

‘Catch Them Being Good’ Information Sheet

We all respond to positive comments, and these help us to know we are doing well, quite often we can find ourselves caught in a negative cycle of using negative comments throughout the course of the day, these do not give positive feelings for either ourselves or the young person. It is important to find ways of praising even the smallest thing so that you can change the cycle of only focusing on what can be seen as negative behaviours to positive behaviours with positive feedback.

You will need to be careful as to how you manage praise as for some people getting it wrong and being too big and or sometimes too small in how we give praise can lead to over arousal and different behaviours that then need support.

Think about how you would like to receive praise and how you respond to praise, this may help to get it right for your child. Sometime a simple thumbs up is enough, other times clear words and a big smile may be needed.

You could experiment as a group of giving each other praise as this is something we easily forget to do, to see how it feels and to practice some set phrases or actions.

You may need to look at first for even the smallest thing to praise to start turning to a positive approach. Rewarding comments/actions are constructive and encourages a child to repeat a behaviour or action.

Praise good behaviour and times when they are being calm, this is to reverse the cycle which can occur if only negative behaviour gets attention. You could try using something visual so that they can see that they are building towards a reward.

‘Catch Them Being Good’ cards are a good way of recording all the times that your child carries out an instruction without negotiation or when they are doing well! The spiral of negative behaviours can be very hard to cope with for both parents/carers and the child. Very often when constantly coping with negative behaviour, it is easy to miss those times when a child does exactly what you want. Those situations are a golden opportunity to praise the child and reinforce positive behaviour!

If a child has low self esteem or is anxious about certain things, this is a good resource that if used consistently, will help to increase self esteem and hopefully reduce negative moments!

A card can be created on the computer or drawn by hand. The adult may like to help the child to create the resource. If possible, laminate the card so that wipe clean pens can be used to record ticks. It can be in the form of a chart showing the days of the week and a row of space for ticks or stickers.

Reference and further information:

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/12262/Praise-and-Reward/pdf/praiseandreward.pdf>
Children's Community Learning Disability Nursing Team – Behaviour Support June 2026

You may have a clear idea of what behaviours you would like to see more of, such as good sharing, good playing or listening to instructions. If that is the case, then illustrate the card with hand drawn pictures or clip art from the computer. It is best to make it very personal to them.

Ensure that all adults that come into contact with the child share their positive moments, and that they are recorded with the child. Get into the habit of looking for the positive and your child will reward you.

Diane is a star 	
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
How many times can grown ups catch Diane being good!	

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