

The Devereux CAREgiving Checklist for Families

Promoting Positive Parenting Practices for Young Children

by Mary Mackrain and Kristin Tenney-Blackwell

Take time to reflect and complete each item on the survey below. There are no right answers. Once you have finished, take time to celebrate those items you are doing “almost always” and then start small and plan for one or two items that you feel are important to improve. For simple ideas on how to strengthen your caregiving practices, see the Devereux CAREgiving Strategy Guide.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Every day for my child I . . .	Almost Always	Some-times	Not Yet
Consistency			
1. Provide predictable routines. ■ “It’s time for our bedtime story.”			
2. Stay close by. ■ “This is a new store. I will hold you for a while longer.” ■ “I can see you are trying to figure out the puzzle. I will be right here if you need help.”			
3. Do what I say I am going to do. ■ “I will be here to hold you when you wake up from your nap—just like I do every day.” ■ “I will be done in three minutes; let’s set the timer.”			
4. Recognize his or her strengths. ■ “You rolled over to get the ball. You worked hard to get what you want.” ■ “You gave your friend a piece of your play dough; that was thoughtful.”			
5. Provide safe and loving limits. ■ “It is not safe to run in the store; you can hold my hand or walk next to me.” ■ “That hurts daddy when you pull my hair; you can pull on the blanket.”			
6. Provide positive guidance when responding to challenging behavior. ■ “You are angry that you can’t climb on the table. I am keeping you safe. We can climb outside.”			
7. Limit the number of caregivers in and out of our home. ■ “Today your grandma is coming for a few hours, and then I will be home to put you to bed.”			
8. Positively manage my own difficult emotions. ■ “I feel frustrated. I need to take a few deep breaths.”			

(continued)

Every day for my child I . . .	Almost Always	Some-times	Not Yet
Attuned Relationships			
9. Provide safe and gentle affection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “I’m gently patting your back and holding you. I hear you breathing calmly.” ■ “I like holding your hand when we take a walk!” 			
10. Encourage the use of favorite comfort items. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “Do you want to bring your blanket to Aunt Maria’s today?” 			
11. Respond to verbal and nonverbal cues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “I see you turning your head away from the spoon; you are all done eating.” ■ “I hear your words; tell me more.” 			
12. Talk about feelings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “You are crying and rubbing your eyes. I think you are feeling tired.” ■ “You are angry that your friend took your toy. What should we do next?” 			
13. Support unique characteristics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “You have a lot of energy. Let’s get up and dance for a bit before we go back to our story.” ■ “I know you need a little time to say good-bye. I will stay for another few minutes.” 			
14. Acknowledge accomplishments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “You crawled all the way to your big brother; you are so strong!” ■ “You picked up your clothes and put them in the basket, way to go!” 			
15. Engage during one-on-one play. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “I like playing this game with you; it’s fun!” 			
Environment			
16. Keep our home safe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “This toy is broken so I am going to put it out of reach until I can fix it.” 			
17. Create a welcoming space to live. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “Yes, that is a photo of you and your sister when you were born.” ■ “I know you like this book before bedtime; let’s read it together.” 			
18. Keep things organized. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “This is where we keep your clothes.” 			
19. Use what is around us to help my child learn. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “Look at the mirror; that’s you smiling!” ■ “Your toothbrush is purple.” 			
20. Have activities that match interests and skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “You love crinkling the paper bag!” ■ “Here are the books from the library that you chose.” 			
21. Provide simple choices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “Do you want the red ball or the green one?” 			