

Words of encouragement:

Whether these suggested remarks would in fact be encouraging will depend on the attitudes of the adults using them. Is the feeling one of belief in the child, trust, confidence, acceptance, sometimes mixed with humor; or is the feeling negative?

“I see a lot of work went into this.” Commends effort. Even a comment about something small and insignificant to us may have great importance to a child.

“You have improved in....” Growth and improvement usually happens in small steps. They may not be where we would like them to be, but if there is progress, there is less chance for discouragement.

“You can help us (me, others, etc.) by...” To feel useful and helpful is important to everyone. Making a contribution to others helps to build self-worth.

“Let us try this together.” Children who think they have to do all things perfectly are often afraid to attempt something new for fear of making a mistake.

“How can we solve this problem-solve together.”

“I am grateful for what you did.” “Thank you.” We can model the behavior we expect from children.

Remember and use the 4 positive to 1 negative ratio.

“I can’t wait to show this to...!”

“I like the way you did that!”

“I’m proud of you!”

“I know you could do it!”

* Statements are based on the writing of Dr. Rudolf Driekurs, Dr. John Taylor, Clint Reimer, and Iona Trapp.