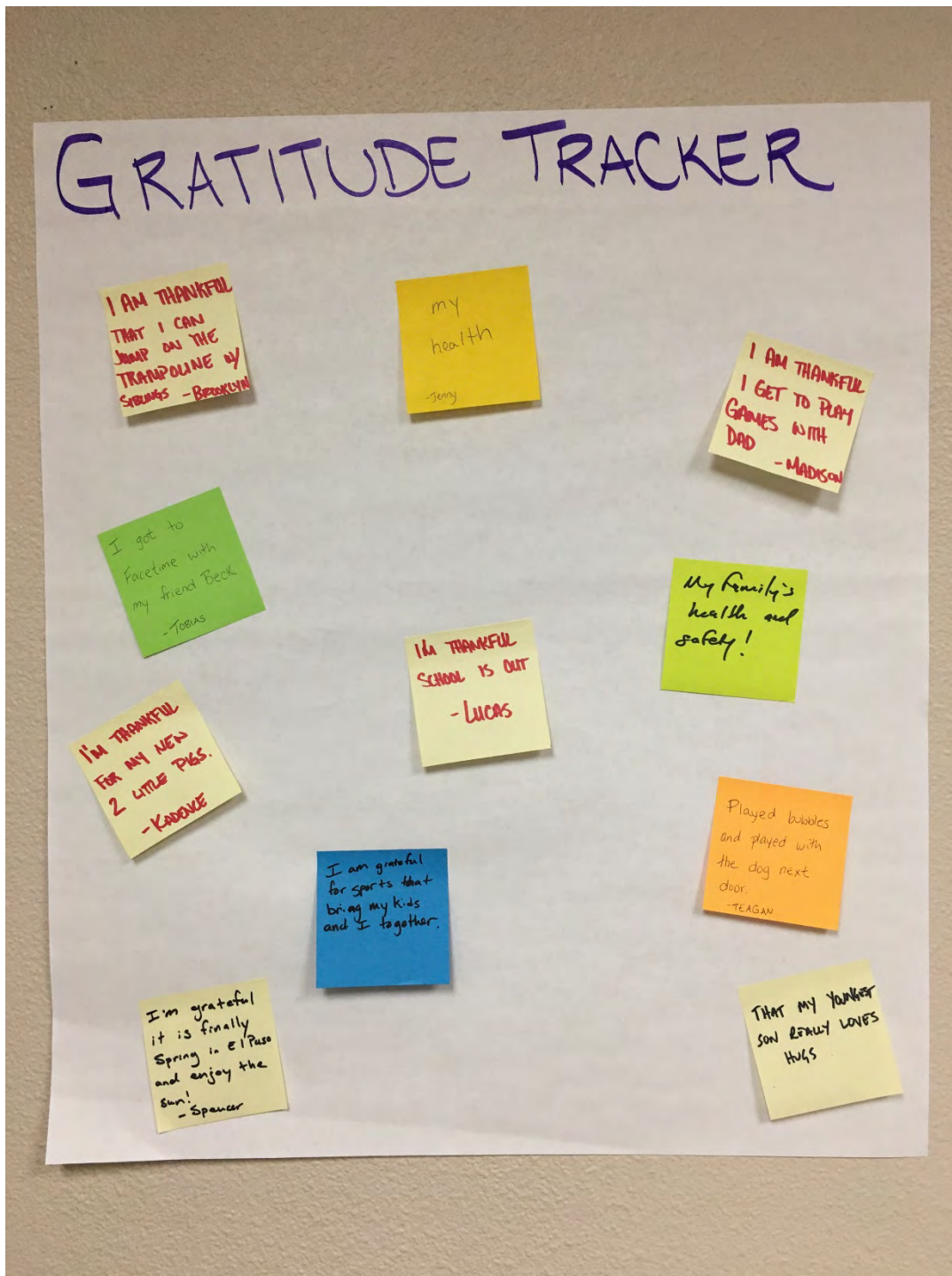




Family Readiness Plan





Can Your Language Influence Your Child’s Performances?



Naturally, with your child’s performances, there are opportunities for criticism and praise. Thinking more about the activities your child participates in, have you ever considered that your language around praise and criticism may have an influence on their performance? Even if you perceive you are providing criticism and praise in a productive way, if critical information is left out of the conversation, it’s possible your child may not be receiving the feedback the way you intended it.

CRITICISM

Have you ever given the criticism, “that was not your best” or “better luck next time” or “you’ll never be good enough” or “your classmates are working harder than you”? What makes these examples of criticism NOT effective?

1. What exactly is the criticism referring to?
2. Is the criticism about their attitude or effort?
3. What part of the performance? A failed attempt? A mistake?

If your child is receiving ineffective criticism, they might not be able to distinguish what exactly was wrong about the performance and are unable to make the necessary corrections, making it difficult to learn from their mistakes.

How exactly can you make criticism effective? There are two parts to effective criticism. The important thing to remember is PBS: Process, behavior, and strategy. When giving effective criticism to someone, name the process, the behavior, or the strategy so they know specifically what the criticism is about. Next, offer the person information on HOW to improve. This part of effective criticism helps your child learn from their actions or behaviors!

Ineffective Criticism	Process, Behavior, Strategy	HOW to improve
“What are you even doing?”	“I noticed you’re dribbling the basketball with your eyes down...”	...try looking ahead and focusing on a target for 3 seconds before you look down again.”
“You always forget things.”	“I see you left your homework on the table again...”	...how about after every time you finish your homework, put your folder in your backpack?”

By being specific about what exactly you are criticizing (PBS, NOT the person) and providing ideas for how to correct it, your child is more likely to understand what exactly the criticism is about and learn how to implement corrections for future performances. This makes it easier for your child to learn from their mistakes and not give up in the face of setbacks.



