

The best things you can say to your child

We asked the children at school what the best things their parents/carers can say to them... (try saying them to yourself and see how difficult, but how nice, it is!)

"I love you"

How easy is that!

These are the nicest words you can say to anyone, especially a child. Let them know you love them. Tell them often. Let them know just how important they are to you. Remember how lovely it is when they say it back - because they really mean it!

"Well done! I'm proud of you"

Children love to be praised. They thrive on it. They love to please you and are often desperate for your approval. Like you, they try much harder when you focus on the positive!

"No"

You are the parent! It is your job to keep your children safe. It's your job to give them the boundaries they need so that they understand what's right and what's wrong. They may rebel, but they need and like the security of knowing where they stand and what's expected of them. They have to learn from the experts!

"It's all right to cry/ feel scared/happy/sad/excited"

Don't tell your child how they feel. They need to know that you understand how they feel and can empathise with them. Then you can reassure, cuddle, distract. Children need to learn how to recognise and cope with their own feelings.

"You are brilliant/ gorgeous/fabulous/clever!" (etc)

Remember how nice it feels to be given a compliment? Let your children know how wonderful and special they are. If you live with compliments you are more likely to feel good about yourself and give those compliments to others.

Self esteem is vital!



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We asked the children at school what the best things their parents/carers can say to them... (try saying them to your child and see how they respond!)

"It's all right to make a mistake"

We all do it! The only mistakes we make are the ones we don't learn from. We need to recognise when we have made a mistake and learn how to deal with it. If we are afraid of failure, we won't even try!

"Come and have a cuddle"

There are few things nicer than a cuddle with a child! Show your children that you love them. Actions speak louder than words, especially for young children. We can't force them, especially as they get older, but we all need hugs and they like it really! Children need to know that someone cares. It makes all the difference!

"It's all right to tell me!"

We need to encourage our children to talk to us. They need to learn how to sort out problems, that some problems are not theirs to sort out and that they may need support to deal with some things. They are vulnerable to abuse/manipulation if they don't learn this life skill.

"I like you because you are you"

The best thing that my child ever said to me was "I like myself". The greatest hope we can have for our children is that they are happy, well adjusted people who go on to make a positive contribution to society. Let your children know they are special. All children (and I!) need unconditional love!

"Let's have some time"

Children need routine. They like the security of knowing what's going to happen. They like patterns and expectations. They also like time to themselves! Give them thinking time, 'time out', they need to learn how to make choices and express themselves. They learn a lot of this through free play. Let them!