

# Behavior-Specific Praise



## What is behavior-specific praise?

Behavior-specific praise is positive feedback about a desired **behavior**, delivered to a **specific** individual, and in the form of a **praise** statement.



## How does behavior-specific praise support distance learning?

Behavior-specific praise increases a child's appropriate behaviors, including academic engagement. With fewer problem behaviors to address, you'll be able to maximize your child's distance learning time.



## How do I use behavior-specific praise?

### 1. Label the Behavior

Be specific by labeling the appropriate behavior. For example, "Thank you for remembering the red post-it on mommy's desk means she can't answer school-work questions right now" instead of "Thank you."



### 2. Praise Immediately

Provide behavior-specific praise immediately after a student engages in the desired behavior. Doing so creates a link between the behavior and the praise.



### 3. Praise Frequently & Mix it Up

Provide high rates of behavior-specific praise. Be sure to vary your praise statements. Challenge yourself by attempting to deliver behavior-specific praise statements starting with each letter of the alphabet (e.g., **a**stonishing, **b**ravo, **c**ool, etc.).



### 4. Be on the Lookout

Use behavior-specific praise to "catch 'em being good" in order to prevent problem behaviors. Show your child the best way to get your attention is by following the expectations.



### 5. Focus on the Appropriate

Identify appropriate alternatives to problem behaviors and provide behavior-specific praise for these "opposite" behaviors. For example, immediately transitioning off of technology when the timer goes off for a child who typically tries to negotiate for more screen time.



### 6. Acknowledge Effort

Focus behavior-specific praise on your child's effort and performance rather than abilities. For example, "You stuck with it and figured out how to add videos to your Google Slides presentation" instead of "You're naturally gifted when it comes to technology."



**Source:** Perle, J. G. (2016). Teacher-provided positive attending to improve student behavior. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 48, 250-257.

