



# PARENTS CONNECT

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**DEAR PARENTS,**

In this issue of Parents Connect, we continue our journey through the 7 Connecting Habits. This time, we explore the importance of "Affirming My Child Genuinely by Accepting and Respecting." Discover how simple yet meaningful actions can strengthen your bond with your child, fostering a nurturing and supportive relationship.

At Admiralty Primary, we believe in fostering an environment where every child feels seen, valued, and respected. We understand the profound impact of building strong, positive connections with our students; connections that encourage growth, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging. As we continue to nurture these bonds, we'd like to take a moment to revisit some core principles that guide our approach to supporting our students' emotional and social development.

As part of our commitment to building positive relationships, we've introduced the 7 Connecting Habits, a set of practices that help us strengthen our connections with one another, especially with our children. These habits include; Listening, Encouraging, Accepting, Respecting, Negotiating, Trusting and Supporting.

These habits not only enrich our students' experiences within the classroom but also build an atmosphere of trust, security, and respect. We encourage you, as parents, to embrace these habits at home as well, reinforcing the connection between school and family.



At Admiralty Primary, we are committed to creating a community where affirmation through acceptance and respect is at the heart of everything we do. By consistently offering this to our children, we provide them with a foundation for developing self-respect and a healthy sense of self-worth.

We are excited to continue this journey of connection with you and your children and look forward to the positive impact this will have on our school community. Together, we can nurture a generation of confident, compassionate, and empowered young individuals.

Thank you for being a key part of this process. We are grateful for your support as we work together to create a positive and affirming environment for all our children.

Warm regards,  
Counselling Team  
Admiralty Primary School



## INTRODUCING OUR NEW CULTURE OF POSITIVE CONNECTIONS

In our ongoing effort to cultivate an environment where students thrive, we are proud to introduce a new initiative: A Culture of Positive Connections. This initiative emphasises the importance of fostering respectful and nurturing relationships—both with our students and among the broader school community.

The goal is simple but profound: to create a culture where students feel affirmed, understood, and supported by everyone around them. By incorporating kindness, respect, and empathy into every interaction, we aim to help students develop the skills to build healthy relationships throughout their lives.

## AFFIRMING MY CHILD: THE POWER OF ACCEPTANCE AND RESPECT

As we focus on Positive Connections, it's essential to remember one of the most powerful ways we can affirm our children: by accepting and respecting them for who they are. Genuine affirmation goes beyond mere praise or acknowledgment of accomplishments—it's about truly seeing our children, appreciating their individuality, and honoring their emotions and experiences.

Affirmation through acceptance means allowing your child to be themselves without judgment. This involves listening without immediately offering solutions or corrections, giving them the space to express themselves freely. Whether they are sharing a triumph or a challenge, simply accepting their emotions validates their experience and strengthens the connection you share.

Respecting your child means acknowledging their feelings and opinions, even when they differ from your own. It's about showing them that their voice matters, that their thoughts are valued, and that they are deserving of the same courtesy and consideration that we expect in our adult relationships.

## IN THIS ISSUE,

We will explore how to incorporate two essential connecting habits, accepting and respecting, when offering affirmations to your children.

Let's begin by taking a closer look at these two habits and their impact.

### ACCEPTING

Accepting means to embrace your children's positive traits unconditionally. This includes your children's behaviour and emotions. By acknowledging and embracing these traits, you would be able to affirm your children in a more genuine and positive manner. It is also important to note that accepting does not mean you accept your children's bad behaviours. The key idea is that accepting highlights and reinforces your children's positive traits, which can further foster healthier connections with them.

### RESPECTING

Respecting means to treat your children with kindness and dignity. This includes valuing your children's thoughts and feelings. As children also learn through observations, modelling good practices in your daily lives by being respectful in your actions and words can further reinforce this connecting habit in their lives too. Respecting also means establishing boundaries with your children and upholding them. By doing so, you are providing an opportunity for your children to build on their self-esteem levels as they learn to navigate through their personal beliefs and values.

