

## *Refrigerator Notes and Handouts Academic and Persistence Coaching*



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# *Academic and Persistence Coaching Promotes School Readiness*

## **HOME ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK**



### *To Do:*

- **PLAY** daily being child-directed and using descriptive commenting. Comment on your child's actions, describe their position (on, under, in) as well as name the objects s/he is playing with. Avoid asking questions.
- **COMPLETE** the temperament questionnaire on your child and yourself. (see handout)
- **KEEP TRACK** of play periods on the "Record Sheet: Play Times" handout.



### *To Read:*

Chapter 2, *Academic and Persistence Coaching* in **The Incredible Years** book.

- **CALL YOUR BUDDY** from the group.

*Handout 2A*

# Academic and Persistence Coaching Promotes School Readiness

## HOME ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK



### *To Do:*

- **PLAY** daily being child-directed and using academic and persistence coaching.
- **DESCRIBE** the colors, shapes, categories and numbers of objects your child plays with. Also describe your child's patience, calmness, persistence and focused attention.
- **READ** using descriptive commenting. When reading together you might consider trying a book that has no words in it at all—only pictures! It will be fun for you to make up stories about the pictures with your child. Practice the skills we have suggested in this program to foster your child's self-confidence. Notice how your child responds to your efforts.
- **KEEP TRACK** of play periods on the "Record Sheet: Play Times" handout.



### *To Read:*

Part 3, Problem 15: *Reading With Care* and Chapter 3, *Social Coaching*, in **The Incredible Years** book.

- **CALL YOUR BUDDY** from the group.

Handout 2B



## Refrigerator Notes

# Facilitating Children’s Language & Pre-School Readiness Skills: Parents as “Academic & Persistence Coaches”

“Descriptive commenting” is a powerful way to strengthen children’s language skills. The following is a list of actions, behaviors and objects that can be commented upon when playing with your child. Use this checklist to practice descriptive commenting concepts.

<b>Objects, Actions</b>	<b>Examples</b>
_____ colors _____ number counting _____ shapes _____ names of objects _____ sizes (long, short, tall, smaller than, bigger than, etc.,) _____ positions (up, down, beside, next to, on top, behind, etc.,)	“You have the red car and the yellow truck.”  “There are one, two, three dinosaurs in a row.”  “Now the square Lego is stuck to the round Lego.”  “That train is longer than the track.”  “You are putting the tiny bolt in the right circle.”  “The blue block is next to the yellow square, and the purple triangle is on top of the long red rectangle.”
<b>Persistence</b>	
_____ working hard _____ concentrating, focusing _____ stay calm, patience _____ trying again _____ problem solving _____ thinking skills _____ reading	“You are working so hard on that puzzle and thinking about where that piece will go.”  “You are so patient and just keep trying all different ways to make that piece fit together.”  “You are staying calm and trying again.”  “You are thinking hard about how to solve the problem and coming up with a great solution to make a ship.”
<b>Behaviors</b>	
_____ following parent’s directions _____ listening _____ independence _____ exploring	“You followed directions exactly like I asked you. You really listened.”  “You have figured that out all by yourself.”

## REFRIGERATOR NOTES

### Building Blocks for Reading With CARE



- C** Comment, use descriptive commenting to describe pictures. Take turns interacting, and let your child be the storyteller by encouraging him/her to talk about the pictures.
- A** Ask open-ended questions.  
“What do you see on this page?” (observing and reporting)  
“What’s happening here?” (storytelling)  
“What is that a picture of?” (promoting academic skills)  
“How is she feeling now?” (exploring feelings)  
“What is going to happen next?” (predicting)
- R** Respond with praise and encouragement to your child’s thinking and responses.  
“That’s right!”  
“You are really thinking about that.”  
“Wow, you know a lot about that.”
- E** Expand on what your child says.  
“Yes, I think he’s feeling excited, too, and he might be a little scared as well.”  
“Yes, it is a horse; it’s also called a mare.”  
“Yes, that boy is going to the park. Do you remember going to the park?”

## **REFRIGERATOR NOTES**

### **Coaching Children's School Readiness Skills**

#### **Academic Coaching**

- Use academic coaching to promote your child's school readiness concepts, tailoring to your child's developmental level.
- Use many more descriptive comments than questions during play times as well as other times of the day.
- Describe the objects, shapes, numbers, letters, textures, and colors of objects your child is using as well as actions.
- Listen to your child and imitate, or mirror, your child's words and extend length of sentence by one word.
- Notice what your child is interested in and talk about it.
- Talk about positions of objects (e.g., inside, under, beside, next to).
- Prompt your child to communicate by modeling words for him/her to copy or by using a hand puppet.
- Praise and give positive feedback to your child for using words (that's right!).
- Use new and more complex words to expand your child's vocabulary even if you know your child won't understand the word at first.
- Talk about simple every day stories and events
- Read with your child often.

