



Positive Discipline: Use the "Praise that Works" to Increase Cooperation

Children want attention from their parents. We often pay more consistent, interesting and enthusiastic attention to misbehavior than we do to positive behavior. In this way, we reward misbehavior, even if we give negative attention.

Your attention is the best reward for positive behavior.

"Praise that Works" is the most effective attention that will get you more of your the behavior you want from your child.

Identify one or two misbehaviors that you want to change in your child.

For example: not following directions, aggression with siblings, disrespectful talk, getting ready in the morning or at bedtime.

Use "Praise the Works" whenever your child displays a "Misbehavior Opposite."

The opposite of *not* following directions (the misbehavior you want to change) is any time your child follows even part of directions. You ask them to clean up their room and they pick up their dirty clothes. That is a misbehavior opposite, even if toys and books are still on the floor. Look for progress not perfection.

Every time your child does a "misbehavior opposite" use the "Praise that Works."

- **Get close to your child immediately after he displays a "misbehavior opposite."**
- **Describe the "misbehavior opposite" in positive words.**

*Thanks for putting your clothes in the hamper!
Good job getting started on your math homework!
I see that you turned off the TV the first time I asked!*

- **Be excited, warm, and enthusiastic** (this matters a lot)
- **Add a physical or visual gesture** like thumbs up, happy mommy dance, daddy cheer, hug, gentle touch, ruffle their hair, etc.
- **Use the "Praise that Works" every time your child does the misbehavior opposite**, even just part of the behavior that you want.

