him/her back to the dinner table without using an instruction). If a single behavior occurs frequently, a signal can be established to remind the child of appropriate behavior. This prevents continual discussions of the behavior. If a child does attend to the signal, a praise for the appropriate behavior will serve to reinforce continued positive behaviors.

9. Accompanied by Rationale

Sometimes (not always) it is helpful and appropriate for the child to be given an explanation for why a request is being made. The rationale should either precede the command or be provided after the child has obeyed. It should not come after the command and before compliance because many children will vague or ask questions to stall for time. Also, children can easily forget the original request if the rationale follows the instructions.

10. Incorporate Choices When Appropriate

It is helpful for children's development of autonomy and decision-making to be presented with a choice between doing two appropriate behaviors or activities. "Choice" commands should be very simple and issued at a level consistent with the child's cognitive level (e.g., "You can either color in your book or play with your puzzle".).

WHEN – THEN

"When you sit in your chair, then I will give you your snack."

IF – THEN

"If you don't put your toys in the box, then you can not watch Power Rangers."

EITHER – OR

"You can either choose to do your homework now, or you can miss TV and do it after dinner."

"You can either play gently with the other children, or I will have to send your friends home."

Changing Old Commands to New Specific Commands, Following the Guidelines

Old Commands

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

**New, Specific, Positively-Stated
Direct Command**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____