#### **Persistence Coaching**

- Coach with persistence narration when you notice your child is working hard, concentrating, being calm, or staying patient when doing an activity.
- Describe your child's persistence when he is trying again, sticking with it, thinking of a new way to do it, staying focused.
- Listen carefully ~ watch for times your child is open to talking ~ don't pressure her to talk if she doesn't want to; try to understand what your child is telling you about her thoughts, ideas, feelings and discoveries without corrections.
- Comment and praise your child for listening to peers or an adult and for his success at sticking with a difficult problem.
- Encourage your child to discover, explore, experiment and provide support when mistakes are made.
- Try not to give too much help; encourage your child's curiosity and problem-solving

# Brainstorm/Buzz



## Personal Thoughts About Play

Before continuing, think about these two questions:

1. What are the potential benefits for your child when you play with him/her?
2. What gets in the way of playing with your child?

Write down the benefits of playing with your child and your difficulties in doing it. See if you can find any solutions to your barriers to playing with your child.

<b>Benefits of My Playing and Spending Time With My Child</b>	<b>Difficulties in Doing This</b>
<p><b>Goal:</b> I will commit to playing with my child _____ times this week for _____ minutes.</p>	





# Brainstorm/Buzz

## Encouraging Words



Share with your buddy some encouraging words you can use to help your child keep trying—even though the task is difficult.

**e.g., You keep trying...**

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### **Goal:**

I will commit to playing with my child \_\_\_\_\_ times this week for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

## REFRIGERATOR NOTES

### About Building Your Child's Self-Confidence



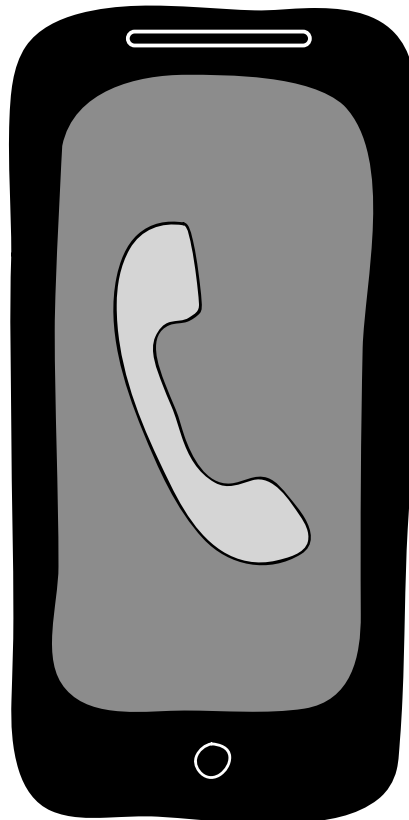
- Value and give your full attention to your children's play activities.
- Listen to your children — watch for times when your child is open to talking — don't pressure them to talk if they don't want to.
- Reinforce your children's learning efforts by describing what they are doing.
- Praise your children's efforts as well as their successes.
- Follow your child's lead when talking with them or playing.
- Spend regular daily time with your children.
- When reading:
  - Ask open-ended questions;
  - Avoid commands and corrections;
  - Offer help when s/he wants it.
- Create opportunities for children to retell stories that they have memorized.
- Encourage children to write their own stories or to dictate them to you.
- Read to children often and allow them to see you reading.
- Encourage children to make up stories and act them out.