Can Your Language Influence Your Child’s Performances?



PRAISE

Have you ever given the praise, “good job” or “you did so well” or “you’re a rockstar” or “you’re so good at math”? What makes these examples of praise NOT effective? These phrases of praise are missing critical information:

1. What exactly is the praise referring to?
2. Is the praise for their attitude or effort?
3. What part of the performance? A successful execution of a skill?

Generic praise can be nice to hear, but it doesn’t help your child understand what exactly they did well nor provide them the information they need to make sure they do it again. It is only the first step in effective praise, but all you need to add is one more sentence.

Effective praise offers your child information regarding the specific strategy, effort, or skill that led to the successful outcome you are praising. This process is similar to PBS, which you are utilizing for effective criticism. Think about it like this: If you just ate the best chocolate cake you’ve ever had in your whole life, you would probably want to know what ingredients were used to make this chocolate cake so delicious. The same idea applies to providing your child effective praise for their performance. You can help your child identify the ingredients to their own success. Therefore, your child is able to create winning streaks, meaning that effective praise lets the person knows EXACTLY what they did well so they are able to replicate the strategy, effort, or skill in the future.

Initial Praise	Strategy, Effort, or Skill
“You did awesome today.”	“When they player on the opposing team tripped over first base, you were a good sport and helped them up.”
“Good job during your debate.”	“You looked extremely confident today because your tone was strong and clear, and you made eye contact with the audience and the opposing team.”

Utilizing effective praise not only benefits your child by creating future winning streaks, but also builds connection. By providing your child information regarding the specific strategy, effort, or skill, you are demonstrating that you were paying attention to their performance. This also demonstrates authenticity because the effective praise was created by YOU specifically for THEM.

DISCLAIMER

- Only praise when praiseworthy! Meaning, if parts of your child’s performance do not require praise, it is not necessary to praise.
- When you do decide to praise, it’s important to make sure effective praise is about the PROCESS (strategy, effort, skills) and NOT the PERSON (talent/ability). Your child will be able to focus on putting effort into mastery, instead of relying on their talent for success.



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PRACTICE

The examples below simulate experiences a parent might face with their child that encompass praise and criticism. After reading each example, 1. Write a response of what you might say to your child in reaction to this situation, 2. Identify which type of feedback you used (praise or criticism), then 3. Decide whether your or not your response is effective. If yes, identify how it is effective in the space below. If no, re-write the response to meet the effective criteria and underline what makes it effective.

<p>Your child hands you their exam from math. The score is a 97%. Response:</p>	<p>What type of feedback was this? _____ Effective: _____ Yes _____ No</p>
<p>You are in the car on the ride home with your child from their sporting event. They made several mistakes during the event and lost. Response:</p>	<p>What type of feedback was this? _____ Effective: _____ Yes _____ No</p>
<p>Your child is in the school play and forgets most of their lines when they are on stage. Response:</p>	<p>What type of feedback was this? _____ Effective: _____ Yes _____ No</p>
<p>You notice your child finished doing the chores, and they are below standard. Response:</p>	<p>What type of feedback was this? _____ Effective: _____ Yes _____ No</p>
<p>Your child brings home a paper they wrote and the grade is an F. Response:</p>	<p>What type of feedback was this? _____ Effective: _____ Yes _____ No</p>



Teaching Kids about their Thoughts



Overview

The purpose of this activity is to teach kids that while we can't always control what happens to us, we can control how we think about it. Kids will learn about optimism, and how they have power over their thinking.

What is Optimism?/ Benefits of Optimism

- Optimism is seeing the good while being realistic. Thinking optimistically helps us be healthier, happier, and even do better in school.

Controlling our thoughts/ Rainy and Sunny Thoughts

- One way to build optimism is to notice when something happens and we have a “rainy” thought (that makes us feel sad, mad, frustrated, lonely) and try to change it to a “sunny” thought (that makes us feel strong, happy, confident)
- ASK: How do rainy thoughts make us feel? How do sunny thoughts make us feel? Do you have an example of what a rainy thought or a sunny thought looks like?
- Rainy thoughts don't always make us feel good or help us do the best we can. It is OK to have rainy thoughts and to feel sad or mad, we just need to learn when they get in our way and how to deal with them.
- We have power over our thoughts and we can change them so that we can feel better, stronger, and be the best we can be.

Sunny Thought/Rainy Thought Game

I'll give you an event and two thoughts that you could have. Help me identify the rainy thought and the sunny thought that we could change it to. (Feel free to adjust these to events your family is actually going through).

I have to go to school online:

Rainy: “Online school is hard, I'd rather do regular school.”

Sunny: “I'm trying a new way to learn, and I get to sit on my comfy couch!”

I am unable to see my friends:

Rainy: “It's boring not being able to play with my friends.”

Sunny: “I am going to find something fun to do today, and make a list of things I want to do with my friends when I can see them again.”

My sibling and I have been around each other a lot and got into a fight:

Rainy: “They're the worst!”

Sunny: “Maybe they're just having a bad day.”

I have to stay home:

Rainy: “I'm bored at home and this is never going to get better!”

Sunny: “Having to stay home is only going to last for a little while. I'm happy that I get to be with my family all day.”



Teaching Kids about their Thoughts: Sunny Thought/Rainy Thought



Practice with your own thoughts:

- Try giving kids an event and have them create their own sunny and rainy thoughts.
- How did you feel after using the sunny thought instead of the rainy thought?
- Choosing a sunny thought usually makes us feel better and helps us do better.

PRO-TIP: Print out a copy of the sunny and rainy thought cards attached, cut them out, and glue them back-to-back so one side has the rain cloud and the other has the sunshine. They can use these to remind themselves that they have a choice in how they think and feel, and that makes them more resilient.

