

Behavior-Specific Encouragement

Caregiver Handout



Your student's teacher is using behavior-specific encouragement, often referred to as praise, to support positive behavior and learning.

What is Behavior-Specific Encouragement?

Behavior-specific encouragement is when the teacher gives attention to a student's positive actions by clearly stating what they did well.

The teacher might say,

"Thank you for raising your hand to speak."

"I appreciate that everyone stayed quiet in the hallway today."

"Great job staying calm and taking a breath."

"I noticed that you stayed focused during the group learning activity."

Behavior-specific encouragement helps students understand exactly what behavior is expected and encourages them to repeat it.

BENEFITS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Reinforces positive behavior

Boosts confidence and self-esteem

Motivates students to stick with difficult tasks

Builds strong teacher-student relationships

*The term "caregiver" refers to parents, family members, and other adults who interact with students before and after school.

How Caregivers Can Use Behavior-Specific Encouragement at Home?

Notice and Encourage Specific Behaviors at Home

Anytime you notice that your student is doing something well at home, you can offer specific praise! Try to notice the small things (e.g., nice words or gestures) and tell your student that you appreciate it. This makes them feel good.

Acknowledge Their Efforts

It can be helpful to acknowledge your student's efforts, even if they do not achieve a task perfectly. This helps them understand what they are doing is right and encourages them to keep it up.



Make Behavior Specific Encouragement a Habit

Try to give positive feedback regularly throughout the day. It can be helpful to have specific periods where you challenge yourself to give as many praises as possible.

Stay Positive During Challenges

If your student is acting out, it can be difficult to find things to praise. Try your best to focus on appropriate behavior and praise them as soon as they start to turn things around.

Examples of Behavior-Specific Encouragement at Home

- *"I really appreciate how you cleaned up your toys without being asked."*
- *"You showed great patience waiting your turn. Nice job!"*
- *"I noticed how you used kind words with your brother. That was very respectful."*
- *"I love how you are using an inside-voice right now."*
- *"Way to go putting your shoes back in the closet!"*
- *"Thanks for calming down and using your words. That showed self-control."*