Bearing these habits in mind, how then do you provide genuine affirmations for your children? The first step is to view your children for who they are. Applying the connecting habits; accepting and respecting, is a way for you to embrace your children. Once you have reshaped your mindset, the next step is to be intentional in your affirmations. These are some tips on how you can be intentional and provide genuine affirmations for your children.



# TIPS TO PROVIDE *GENUINE* *AFFIRMATIONS*

## AVOID COMPARISON

Avoid making comparisons when affirming your children. Instead, focus on the behaviours and qualities portrayed by your children. For example, statements such as “you are the prettiest girl / most handsome boy,” may seem harmless but it can create unrealistic expectations or perceptions on one’s self-image in the long run. You can instead choose to affirm and praise their unique qualities and traits. An example would be “I love how neat your hair is today.” Phrasing how you give your affirmations without comparing your children can create a more positive and healthier outlook on them.

## BE AUTHENTIC/ GENUINE

It is important to mean what you say when affirming your children. Children can sense whether you are genuine with your words. They may not verbalise it, but they can feel it. For example, if you find that there is an area for growth that your children need to work on, affirm them by saying out what you genuinely feel in a tactful and polite manner instead of masking your true feelings. The tone of your speech when you affirm your children also matters. When you mean what you say, your children will also feel respected.

## DESCRIPTIVE PRAISE/ BE SPECIFIC

Be specific in your affirmations. Being specific helps your children identify and understand their positive behaviours, qualities and values. For example, letting your children know what exactly they have done well or what they can work on instead of providing a general statement. This allows your children to make meaning of their behaviours as they learn to understand what aspects of their behaviours are socially acceptable.

# BENEFITS/ ADVANTAGES OF *Affirmations*



## 7. Improve social skills and relationships

- promote self-acceptance, making it easier for children to connect with others
- encourage kindness, gratitude and positive interactions

## 6. Encourage positive behaviour

- children who feel valued and encouraged are more likely to develop good habits
- help reinforce kindness, perseverance and responsibility

## 8. Build resilience

- help children bounce back from setbacks with a positive attitude
- teach them to overcome negative thoughts and self-doubt

## 5. Strengthen parent-child bond

- create a loving and supportive environment
- reinforce trust and open communication between parents and children

## 4. Enhance emotional intelligence

- encourage self-awareness and positive self-talk
- help children regulate emotions and build empathy for others

## 3. Reduce anxiety and stress

- positive affirmations can help children manage emotions and cope with stress
- provide reassurance in difficult situations, fostering emotional stability

## 2. Develop a growth mindset

- reinforce the idea that effort and persistence lead to success
- encourage them to embrace learning and challenges rather than fear failure

## 1. Boost self-esteem & confidence

- help children believe in their abilities and self worth
- encourage a positive self-image and resilience in facing challenges



## EXAMPLES OF AFFIRMATIONS FOR CHILDREN TO SAY:

I can do challenging tasks.

I am loved and valued.

I am kind, smart and capable.

## USING QUALITIES IN OUR COMMUNICATION WITH OUR CHILD AND AT THE SAME TIME BUILDING THESE QUALITIES IN THEM



**Active listening** – truly hearing and understanding the child's thoughts, feelings and needs

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**Empathy** – recognising and validating emotions, fostering compassion

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**Gentle encouragement** – offering positive reinforcement that motivates without pressure

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**Respectful boundaries** – supporting children by respecting their physical and emotional space

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**Clear communication** – being transparent and open in our words, actions and expectations

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**Positive reinforcement** – acknowledging effort and achievements to build self-confidence

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**Consistent presence** – being reliably present and engaged, emotionally and physically, in the child's life

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# PRACTISING positive connections WITH OUR CHILD

*Giving genuine affirmations to children help build their self-esteem, foster a sense of belonging and encourage positive behaviour.*

*Here are some ways parents can provide heartfelt and specific praise.*

**Check the boxes to see how many of these practices you already use at home!**

## **BE SPECIFIC**

☐ I Instead of a general praise like "Good job", I specify what I am praising.  
Example: "You worked really hard on that puzzle, and you didn't give up!"

