

Unleash the Greatness in Your Child



**Powerful,
Character-Building,
Positive
Parenting Activities**

An "I Care" Positive Parenting Workbook



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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Introduction</i> | <i>ii</i> |
| <i>How To Use This Book</i> | <i>iii</i> |
| <i>“I Care” Positive Parenting Workbooks.</i> | <i>v</i> |
| <i>A Proven Educational Method</i> | <i>vi</i> |
| <i>“I Care” Positive Parenting Pledge</i> | <i>vii</i> |
| <i>“I Care” Positive Child’s Pledge.</i> | <i>ix</i> |

| | | |
|----------------|---|-----------|
| January | Hard Work | 1 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>1</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>5</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>10</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>11</i> |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------|
| February | Humility | 13 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>13</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>17</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>22</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>23</i> |

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----------|
| March | Accept Recognition | 25 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>25</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>29</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>34</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>35</i> |

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----------|
| April | Value Differences | 37 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>37</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>41</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>48</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>49</i> |

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------|
| May | Be Cautious | 51 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>51</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>55</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>60</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>61</i> |

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| June | Have Compassion | 63 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>63</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>67</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>72</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>73</i> |

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| July | Be Dependable | 75 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>75</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>79</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>84</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>85</i> |

| | | |
|---------------|---|-----------|
| August | Oversee the School Environment | 87 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>87</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>91</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>96</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>97</i> |

| | | |
|------------------|---|------------|
| September | Listening | 99 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>99</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>103</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>110</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>111</i> |

| | | |
|----------------|---|------------|
| October | Optimism | 113 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>113</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>117</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>122</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>123</i> |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|------------|
| November | Fairness | 125 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>125</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>129</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>134</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>135</i> |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|------------|
| December | Loyalty | 137 |
| | <i>Parenting Activities</i> | <i>137</i> |
| | <i>Enrichment Activities</i> | <i>141</i> |
| | <i>Reinforcement Activity</i> | <i>146</i> |
| | <i>Reflection Activity</i> | <i>147</i> |

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Recommended Books</i> | <i>149</i> |
| <i>Workbook Series</i> | <i>150</i> |
| <i>50 Ways Parents Can Say “I Care”</i> | <i>151</i> |
| <i>“I Care” Parental Involvement Book</i> | <i>152</i> |



Introduction

The “Unleash the Greatness in Your Child” Workbook

The “Unleash the Greatness in Your Child” Workbook will not only increase the impact that you can have on the social, emotional, and academic growth of your children, but it can help them to reach their fullest potential. Highly successful individuals share a number of traits in common. Among them are the thinking skills, attitudes, and behavior patterns that represent “character.” This book provides tools for parents like you who want to begin unleashing the potential in their children through the development of their character.

Positive Parenting

Positive parenting strengthens parent/child relationships by engaging children with the most important teachers they will ever have—their parents. Furthermore, it increases academic achievement and expectations for the future; instills self-esteem and confidence; and reduces behavior problems and school absenteeism.

Character Development

Character development doesn't just happen, it is primarily learned from role models and significant adults and should be started at an early age. A list of the twelve “Pillars of Character” upon which the “I Care” approach is based is found on pages iv and v, along with the behaviors that define them at each grade level of the “I Care” Positive Parenting Workbooks.

“I Care”

Beginning over ten years ago, “I Care” is committed to communicating with parents the importance of their involvement with their children and helping them improve their parenting skills. Today, “I Care” is used by over a million parents.

“I Care” Positive Parenting & Mentoring Curricula

“I Care” Positive Parenting & Mentoring Curricula are used in over 35,000 classrooms for Toddler and Pre-K through High School. Activities similar to the ones in this Workbook are implemented by parents throughout the school year. Administrators, teachers, and parents have all raved about the results.

Feedback

Feedback is one of the key components to the “I Care” approach. Defining parental involvement as the number of positive interactions you have with your child makes it easy. The *Reflection Activity* at the end of each month will help you keep track of your involvement. The other indicator will be the changes you see in your child. They will be stunning.



How To Use This Book

Practice, Practice, Practice

Practice is necessary for a behavior or attitude to become a habit. That's why we provide so many activities for each character trait. In fact, learning theory tells us that it generally takes 21 days of practice before a new habit is acquired. But don't stop with ours! Be creative in developing your own activities as well.

