



Speaking from the Child's Perspective

Adapted from Hall, N., Kulkarni, C. and Seneca, S. (2008) *Your Guide to Nurturing Parent-Child Relationships: Positive Parenting for Home Visitors*.

Follow the child's lead

- Allow the child to initiate activities and games.
I like it when you play with things that I am interested in, it makes me feel special.
- Match the child's pace rather than your own tempo.
I don't like it when you ignore the toy I'm interested in exploring and show me something else, I don't want to move that fast.
- Hold back the urge to take over and lead all of the time.
When you imitate what I do, it makes me feel smart.

Taking turns

- Pause and wait for the child to respond either in movement, gesture, or vocalization.
When you listen to me, I feel like a valued partner in our conversation.

- Talk in small bits and pause to hear the child's reply. Maintain eye contact.
You make me feel important and like what I have to say is worthwhile.

Responding to crying

- Pick up and cuddle the child.
When you pick me up, I feel comforted and protected.
- Use soft soothing sounds, gentle looks, and smiles.
When you figure out why I am crying, I feel secure that you love me.
- Calmly touch and comfort the child.
Every time you comfort me, I learn to trust you more and more.

Responding to protests of separation

- Tell the child when you are leaving.
I love you so much, I can't stand to be out of your sight, but thanks for telling me and not just sneaking out.
- Reassure the child before you leave and return with lots of smiles, hugs and kisses.
I get really scared when you aren't near me but I'm glad you are happy to see me!
- Keep the child in range of vision and call out to him or her from another room.
I haven't learned yet that when you disappear from my sight, it isn't forever. Thanks for reminding me.

Responding sensitively and appropriately to any signal or behavioral cue

- Think about what the child's trying to tell you about his or her wants/needs.
When you notice that I am hungry/tired/frustrated/sad/lonely and you help me, I know that you care for and love me.

Understand the child's unique personality

- Unconditionally accept the child's reactions, biological rhythms, and overall personality.
When you accept me for who I am, I feel respected and valued.

Recognize developmental competencies

- Observe the child daily and watch for new skills being practiced.
I feel proud when you get excited about my accomplishments.

Reframing Children's Behaviors

(Hall, Kulkami, Seneca, 2008)

Behavior	How Parent May See It	Another Way To View It
Crying and fussing	He always wants something. He really knows how to push my buttons.	You are lucky that your child lets you know when he needs you for something. He is really good at telling you when he is bored, hungry, lonely.
Whining	She is doing it to get my attention. She is manipulating me to get her way.	She is trying to practice expressing her needs. She is showing great control over frustrations and lack of words to tell you what is really bothering her.
Getting into everything, making messes	He is such a problem. He is always into my things.	He is a real explorer and loves to learn how things work. He is very good with his hands and loves to touch all the interesting things in his world.
Protesting separation	I can't leave her alone for one minute. She is so spoiled.	You have done a great job! She is showing you how she loves you and needs you.
Picky at mealtimes	He refuses to eat anything. He will have to starve because I'm not a short order cook.	He is growing up and showing his opinion on things. He needs to make choices to feel grown up, like you.
Saying "NO" and testing limits	She is so oppositional.	She is becoming an independent person; she is trying to tell you that she has a mind of her own.
Doing things his or her way	If I always give in, he will get so spoiled.	He is growing up and showing you how he likes to do things his own way.
Tantruming and other negative behaviors such as pushing, hitting, biting	She thinks that if she throws a fit she will get her way. What a brat.	She is telling you that she has lost control and needs your help. What a great communicator.
Not sharing or taking turns	He is so selfish. He has more toys that he knows what to do with and can't even share one of them!	He is starting to understand that he is not the center of the universe.
Displaying new fears	She is always afraid of something. I can't take her anywhere.	She is starting to think about lots of new things and sometimes that gets scary.