## **FOCUS ON EFFORT, NOT JUST RESULTS**

☐ I highlight my child's effort rather than just the outcome to encourage perseverance.  
Example: "I'm proud of how much effort you put into your homework. It shows how dedicated you are."

## **RECOGNISE CHARACTER AND VALUES**

☐ I affirm my child's positive qualities and values, such as kindness, honesty, or patience.  
Example: "It made me so proud when you stood up for your classmate. That shows you care about fairness."

## **BE AUTHENTIC**

☐ I ensure my affirmations are heartfelt and sincere, avoiding exaggerated praise.  
Example: "I noticed how much you've improved in drawing. You're practising a lot, and it's paying off."

## **AFFIRM WHO THEY ARE**

☐ I validate my child's unique traits and identity to make them feel loved for who they are.  
Example: "I love how curious you are about the world. Your questions are so interesting!"





# PRACTISING *positive* *connections* WITH OUR CHILD



## **CELEBRATE SMALL SUCCESSES**

[ ] I acknowledge small achievements, not just big milestones.

Example: "You remembered to put your shoes away today! Great job being responsible."

## **USE POSITIVE BODY LANGUAGE**

[ ] I use warm smiles, hugs, or eye contact to reinforce my affirmations.

## **SHOW GRATITUDE**

[ ] I express appreciation for my child's thoughtful actions.

Example: "Thank you for helping me set the table. It made things so much easier for me."

## **ENCOURAGE SELF-REFLECTION**

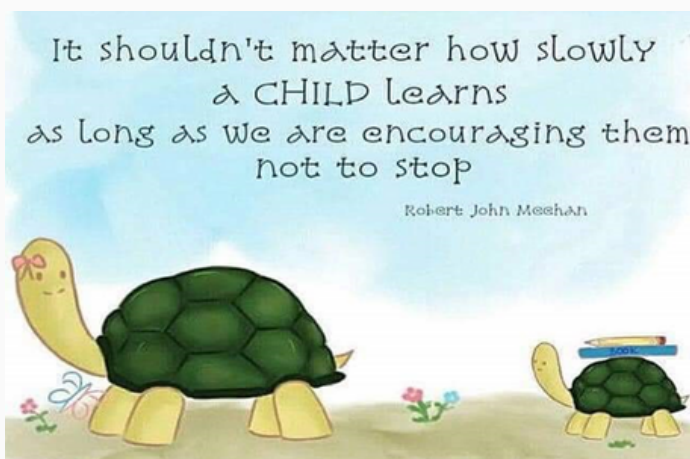
[ ] I help my child recognise their strengths and achievements through reflective questions.

Example: "How did it feel to finish that project? You must feel really proud of yourself!"

## **AVOID COMPARISONS**

[ ] I affirm my child's unique abilities without comparing them to others.

Example: "You worked really hard on that painting, and it turned out beautiful. I love how you used those colours!"



## **How many boxes did you check?**

**Every small step makes a difference! Keep practicing positive affirmations to help your child grow into a confident and kind individual.**

# ADDITIONAL READINGS

Choice Theory:

<https://www.crossrivertherapy.com/autism/what-is-choice-theory>

The Problem with Overpraising Children:

<https://www.psychalive.org/problem-overpraising-children/#:~:text=Overpraising%20our%20kids%20makes%20them,fear%20that%20they%20will%20fail.&text=Parents%20often%20make%20sacrifices%20in%20hopes%20of%20giving%20their%20children%20the%20best>

Praise, Encouragement and Rewards:

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/connecting-communicating/connecting/praise#:~:text=Descriptive%20praise%20is%20when%20you,'re%20a%20good%20boy>

Tips to Praise your Kids:

<https://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/the-right-way-to-praise-your-kids>