Discuss, Discuss, Discuss

Discuss—not tell, tell, tell—is the rule. If a child can talk about an idea using his own words, ask questions about it, and consider it from different points of view, he will both learn it and understand it more completely.

Parenting Activities

Carefully read through the month's activities. Designate a visible location to place the positive message and post the activities (refrigerator, message board, etc.). The activities can be done while walking or riding in the car, at the breakfast table, at bedtime, on weekends, and in other situations where you and your child are together. Take advantage of the "teachable moments" and read to and with your child daily.

Monthly Character Traits

There are twelve important character traits, one for each month of the year, spiraling from a Pillar of Character. They instill self-esteem, positive attitudes, and self-confidence. Focus on one character trait per month and complete the associated parenting, enrichment, reinforcement, positive message (monthly character trait), and reflection activities.

Parenting Pledge

The *Parenting Pledge* is an affirmation from the parent to the child that the character traits will be practiced and reinforced. Display it in a visible location. (See page vii.)

Child's Pledge

The *Child's Pledge* is an affirmation from the child to the parents. Have your child repeat it often until it is committed to memory. Display it in your child's room. (See page ix.)

Enrichment Activities

The *Enrichment Activities* will get your child excited and motivated about learning. The activities are designed to enhance your child's skills in reading, writing, constructing, designing, recognizing, visualizing, making patterns, and communicating.

Positive Messages

The monthly *Positive Message* should be displayed in a visible location to help your



child maintain focus on one character trait while you, as a parent, provide reinforcement actions.

Reinforcement Activities

These *Reinforcement Activities* will give parent and child multiple opportunities to manipulate and model the behaviors associated with each character trait during the month.

Reading Activities

The recommended books and reading activities support the child's literacy development and reinforce the monthly character traits. These books may be available at your local library or they can be purchased in a set of 12 at www.icarenow.com/parents.html. Other books that reinforce the month's concept may be used if the recommended books are unavailable.

Reflection Activity

The monthly *Reflection Activity* is designed for parents to summarize their positive actions, recognize their accomplishments, and encourage self-initiation of more positive parent/child interactions.

Successful Parenting Practices

The timeless successful parenting practices at the end of each month's activities were used as a guide to develop the "I Care" Positive Parenting Workbook. They serve as models for effective parent/child relationships.

12 Universal Pillars of Character

Goal Setting—*Learning How to Plan*

Self-Aware—*Understanding What You Think and Why*

Value Achievement—*Taking Pride in Accomplishments*

Value Others—*Being Able to See the Good in Everyone*

Self-Control—*Keeping Action and Emotion in Check*

Caring—*Respecting Others' Feelings and Giving of One's Self*

Responsible—*Following Through on Commitments*

Citizenship—*Showing Loyalty to the Rights of Others*

Life-Long Learner—*Enhancing Learning Skills*

Self-Confidence—*Trusting in Your Own Abilities*

Respect—*Showing Honor or Esteem*

Trustworthiness—*Being Honest*



"I Care" Positive Parenting Workbooks

- Built on twelve universally recognized pillars of good character with spiraling grade-level character traits to build one behavior on another
- Includes the primary behaviors that define each character trait for the repetition that enables transfer of learning
- Includes parenting/mentoring, enrichment, reinforcement, visual learning, and reflection activities
- Additional grade-level workbooks are available for the grades listed below

| Month | Pillars of Character | Pre-K | Kinder-garten | 1st Grade | 2nd Grade | 3rd Grade | 4th Grade | 5th Grade |
|-----------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| January | Goal-Setting | Dream | Dream | Imagine | Hard Work | Persevere | Persist | Set Goals |
| February | Self-Aware | Recognize Feelings | Recognize Feelings | Sensitive | Humility | Consistency | Monitor Thinking | Integrity |
| March | Value Achievement | Recognize Achievement | Recognize Achievement | Accomplishments | Accept Recognition | Dedication | Appreciation | Productive Thinking |
| April | Value Others | Unique Qualities | Unique Qualities | Make Friends | Value Differences | Hospitable | Forgiveness | Loyalty |
| May | Self-Control | Self-Control | Self-Control | Self-Discipline | Cautious | Punctual | Endurance | Control Impulses |
| June | Caring | Caring | Caring | Respect | Compassion | Gentle | Generous | Sympathetic |
| July | Responsible | Responsible | Responsible | Follow Procedures | Dependable | Prudence | Thorough | Accuracy |
| August | Citizenship | Positive Attitude Toward School | Positive Attitude Toward School | School Pride | Oversee Environment | Understand Consequences | Thriftiness | Cooperation |
| September | Life-Long Learner | Read | Read | Discover | Listen | Alertness | Creative | Find Facts |
| October | Self-Confidence | Self-Confidence | Self-Confidence | Self-Reliance | Optimism | Courage | Joyful | Problem Solving |
| November | Respect | Courteous | Courteous | Polite | Fairness | Patience | Honor | Open-Minded |
| December | Trustworthy | Honest | Honest | Sincere | Loyalty | Truthful | Reliable | Self-Knowledge |