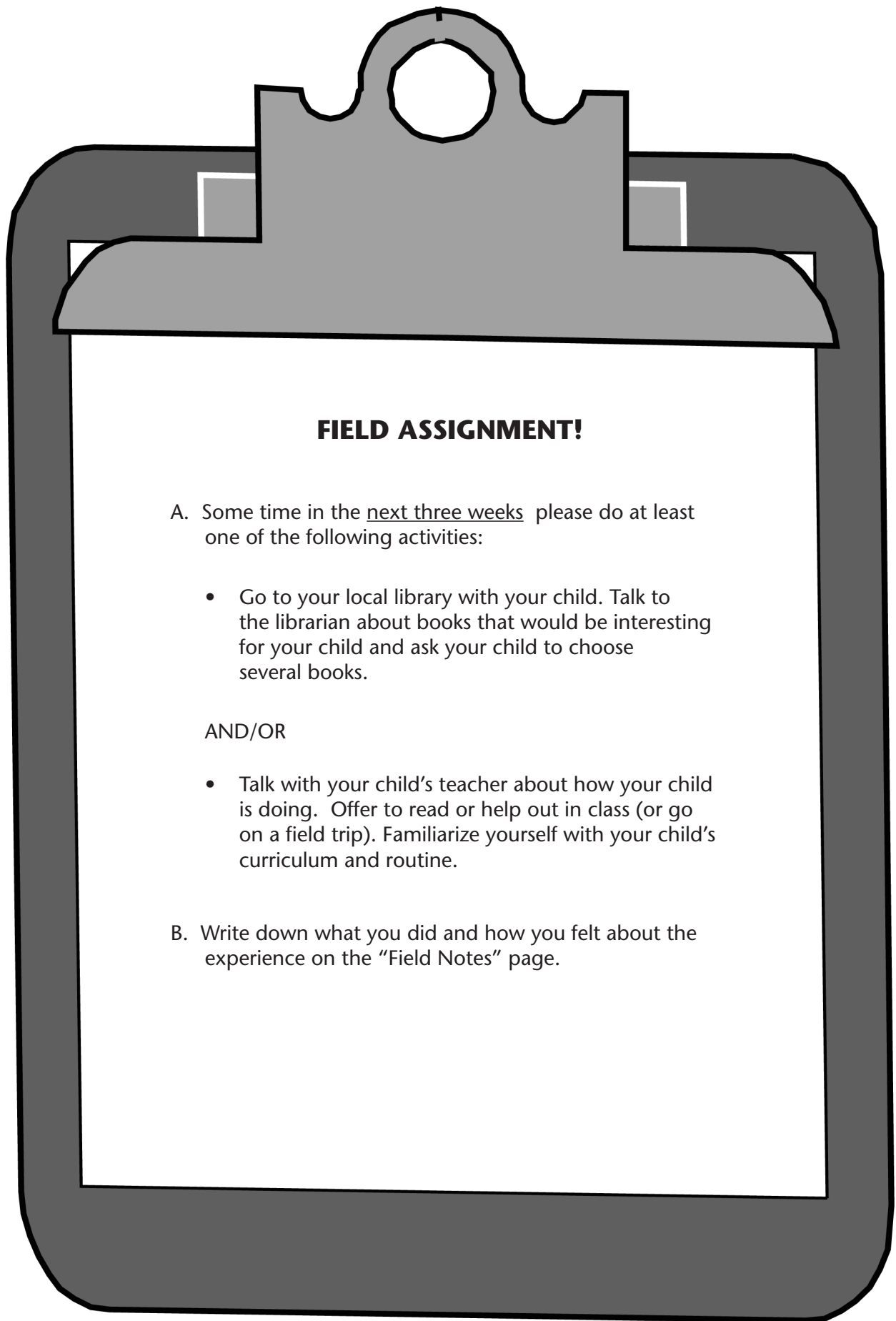
## *Calling Your Buddy*

From now until the final week of the Parenting Course you will be asked to call a person from your group. You will have the same “buddy” for several weeks. The purpose of these calls is to share ideas and “hot tips” about the home activities, such as how one of your play times went, how you set up your sticker system, what rewards you used, or consequences you found effective when handling a particular problem behavior.

These calls need last no more than 5-10 minutes and can be scheduled at your own and your buddy’s convenience.

Parents sharing with each other can not only provide a rich bank of creative solutions but also be supportive on one another!





## **FIELD ASSIGNMENT!**

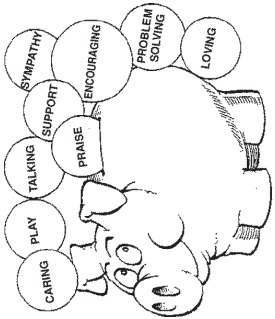
A. Some time in the next three weeks please do at least one of the following activities:

- Go to your local library with your child. Talk to the librarian about books that would be interesting for your child and ask your child to choose several books.

AND/OR

- Talk with your child's teacher about how your child is doing. Offer to read or help out in class (or go on a field trip). Familiarize yourself with your child's curriculum and routine.

