

## Picture These Parenting Skills

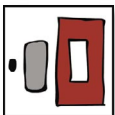
The *Sunny Side of the Street* program highlights parenting skills that research shows support healthy child development and encourage strong relationships between parents and their children. Below is a picture that represents each parenting skill and an explanation of why it is a valuable activity in the family setting.

### Child-led Play



Parents can watch and listen to children while they play and then follow their child's interest, rather than direct the activity. As children explore the world around them, they like to share their ideas. When parents follow their child's lead, it ensures that the activities are developmentally appropriate and interesting to the child. Child-led play helps parents know and appreciate their children.

### Say More (elaborate)



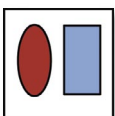
Parents can elaborate on a child's thought by adding more or asking a question. For example, if a child says the toy car is red, parents might elaborate by adding their own comment, "You're right! The wheels are red too." and then ask a question, "Who do you think drives that car?"

### Encourage



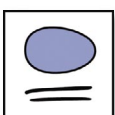
Parents can show interest and give children tangible support in what they set out to do. This helps children feel loved, appreciated, supported, and recognized for their contributions. Encouragement also deepens the parent-child bond and stimulates cooperation.

### Give Choices



Giving choices within a framework of choices that are OK with the parent is an effective way to guide children toward making responsible decisions. The act of choosing makes children feel included and in control of their lives. This fosters cognitive development, self-confidence, and a sense of responsibility.

### Label



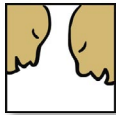
When parents use a word to describe what their child sees, or points something out and asks the child to name it, it broadens their child's vocabulary and understanding of the world. For example, when parent and child are looking at a picture of a boy who is crying, the parent might label the child's emotion by saying, "He looks sad, doesn't he?" Parents can combine labeling with repeating and elaborating to foster their child's thinking, communicating and emerging literacy skills.

## Listen



Listening to what children say, without interrupting them, encourages their language and cognitive development, emergent literacy skills, and sense of mutual respect. In listening, parents also learn more about their child's thoughts and feelings.

## Manners



Parents can model ways of behaving that show respect and kindness for others. When parents model good manners, they help children learn to treat others respectfully. Children who treat others respectfully are more liked by others and tend to be included, rather than excluded from peer activities.

## Repeat



When parents repeat words and phrases while talking and reading together, their children feel listened to, understood and appreciated. Repeating also encourages the development of language and communication skills.

## Routines



Establishing and creating a routine creates a predictable pattern of activities. Routines can include daily life activities, like meals and bedtime, as well as fun activities like going to the park or reading and playing games. The comfort and security of routines give structure to a child's life. Routines also contribute to children's good physical health and social, emotional and cognitive development.

## Shared Focus



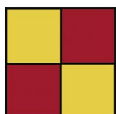
Combined parent-child attention on an object, activity (such as playing a game together) or an idea (sharing a joke) nurtures warm feelings between parents and children and plays an important role in stimulating children's language, cognitive and social development.

## Show Affection



Parents can use words and actions to show warmth, kindness, interest and love. When parents show love and respect, their children are much more likely to respond with similar behavior. Affection builds a bond between children and parents and helps children develop healthy relationships. Parental warmth also stimulates children's physical, cognitive and emotional development.

## Take Turns



Taking turns is a difficult skill for young children to learn because children have to give something up and then wait to regain it. Practice helps children learn to take turns. Parents can help children practice taking turns while playing games together.