



Parenting Tips from a Play Therapist

Taken from Child Parent Relationship Training by Sue Bratton and Garry Landreth



PARENTING TIP 1

FOCUS ON THE DONUT NOT THE HOLE

focus on what your child is doing right.

Starting therapy can be a difficult time for children and parents. Sometimes, parents are focused on everything the child has done wrong. Begin looking for positive qualities such as helpfulness or empathy. Use the "Greatness Qualities" homework to start meaningful conversations about what your family values most. Noticing your child's greatness can be a game-changer!

homework

greatness qualities
reflective responding

main topics



focus on strengths

Greatness Qualities handout and activity



reflective responding

Mirror your child's feelings to connect and de-escalate times of upset



DISCERN

Look into your child's eyes for clues to their feelings or desires.

*Situation:
Child yells and throws
their backpack on the
floor.*



REFLECT

After you've decided the child's primary feeling, put the feeling word into a short response, generally beginning with you.

*"You seem
REALLY mad!"*



REFLECTIVE RESPONDING

Taken from Child-Parent Relationship Training
by Sue Bratton and Garry Landreth

BOOST
*emotional
literacy*

DE-ESCALATE
conflict

IMPROVE
self-esteem



EMPATHIZE

Add a genuine empathic statement. Remember the importance of your facial expression, and tone.

*"I feel that way
too sometimes.
It's hard."*

*Your intensity should
match the child's.*

**Note - If your intensity is too
low, the child will think you are
minimizing their feelings.*



PAUSE

Give your child a chance to respond. Do not correct or rescue.

*After they respond,
say,
"How can I help?"*