B. Write down what you did and how you felt about the experience on the "Field Notes" page.



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

Home Activities



## RECORD SHEET: PLAY TIMES

Record times you spent playing with your child, what you did, and any reaction you noticed in yourself or your child.

Date	Time Spent	Activity	Child's Response	Parent's Response



## ***Do's and Don'ts for Facilitating Learning Through Play***

### ***Don't:***

1. Structure, organize, impose your own ideas, do it "for the child," or take over the child's play.
2. Compete with the child.
3. Push the child into new activities that are too difficult for his or her developmental level.
4. Become involved in your own play and ignore the child's play.
5. Provide play equipment that is too advanced for the child.
6. Judge, correct, contradict or punish the way in which the child plays. Remember, it's the "doing" that is important, not the finished product!
7. Refuse to role play in the child's make-believe world, or try to prohibit make-believe aggression and controlling behaviors during pretend play activities.
8. Ask too many questions or give commands during play.
9. Ignore a child who seems to be absorbed in playing by him- or herself.
10. Attempt to "teach" instead of play.

### ***Do:***

1. Follow the child's lead—build on his or her ideas and imagination. If the child has difficulty getting started, choose an activity that matches his or her interests, or provide some gentle prompts to get the child going. Once he or she shows some initiative, stand back and give the child attention.
2. Provide lots of praise for the child's ideas, creativity, and imagination.
3. Enthusiastically describe what the child is doing, rather than asking a stream of questions or focusing on what the child isn't doing.
4. Encourage the child's efforts instead of judging the merit of the endeavor. Remember, the important aspect of play is "doing" it, and the "doing" does not have to make adult sense. Play is an opportunity for children to experiment without having to worry about reality.
5. Imitate the child's actions, and do what he or she asks you to do, as long as the behavior is appropriate.
6. When the child has problems, provide assistance after the child seems to have gone as far as possible on his or her own. Then suggest doing it together, and wait for the child to confirm that help would be appreciated.
7. If it is necessary to impose limits, point them out clearly and pleasantly; for example, "You may not color on the table. Here is some paper you can use instead."
8. Ignore problem behaviors like whining, crying, sassy talk, negative remarks, and tantrums. Otherwise, you may inadvertently strengthen these behaviors.
9. Help the child make the transition from one type of play to another; for example, shifting from quiet to active play activities.
10. Provide unstructured play times and encourage the child to play with toys and materials that foster creativity. For example, blocks, play dough, and paints require more imagination than most commercially manufactured toys.
11. Role play with the child.
12. Be an attentive and appreciative audience. Show interest in the child's learning discoveries.
13. Allow for some messes. Take precautions such as using a vinyl tablecloth that can be wiped off when you are setting up the play area for an art activity.
14. Take part in the play activity, but let the child be in charge.

## ***Refrigerator Notes***

### ***Goodness of Fit—Managing Your Child's Temperament***

Even if parents have different temperaments than their children, they can still strive for a good fit with their child. A good fit is when parents' demands and expectations are compatible with their child's temperament, abilities and characteristics. The goal is always to manage rather than to squelch or change temperament.

Here are some tips for achieving a good fit and managing your child's temperament.

- Realize that your child's temperament style is not your "fault" because temperament is something biological and innate, not something that is learned from parents. Your child is probably not purposely trying to be difficult or irritating. Don't blame him or yourself.
- Respect your child's temperament without comparing to other siblings or trying to change his or her basic temperament.
- Consider your own basic temperament and behavior and tailor your parenting responses when they clash with your child's responses to encourage a better fit.
- Remember what you model for your children is what they learn from you.
- Try to consider and anticipate your child's adaptability, activity level, sensitivity, biological rhythms and ability to sustain attention when planning activities that are most suitable for your child.
- Try to focus on the issues of the moment. Do not project into the future.
- Review your expectations for your child, your preferences and your values. Are they realistic and appropriate?
- Anticipate high risk situations and try to avoid or minimize them.
- Enjoy the interactions and the differences in each of your children.
- Avoid labeling your child as bad or difficult as this may lead to negative self-image and further compound his difficulties.
- Try to distinguish between a tantrum that is temperamentally induced (reaction to disappointment) versus one that is manipulative (designed to get parent to give in).
- Help your child develop a positive self-esteem – that is, to have a fair sense of his strengths and weaknesses.
- Find a way to get relief for yourself and your child by scheduling some time apart.

Remember above all temperament qualities can be shaped to work to a child's advantage if they are sensibly managed.

