



Encouragement Phrases for Early Childhood Staff

To recognise effort, growth, and emotional development (without language like "good job")

Recognising Effort & Problem-Solving

- "You kept trying, even when it was tricky!"
- "You're working really hard to figure that out."
- "You found a different way, you knew what to do!"
- "You didn't give up and look what you did!"
- "You thought through that so carefully."
- "You're learning new things every day."

Building Confidence & Independence

- "You made a plan and followed it through!"
- "You did that all by yourself."
- "You knew just what to do."
- "You're learning how to take care of things on your own."
- "You made a decision, and it worked out!"

Highlighting Emotional Growth & Self-Regulation

- "That was a big feeling, and you found a way through it."
- "You used your breath to help calm your body."
- "You're learning to notice when you need space."
- "You told me how you felt, that's really important."
- "You asked for help when you needed it."

Acknowledging Kindness & Contribution

- "That was really thoughtful of you."
- "You helped your friend feel better."
- "You shared your idea, and it helped the group."
- "That was a kind choice you made."
- "You took time to help someone, what a difference that made!"

Celebrating Creativity & Unique Ideas

- "You used your imagination to make something new!"
- "You tried something different, what a creative idea."
- "That was such a unique way to do it."
- "You figured out how to make your idea work!"
- "You solved the problem and figured it out."



Reflecting Feelings in Children

To help children name, understand, and process their emotions

Happiness & Excitement

- "You're really proud of what you made!"
- "You're so excited, you can hardly wait!"
- "That made you feel really special."
- "You love doing that, it brings you joy."

Sadness & Disappointment

- "You were really hoping for that, and now you're feeling let down."
- "That was important to you, and you're feeling sad it didn't happen."
- "It's okay to feel sad when things don't go the way we want."

Anger & Frustration

- "You didn't like that at all, you're really angry."
- "You're frustrated because it's not working how you wanted."
- "That made you really upset."

Fear & Anxiety

- "That was scary for you."
- "You're unsure about what's going to happen next."
- "It's okay to feel nervous when something is new."

Overwhelm & Sensory Overload

- "That was just too much all at once."
- "You need a little space to feel calm again."
- "Everything feels big and loud for you right now."

Hurt & Discomfort

- "That really hurt your feelings."
- "You weren't expecting that, and now you feel uncomfortable."
- "Your body didn't like that, it didn't feel right to you."

Feeling Left Out

- "You really wanted to be part of that."
- "You feel left out right now."
- "It's hard to see someone else get something you were hoping for."

Embarrassment & Shyness

- "You're a bit shy right now."
- "You didn't expect that to happen, and now you want to hide a little."
- "You're feeling unsure about joining in."