

HOW PARENTS

Can Recognize, Value & Express Appreciation To Their Children

Recognizing the value of your children and expressing appreciation to them is essential for building their self-esteem and strengthening your relationship with them. Here are practical ways parents can do this:

- **Specific Praise:** Instead of general comments like "Good job," focus on specific actions or behaviors you want to encourage, such as "I really appreciate how you helped your brother with his homework. That was very kind and patient of you."
- **Quality Time:** Spend one-on-one time with each child, doing something they enjoy. This demonstrates that you value them enough to give them your most precious resource: your time.
- **Listen Actively:** Show that you value their opinions and feelings by listening actively. Make eye contact, nod, and ask follow-up questions that show you are engaged and interested in what they have to say.
- **Celebrate Their Individuality:** Appreciate and celebrate each child's unique qualities and interests. Encourage them to pursue their passions, even if they're different from your own.
- **Write Them Notes:** Leave them small notes of encouragement or appreciation in their lunch boxes, on their pillows, or in their backpacks. This can be a pleasant surprise that brightens their day.
- **Acknowledge Their Effort:** Focus on the effort they put into their work, rather than the outcome. This teaches them that perseverance and hard work are more important than innate talent or immediate success.
- **Include Them in Decisions:** When appropriate, involve them in family decisions to show that you value their input. This could be as simple as letting them choose a movie for movie night or more significant decisions, depending on their age.
- **Apologize When You're Wrong:** Demonstrating that you can admit when you're wrong and apologize sincerely shows them that their feelings and perspectives are valued and respected.
- **Celebrate Their Achievements:** Whether it's academic, extracurricular, or personal milestones, celebrate their achievements in ways that they find meaningful.
- **Teach Them Self-Value:** Encourage activities that help them build their own sense of self-worth and teach them to appreciate themselves. This could include mindfulness practices, journaling about things they're grateful for or proud of, and discussing qualities they like about themselves.
- **Encouragement Over Criticism:** Frame your feedback in a positive and encouraging way. Instead of focusing on what they did wrong, suggest how they can improve while highlighting what they did well.
- **Respect Their Privacy:** Show that you trust and value them by respecting their privacy. This is crucial as they grow older and seek more independence.
- **Physical Affection:** Hugs, pats on the back, or a gentle touch on the arm can convey warmth and appreciation without words, tailored to each child's comfort level with physical affection.
- **Show Interest in Their Interests:** Take time to learn about and participate in activities they enjoy. This shows you value what matters to them.
- **Set Aside Special Days:** At least one day each month, dedicate a day (perhaps on their birthdate, for example 5th of each month), to celebrate each child individually, doing activities of their choosing. This can be a powerful way to show them how much they're appreciated.
- **Catch Them Being Good:** Instead of looking for when they make a mistake, praise them when they are being good or have done something good.