Positive Parenting Tip Sheet

Positive Parenting is a way to parent your child that focuses more on your child’s positive behaviors rather than on your child’s problem behaviors.

Things to do:
• Praise your child and tell him exactly what you like about his behavior. “I like how you cleaned up your toys!”
• Ignore minor negative behaviors such as whining and screaming.
• Play with your child for about 5 minutes a day and let her lead the play.
• Actively listen to your child by reflecting what he says back to him. “I understand that you want another cookie.”
• Use a when-then approach. “When you put on your shoes, then you can go outside.”
• Tell your child what to do instead of what not to do. “Please walk” instead of “Stop running.”
• Redirect your child by making something else seem more interesting.

Things to avoid:
• Spanking or threatening your child. These increase hitting and other negative behavior.
• Yelling and screaming at your child.
• Teasing and laughing at your child’s negative behavior.
• Giving attention to negative attention-seeking behavior.

Things we know:
• Being consistent lets your child know what to expect and lets your child know that you mean what you say.
• Offering a child choices between 2 possibilities gives the child a sense of control. “Do you want to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt?”
• Rewarding good behavior increases the chances of that behavior happening again.
• Picking your battles allows you to work on one thing at a time.

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For more information about positive parenting, please contact the Center for Child Development (615) 936-0249