

# The Incredible Years Newsletter

## The Beginning Basics Volume 2

So POP QUIZ! How many positive and encouraging things did you say in the last 24 hours to others, including your children?

**Do not be alarmed if you find yourself lacking a lot of good comments. We spend so much of our time worrying about what we do NOT want to happen that we often forget to play forward. The concept I am introducing is developing our children's strengths, NOT preventing their weaknesses. It is a positive spin on parenting—check it out!**

**We don't want our children to:**

**Get run over on the street**

**Poke their eye out with a stick**

**Get bullied or be a bully**

**Try drugs or have addictions**

**Be overweight or unhealthy**

**Get bad grades**

**AND THE LIST GOES ON AND ON AND ON.....**

**There are so many things we do NOT want for our young. We FEAR these things could affect our children. We spend endless time avoiding or telling our children about how to NOT be....when there are so many things we can share with them TO be. This is a change in your whole way of thinking for many of us. It is difficult to always see the good in a situation or think how can I benefit from a struggle. BUT THIS STARTS WITH YOU AND YOUR THINKING!!!!!!**

If you want your children to whine less, complain less, be a helper not a procrastinator, and become a productive and responsible adult...then keep reading about how to give encouragement and praise....

- You need to watch and see your child doing good things. This takes effort and restraint. You must find good things (even little things count), even “thank you wearing your book bag right” or “you hopped right out of bed this morning, good job” are great. **ACCENTUATE** the positive!
- Do not worry about giving too much good praise-it will not spoil your children. Make sure it is accurate and sincere and you will not regret it. An “over the top” example would be: “Thank you for breathing” ☺.
- The more difficult your child’s behaviors seem, the more important the positive praise is, and the more you should give. You might have to pay close attention, but you will find good things. Each time you give a positive reminder you are redirecting and reinforcing what you want, instead of complaining about what you do not want!
- Model self-praise. Remember if you think you are a nobody and speak of yourself as such, your child may believe that of you and begin to treat themselves in the same manner. **YOU HAVE GREAT QUALITIES**-talk about them! Such as: “I got all my chores done today! Hoorah! That took work but I feel good!”
- **CONNECT THE PRAISE TO THE CHILD’S BEHAVIOR!** This means say good things about what the child can change and choose. Instead of “you are so smart” for a good grade, you could say, “wow, you really worked hard to learn that or to finish that-great work”. This gives your child the control to make it happen again.
- Praise things you want to see again and again.
- Praise immediately or asap.
- Praise with direct eye contact, smiles, and enthusiasm. Avoid being sarcastic or adding the “but”. Ex: Thank you for remembering to feed the cat (smile and look at them). (Do not add “since I usually have to tell you 4 times before you actually do it).
- Give hugs and kisses and pats while praising (tougher with teenagers sometimes, but try) positive hugs and pats are often times more powerful for children than your words are.
- Make a big deal of your child in front of others-positively. Hang up those good papers, have them show off how they can make their bed, or let them call a loved one when they finish all of their vegetables.
- Make sure to tell your children you believe in them. Empower them to be good and strong. Do not give them excuses to fail. Ex: “I know spelling is hard for you but I think if we write the words together the night before the test it would really help you get a better grade. We should try it once to see if it helps. I know you are a hard worker and you can do it.”

I have to say this is all tough stuff to say the least. It is a mind set, but a successful one. This does not mean there are no consequences for bad choices! You must have structure with consequences, and we will get to that, but one step at a time. You have to tell your child what they are doing right. And you have to help them see the path to take in life. A big part of their choices is your choices. Is your glass half empty or half full?

#### **FUN HINTS:**

Fabulous website for sun and fun safe tips:

[http://kidshealth.org/kid/watch/out/summer\\_safety.html#](http://kidshealth.org/kid/watch/out/summer_safety.html#)

Fun learning website for you and your children-great start on the POSITIVE:

<http://www.starfall.com/>

#### **RECIPE OF THE MONTH:**

**FamilyFun.com**

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### **Sticks and Stones**

from **FamilyFun Magazine** 

This crunchy, lunch-box-friendly snack mix is sweetened with fruit juice and brown sugar.

#### **Ingredients**

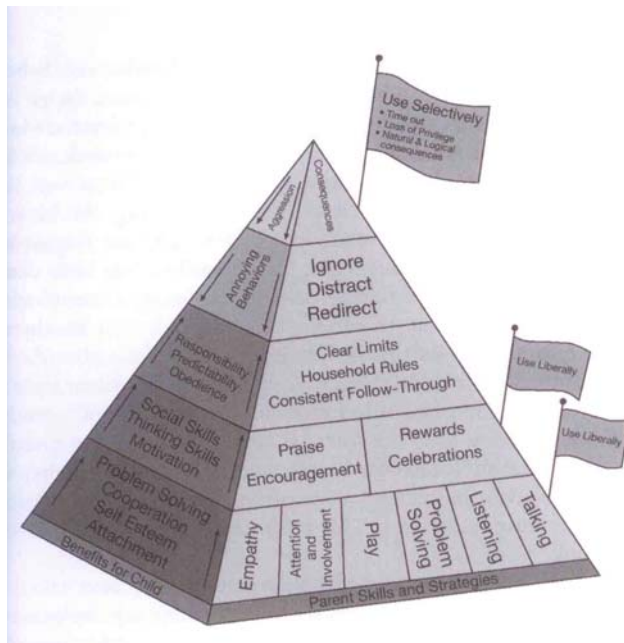
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup frozen orange or apple juice concentrate
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 3 cups oatmeal cereal squares (we used Quaker Oatmeal Squares)

- 2 cups pretzel sticks
- 1 1/2 cups whole almonds
- 1 cup raisins or dried cranberries

### Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 300°. Place the butter, juice concentrate, and sugar in a large, microwave-safe bowl and microwave on high for 45 seconds to melt the butter. Stir in the cinnamon.
2. Spread the oatmeal squares, pretzels, and almonds in a single layer on a baking sheet. Toss the pieces with the melted-butter mixture to coat. Bake the mix, stirring the pieces every 10 minutes, until the mixture is dry to the touch and the nuts are lightly toasted, about 30 minutes.
3. Remove the pan from the oven, then stir in the dried fruit. Let the mix cool completely before storing it in an airtight container. Makes about 7 cups.

**Welcome to the newsletter for the Incredible Years! We know that so many of us have so little time and want to make the most of what we do have. This parent training material is designed for multiple classes, but we are hoping to give you some highlights and tips that will not cut into your time. If you find it is life changing and you want more information to keep improving your own situation, just contact us for more in depth training at 641-236-7511 and ask for Vicki Nolton, or check out the website for the Incredible Years at <http://www.incredibleyears.com/program/parent.asp>. Let's get started with our information to get you headed down the road to success.**



This is my favorite pyramid! It is the perfect reminder that we must start at the beginning and give our children a stable and solid base to grow on. All the parenting magic in the world will not work if you do not start with the basics. It is never too late to try the basics. Never lose hope on the relationship you can have with your children. They are resilient and they need your love and affection. Where you start and what you do will always affect them. As you can see, the base is your skills and abilities to interact with your child and the benefits for the child in these interactions.

