

Ten Power-Packed Phrases for Parents

Choosing the right word at the right time cements a strong parent-child relationship. The National PTA has compiled a top-10 of words and phrases list as a handy guide for parents to use in encouraging and supporting their child's efforts.

Here are their picks:

1. **Thank you.** Acknowledge your child's efforts to help.
2. **Tell me more.** Words like these show your child that you are listening and that you would like to hear more about what's on their mind.
3. **You can do it.** Your expression of confidence in your child's ability to do things without your help is important.
4. **How can I help?** As your child takes on projects in school, encourage them to think of specific steps necessary to complete it. You both can decide which tasks your child can handle and which ones they'll need help with.
5. **Let's all pitch in.** A child is never too young to learn that cooperation and team effort make many jobs easier.
6. **How about a hug?** Research indicates that young children deprived of hugs and displays of affection often fail to thrive.
7. **Please and Thank you.** When you ask a favor of anyone — including children — these "magic words" acknowledge that you are asking for a behavior that will help make you happy.
8. **Good job.** Self-respect and self-confidence grow when your child's efforts and performance are rewarded. Praise should be honest and specific. Focus on efforts and progress, and help your children identify their strengths.
9. **It's time to ...** Children need structure in their lives to provide a measure of security in an often insecure world. Parents should establish and maintain a workable schedule of activities, always remembering that children benefit from regular mealtimes and bedtimes.
10. **I love you.** Everyone needs love and affection and a feeling of acceptance and belonging. We can't assume that children know and understand our love for them unless we tell them.

Source: *Our Children*, the official magazine of the National PTA;
www.pta.org.