



4-H School-Age Child Care
University of California Cooperative Extension

PARENT STYLES II

Tips for Busy Parents

REPORT CARD BLUES

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One of the hardest things about being a child is getting a poor report card. It's also hard on you as a parent, because it's natural to think that poor grades are a reflection on you. Sometimes parents take their frustration and anger out on their children.

Instead, there are positive ways for parents to react.



First of all, if you are happy with your child's report card, be sure to tell her. Many parents never say when a card is good enough. A lack of response can be almost as hard on a child's self-esteem as an angry one.

If you are not happy with a report card, try some of these tips:

- ★ **STOP** whatever you are doing.
- ★ **LOOK** at your child's report card.
- ★ **LISTEN** to what your child has to say.

This will give you time to deal with any negative emotions you may be feeling. You may also get some clues about why your child's grades are poorer than you expected. **Together create a plan to help your child improve.**

Resource: Adapted from parent cards developed by the *Baltimore, Maryland Commission for Children and Youth.*

SOME SPECIAL WORDS

Children are special. It's important for them to know they can depend on you when life gets a little rough. This activity is an easy way to show you care and appreciate your child. The best part is that it will only take a few minutes!

WHAT YOU NEED:

- ☆ 3 X 5 Index cards
- ☆ Crayons or marking pens

WHAT TO DO:

- ★ Think of times, (like report card time), when children may need some special words of support.
- ★ On index cards, write down some simple phrases, like:
 - ☆ You did your best. Keep trying.
 - ☆ It was good to talk it over with you last night.
 - ☆ I'll always love you...no matter what!
 - ☆ You'll do better next time.
 - ☆ It will work out better next time.
 - ☆ I'm sorry I got upset with you.
- ★ Fold the cards in half. Tuck them into your child's lunch box, jacket pocket or backpack.



You'll be amazed at how much this simple act will brighten your child's day. It will also motivate your child to try harder in school. The next report card is bound to be better.

Another idea is to make a tradition of doing something special when report cards are handed out at the end of the school year. You might go to breakfast, or make special cookies. Whatever it is, your child will feel great!

Adapted from: University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension "*Family Times*" Program.