

Praise vs Encouragement

A simple shift that builds confidence, resilience, and motivation

Many of us were raised on praise. It sounds positive, but over time it can teach children to look outside themselves for approval.

Encouragement, on the other hand, helps children notice their own effort, growth, and persistence. They build skills they carry with them long-term.

PRAISE

Sounds like

“Good job!”
“You’re so smart.”
“You’re the best.”



Focus

the outcome



What kids may learn

I perform to be approved
Mistakes mean I failed
Success = pleasing others



Core Reframe

- ✗ Judge the result
- ✗ Label the child
- ✗ External approval



ENCOURAGEMENT

Sounds like

“I noticed your effort .”
“What part are you proud of?”
“That took a lot of patience.”

Focus

the process

What kids may learn

My effort matters
I can handle challenges
I trust my own judgment

Core Reframe

- ✓ Notice the effort
- ✓ Describe what you see
- ✓ Internal confidence

Encouragement is especially powerful for our kids

When effort is high and progress isn't always visible, pressure can shut learning down. Encouragement creates safety, which supports growth and persistence.

Try this: Next time you're about to say “Good job,” pause and ask:
What did my child do to get here?
Then name *that*.