

## Strategies for Building Relationships with Children

Activity / Center	Examples of Positive Comments
Designing the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Include family pictures and photos into the environment</li> <li>* Post visual cues around the room to remind you to say positive comments and use positive gestures               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Give lots of smiles, thumbs up, and high fives</li> <li>o Encourage children to compliment each other</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Arrival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Greet children and parents by their name during arrival and departure.</li> <li>* Ask the parents and children about their favorite games and activities. Embed into the day.</li> </ul>
Book Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Make books about each child with their pictures and favorite things (or have children or families make books about themselves). Keep them in the library and encourage children to read their own and their peers'.</li> </ul>
Dramatic Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Encourage children to compliment each other</li> <li>* Comment on their creativity and pretend play. Join in their play by asking for a role or cue. "You are playing together with the bear family so well, Julie and Margo! Can I take a turn making dinner for the bears? What should we eat?"</li> </ul>
Block Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sit down and play with the child. Let him or her direct how you will play with the blocks.</li> <li>* Comment on or ask a child about her or his creation. "What is your favorite part of the tower?"</li> </ul>
Water table	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Comment on children who are playing with each other "Look at Mikey and Luke playing together with the boats! They are having so much fun!"</li> </ul>
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Comment on or ask a child about his drawing. "What a cool way to mix those colors!"</li> </ul>
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Give lots of smiles, thumbs up, and high fives</li> <li>* Include a child's favorite snack into meals or snack time</li> </ul>

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Outdoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Give lots of smiles, thumbs up, and high fives</li> <li>* Join in active play: play soccer, join a basketball game, help draw a hopscotch grid, or join a game of tag</li> </ul>
Group Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* All ages: Give lots of positive comments and statements to review the expectations and build relationships with children. For young children, you might say, “You are all listening to the story! I see your quiet hands in your lap and your eyes on me! Wow! We have really good listeners in our classroom!” For school-age children, you might simply say, “Thanks for coming in and getting started so respectfully.”</li> <li>* Encourage children to compliment each other.</li> <li>* Read a child’s favorite book or sing her or his favorite song. For older children, make a favorite recipe together or install a favorite (approved) video game.</li> </ul>
Puzzles / Manipulative Crafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Encourage the child’s persistence by commenting on his or her effort, “You are working so hard at that puzzle, Annie!” or “That is an awesome way to make a necklace! What a cool pattern!”</li> </ul>
Preparing to go home / outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For young children, comment on how hard the child is trying at zipping up his or her coat or putting on his or her shoes. Step in to support the child, while encouraging independence. “Elise, you really worked hard to get your boots on!! Good work! I can help you get them all the way on!”</li> <li>* For older children, use this as a time for informal conversations.</li> </ul>
Bathroom (for young children)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Comment on children who are waiting in line and following all the directions. “Look at everyone waiting for their friends to finish up! You are all good friends!” and “Look at Tommy and Emma washing their hands! Look at all those bubbles! They are getting all the germs off!”</li> <li>* Encourage children to be independent while supporting their success. “You got your pants down and back up by yourself! Way to go Jonathan!”</li> </ul>
Departure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Consider the 5:1 ratio when interacting with both parents and children. Use this at arrival and departure when telling parents about their child’s day. Tell the parents at least 5 positive things about what their child did for every negative one!</li> </ul>