

“RECIPES FOR COMMUNICATION:” ACCENTUATING THE POSITIVE

GOOD TASTE: Recognizing strengths, building the relationship, increasing parent’s feelings of competence. A really good way to work on positive parent-child interaction.

BAD TASTE: Focusing on problems, deficits, missing opportunities to acknowledge what parents do well.

- 1. Gather information through listening and/or observation.**
- 2. Identify the positive interaction or behavior you have noticed.**
- 3. Acknowledge this interaction or behavior to the parent.**

TIPS:

- Do not use “I” statements, such as: I’m so glad you are feeding the baby regularly now. Parents should not get the message that you are there to approve or disapprove of what they do.**
- Make the baby the focus of your positive comments whenever possible.**
- Avoid using vague labels such as “great dad,” “terrific mom.” They aren’t specific and do not let the parent know why they are being complimented.**

Examples:

“Your little guy looks so relaxed and secure when you hold him like that. It will really help him with his development now and later on.”

“You are so good at keeping your records and files in order.”

“You showed a lot of patience when daughter screamed and yelled before naptime. That is a nice way of teaching her self-control... because you are showing her what it looks like.”

“You seemed to know just what your baby wanted. How did you figure that out? “

“I’ve noticed you are very consistent with your household rules. Your children are lucky to have a fair and consistent parent like you.”