

A Quick Guide to a Positive Perspective

How to Communicate Positively About Children

Engaging in appreciative conversations about children requires a touch of reframing. To steer potentially negative remarks towards a more appreciative, solution-oriented direction, let's sprinkle some positive thinking into our outlook.

I once found a list of attributes published by the Lower Saxony Institute for Early Childhood Education and Development (nifbe), aimed at children who might be a tad more intellectually curious than others – thereby potentially testing the patience of their parents, grandparents, caregivers, and teachers. Most of them sounded quite negative. After all, they don't intentionally try to annoy anyone; they're just being themselves. All children deserve a bit of trust.

So, here's a little starting boost for those who wish to spice up their attitude towards their children and their outward communication with a dash of positive thinking. And of course, the same applies to all benevolent educators who wish to defend those under their protection against their desperate parents!

"She's always so curious. She sticks her nose into everything!"

When someone says this about their daughter, they could be reminded that the girl is showing curiosity, seeking meaning and purpose everywhere. She's thirsty for knowledge, curious, interested, open-minded, explorative, observant, and attentive. Plus, she's a great listener!

"He's terribly stubborn!"

On the contrary! He's intrinsically motivated, persistent, resilient, consistent, determined, patient, and he doesn't give up. He actually follows through tasks, has a high tolerance for frustration, is assertive, strong-willed, and steadfast in his opinions. End of story.

"She just doesn't make an effort!"

Why should she? She easily and quickly acquires information; it comes naturally to her. She doesn't feel challenged yet and seeks meaning first. She takes the efficient route. Or maybe she just has other interests. She's calm, relaxed, composed, content, and creative, with a knack for delegation.

"He drives me crazy with all his questioning!"

One could also say that he loves solving problems, is very capable of formulating concepts and synthesizing information. He forms his own opinions, doesn't take things at face value, actively seeks meaning, and is generally curious and critical. He's definitely eager to learn, probing into matters, open-minded, and self-assured.



"She never listens to rules; she has to try everything!"

That's because she's intensely seeking relationships between cause and effect! She wants, no, needs to know how things feel, how they work. She demands proof: it might be different! It's clear she wants to learn and is incredibly curious, eager for information, and versatile in interests. Moreover, she's extremely brave and experimental, with a strong inclination for research.

"I can't take it anymore – he won't give me a break!"

He doesn't like ambiguities and illogic; hence, he keeps asking. Or maybe he's searching for meaning, he is missing one puzzle piece to grasp the whole picture. One thing's for sure, he's communicative, always has something to say, tells stories, perseveres, is lively, energetic, and has a lot of stamina. He's tireless, determined, and goal-oriented.

"She's always so direct and undiplomatic. She doesn't make friends!"

That's simply because she's genuine: emphasizing truth, equality, and fairness, she's open, honest, clear, and straightforward. She speaks her mind spontaneously and without beating around the bush. She knows what she wants, gets straight to the point, and expresses her emotions. Plus, she's assertive, caring for herself, and not afraid of confrontations.

"Why is she so stubborn?"

She's independent, prefers individual work, and has high self-control. She works effectively, results-oriented, and aims to achieve her goals quickly. She has her own way of thinking, is creative, individualistic, and simply has got character. At the same time, she's self-centered, self-possessed, and seems to need no one else, capable of taking care of herself.

"He's incredibly cheeky!"

That's because he has got a strong sense of humor. He is refreshing, lively, imaginative, articulate, witty, and charmingly mischievous! He's courageous, confident, bold, and he challenges with his own opinions, he is able to justify himself clearly. He's experimenting, boundary-testing, and simply cool!

Now, please have fun reformulating your opinions about children with a positive outlook!

PS: Thanks to all the participants of my workshops "From ,Working with Parents' to Educational Partnership" and the DGhK discussion group "Giftedness and High Sensitivity" for their numerous ideas.

You can find the original German version here: https://www.weinbrandt.com/positiver-blick/ presented by:

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