

## **Encouragement, Not Just Praise**

It may sound strange to consider not always praising our children. However, constant praise that implies everything is always “great, wonderful, fantastic and good” sometimes becomes a bit overdone.

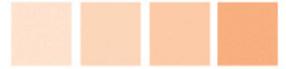
Using encouraging phrases often helps children to keep trying even when things aren’t “great”. It also acknowledges that the effort, the attempt, the act of having a go and working on something is worthy of acknowledgment, even if it doesn’t always work out.

Encouragement helps build resilience and self-esteem and models for children that it is productive and constructive to have a go - even if you don’t always achieve the intended outcome. Praise and encouragement are both lovely for children but encouragement is often underdone and praise is often overdone.

## **Finding the balance is the key!**

Some examples of encouraging phrases and comments:

- I can see you have tried hard with that today.
- I like the way you had a go.
- I can see you have had to try really hard with that.
- I like the way you kept trying.
- I wonder if there is another way you could try to make that work.
- I enjoyed playing together with you today.
- I know you are finding this hard. Perhaps there is another way...
- How do you feel you went with that today?
- Could we do this bit together to keep you going?
- Can you think of another way to do this?
- I love the effort you have put into this today.
- You have worked really hard and tried really well with this today.
- I know it isn’t quite how you thought it would be, but you really persisted and tried hard.
- I like the way you have picked up your things and packed away today.
- I appreciate you collecting the mail. Thanks.
- I like it when we read together and you have a go at the words.
- I thought we all worked well together today as a family.



- We might have to try and problem-solve this so we can work it out.
- Would you like to tell me about this today and how it went?
- I know you are finding this frustrating. How else might you try or what else can you do?
- I would like you to have a go at this and I will help if you are stuck.
- I would like you to try before I help you. I think you will be able to make a start.
- I like the ideas you have. Can you think of an idea now that might help?