

gave me a list of commonly used negative phrases and their positive counterparts. That list really helped me. It took lots of time and effort, and a good deal of frustration, but I finally mastered using positive language with children. I was delighted to see that it affected behavior--profoundly! I fully embraced the concept, and began to use it with all children I encountered.

I made a list of the negative things I heard the ECC students use throughout the day as they worked with the infants, and then I gave them alternatives to use. The result was the *Instead of Saying* handout, below. Maya's teachings live on!

### INSTEAD OF SAYING

#### Instead of Saying...

##### During Play Time:

Don't climb on the table (crib, shelf, gate).

Don't hit (push, pinch, pull hair, kick, etc.) the baby (me).

Don't throw the truck (blocks, telephone, etc.).

No climbing with toys in your hand.

No toys on the slide.

Don't bang on the mirror (windows) with toys.

Don't chew on books.

Don't play in the garbage.

Stop crying you're fine.

Haven't I told you not to hit other children!

If you don't put that shovel down right now, I'm going to take it away.

If you don't stop pushing other children on the slide, they'll start pushing you.

Stop running those trucks into the walls.

Put that stick down. Don't you know someone might get hurt?

Did you dump the puzzle pieces on the floor again? I told you not to do that.

You're dripping paint all over the floor! Why don't you find another activity?

Don't play with the diapers.

Don't eat the crayon (paint, paste, soap, etc)

Don't shut the door.

Don't sit on the big chair.

##### *When walking in the building:*

Don't run away: no, come back.

Get away from the stairs.

Don't go near the elevator.

##### *Other times of the day:*

Stop wiggling on the changing table.

Don't spill your milk (juice, bottle, etc).

Don't play with your food.

No, don't eat the food off of his/her plate.

Don't put so much in your mouth.

Don't spit out your food.

Don't dump your food on the floor.

Drink your milk, try your peas, eat your meat, etc.

Don't touch the top of his head (eyes).

#### Say...

##### During Play Time:

If you need to climb, here is the climber.

Be gentle with him/her (me).

This toy is for driving (building, talking, etc.) you may throw a soft ball.

I'll hold your toy while you climb.

The slide is for people, the ramp is for toys.

The toys go on the floor.

We look at books: let me help you.

The garbage is dirty: come away from it and find a toy to play with.

You're upset because you fell down (hurt yourself, can't have that toy, miss your mom, etc.). Let me try to help you feel better.

You're angry, but hitting hurts. Let's talk about what's bothering you.

Use the shovel to dig with; if you want to throw something, you can throw the ball.

Please keep your hands on your own body. Pushing hurts other children.

Careful drivers put on their brakes and beep their horn.

Lets throw the stick in the garbage so that no one will get hurt.

Keep the puzzle on the table so that the pieces don't get lost.

Wipe your brush on the jar so that it won't drip.

Leave the diapers there and come over by me and find a toy to use.

Crayons are for drawing. (Paint is for painting; paste goes on paper; soap is for washing)

Leave the door open.

Here's a chair for you; this chair is for an adult/teacher.

##### *When walking in the building:*

Walk near me.

Hold onto my hand. Stay near me: the stairs are dangerous.

Hold my hand while we wait for the elevator.

##### *Other times of the day:*

Try blowing on the streamers. Can you make them move?

Oops, it spilled. I'll (lets) wipe it up.

If you're hungry, please eat. If you are finished you can clean up your space.

This is your plate; you need to eat your food.

Take little bites: chew it and swallow before you take more.

Keep your food in your mouth.

You must be done: give me your plate and clean up your space.

NOTHING. Comment about how good the food is and the child will usually try it.

Touch him here on the back of his head and feel how soft he is.

- Use rewards that are meaningful to the student. Check out the following chart for ideas. The teacher can also ask the student for what he/she would like to work.

## CHART 1: Menu of Ideas for Intermittent Celebrations

Ideas for Younger Students (Pre-K – 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade)	Ideas for Older Students Grades 5-12	Ideas for a Group of Students
Let student choose a story	Let student teach a portion of the lesson	Let class listen to recorded music during an independent work period
Let student be first in line	Let student tell a joke to the class	Let class select a theme for one day, such as: - Dress-up day -Backward day - Opposite day -Hat day (dress code?)
Let student use piano, computer, tape recorder, video camera, etc.	Let student tutor younger students	Let class invite someone to come to class to see completed projects
Let student dictate a story that someone types and prints for the student to illustrate	Let student repair a broken desk or replace batteries in calculator	Let class work outside
Let student earn extra minutes of recess for entire class	Let student choose a modified or independent assignment	Let class redecorate classroom
Let student wear a sign or a badge	Let student choose a peer with whom to play an appropriate computer game	Have a class party
Let student work near a class pet or have hamster (or other caged pet) on desk for the day	Let student leave class a minute early	Give everyone in class food/beverage: - Popcorn - Fruit - Crackers - Juice
Let student sit in your chair	Let student select which color dry marker to use during class	Allow open seating for a period
Let student perform for the class	Publicly congratulate (but be careful not to embarrass) student	Have class applaud for themselves or exchange "High 5's"
Have class applaud the student	Congratulate student in front of another adult	Tell a joke to class
Identify student as "Special Student of the Day"	Give (or loan from the library) student a book that was special to you at a similar age	Give class a new freedom or responsibility (e.g., increased freedom to move about the room)
Allow student to keep a special trophy or stuffed animal for the day	Give student a job or meaningful responsibility (see Chart 2)	Watch a relevant movie or video
Give student a gift certificate for free ice cream or French fries	Give student a ticket to school dance or sporting event	Award a small number of extra credit points
Congratulate student in front of class	Ask the principal or counselor to call student in and congratulate student on classroom success	Give class additional break time
Take student's picture and post it in the room, on the door or in the hallway	Send student or parent(s) a positive letter via the mail	Allow students to select their partner for collaborative pair activities
Draw stars on back of student's hand	Shake student's hand and congratulate in a very "adult-to-adult" manner	Set up a challenge or competition with another class
Have student eat in room with you	Give a "Free Homework Pass"	Have a pizza delivered to classroom
Give student a paper crown to wear	Write a positive note to student	Teacher wears funny clothes to class
Post banner or poster with student's name and accomplishment	Call student at home to congratulate for classroom success	Schedule a field trip

Adapted from The Teacher's Encyclopedia of Behavior Management (Sprick, 1995—Sopris West)