

## Praise vs. Encouragement

Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs makes a distinction between praise and encouragement that's not found in the dictionary. Praise causes the child to look externally for how to feel about herself, whereas encouragement focuses the child on an internal reflection. Below are two lists of how praise and encouragement differ.

<b><u>PRAISE</u></b>	<b><u>ENCOURAGEMENT</u></b>
Stimulates rivalry and competition	Stimulates cooperation and contribution to the good of all
Focuses on quality of performance	Focuses on the amount of effort, persistence, determination and joy shown
Evaluative and judgmental	No evaluation of person or act; person feels "accepted"
Fosters selfishness at the expense of others	Emphasis on encouraging everyone's success
Emphasis is on being better than others	Enhances persistence and determination
Creates quitters	Fosters acceptance of imperfection
Fosters fear of failure	Fosters self-sufficiency and interdependence
Fosters dependence	Looks within for self-acceptance and direction
Promotes looking outside oneself for validation and direction	Creates eagerness to build character
Creates sensitivity to criticism	Sparks motivation and curiosity

<b><u>PRAISING STATEMENTS</u></b>	<b><u>ENCOURAGING STATEMENTS</u></b>
You are a good boy.	Thank you for your help cleaning up the living room.
Good job!	You dressed the doll by yourself!
I am so proud of you!	You seem to really enjoy putting this puzzle together.
You are the best helper I ever had.	You set the table all by yourself.
Your paintings are so pretty.	Which painting do you like best?

*Fr. Positive Discipline, Jane Nelson*

## Supporting Children and Their Learning

### Praise vs. Encouragement

	<b>Encouragement</b>	<b>Praise</b>
<b>Definition</b>	1. To inspire with courage 2. To spur on; stimulate 3. To point out the positive aspects of behavior 4. To show appreciation for contributions	1. An expression of approval 2. To express favorable judgment of (value-driven) 3. To glorify, attributing perfection
<b>Recognizes and values</b>	Effort and improvement: "You gave it your best." Or, "How do you feel about what you accomplished?" Children feel valued for who they are without conditions.	The end product and whether it was done right or wrong. "You did it right." Places conditions upon acceptance.
<b>Attitude</b>	Respectful, appreciative: "Who could show an example of a good way to be sitting right now?"	Patronizing, manipulative: "I like the way Suzie is sitting."
<b>Examples</b>	"You finished the puzzle. You worked hard." Recognizes ownership and responsibility for effort. "You figured that out all by yourself."	"You did great. I'm so proud of you for doing the puzzle" Robs person of ownership of own achievement. "You're such a good boy."
<b>Motivates</b>	By increasing awareness of personal efforts and accomplishments. "What do I think?"	With external rewards and outside approval. "What do others think?"
<b>Invites</b>	Children to change for themselves and to notice their own contributions and value. "Inner direction."	People to change for others, looking for validation and approval from other people. Approval Junkies.
<b>Effects on self-esteem</b>	Feel worthwhile without the approval of others. Are confident that others have faith in their abilities.	People believe that their worth depends on other people's approval.
<b>Teaches</b>	How to think and self-evaluation.	What to think and dependence on the evaluation of others.
<b>Long range effect</b>	Self-confidence and self-reliance.	Dependence on others.
<b>"I" message</b>	Self-disclosing: "I appreciate your cooperation."	Judgmental: "I like the way you're sitting."

Adapted from:

Nelson, Jane (2006) *Positive Discipline*. New York: Ballantine Books.