A Proven Educational Method

“I Care” follows best strategies of the teaching and learning process described below and has been professionally developed using relevant research.

Advanced Organizers

The *Message to Parents* is provided for introducing the month’s character trait.

Three Essential Learning Conditions

These have been identified by cognitive psychologists and embedded into the workbook: reception, availability, and activation.

1. Reception—Advanced organizers focus the child’s attention on specific activities.
2. Availability—Parents can take advantage of the “teachable moments” and insert parenting activities into the home schedule at any time.
3. Activation—When parents role model the character traits and ask questions such as those provided in the preplanned activities, they are activating the child’s cognitive assimilation of the trait.

Repetition, Repetition, Repetition

Long-term memory is enhanced by the number of times a child mentally manipulates a trait. “I Care” provides varied repetitions of each character trait over an extended period of time. Learning theory tells us that it generally takes 21 days of practice before a new habit is acquired.

Use of Questioning Strategies

Most of the “I Care” Activities are written in the form of open-ended questions.

Connected to Real Life

Children are able to respond to activity questions (passive activity) utilizing their own experiences, and when activities involve doing something (active activity), children carry out the activity within a familiar environment that is part of their daily lives.

Substantive Conversation

Research shows that a child must talk about an idea or trait using his or her own words, ask questions about it, and look at it from multiple points of view for it to be assimilated to the point that the trait transfers into automatic behavior response. The “I Care” Workbook has built-in opportunities for all these kinds of conversations.



"I Care" Positive Parenting Pledge

I Pledge To Teach My Child:

The Importance of Hard Work

The Importance of Humility

How to Accept Recognition

How to Value Differences

How to Be Cautious

How to Have Compassion

How to Be Dependable

How to Oversee the School Environment

How to Listen

The Importance of Optimism

The Importance of Fairness

The Importance of Loyalty



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Tear out this page and display the Parenting Pledge on the other side in a visible location.



"I Care" Positive Child's Pledge

I Pledge To:

Do My Best to Achieve in School

Read Daily for Information or Enjoyment

Have a Positive Attitude Toward School

Listen to My Parent's Advice

Use Good Manners

Practice Common Courtesies

Limit My Television Watching

Be Responsible for My Actions

Stick With a Task Until It Is Finished

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Tear out this page and display the Child's Pledge on the other side in a visible location.

Parenting Activities

Message to Parents

Caution is taking care to avoid danger or harm. It isn't just learning rules of what to do and not to do. It is being observant and thinking smart. These are things you can teach your child.

1. COMMUNICATION

Be Cautious

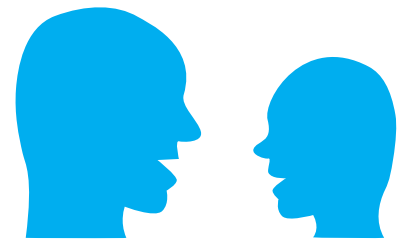
Discuss the meaning of the word *caution* and talk with your child about the need for caution. Think of examples of how you use caution at home and away from home. Emphasize that he cannot control others but can control how he reacts.



2. ROLE PLAYING

Model It

Show caution in all you do. Drive safely, make sure there are no dangers around your house, such as frayed wires or broken glass, handle tools with care, and keep all firearms under lock and key. While you are practicing safety, keep a positive attitude with your child so he will not become apprehensive or constantly concerned about danger. Fear can cause him to freeze when he needs to be cautious.





Be Cautious

Parenting Activities

3. TABLE TALK

Talk About It

Discuss the following with your child:

- Talk with your child about what he should do if he gets home and finds the door ajar or a window broken, someone has eaten something poisonous, the doorbell rings and mom is in the shower, or a stranger asks for his name and address.
- Practice the actions your child might take for the situations above. Add other scenarios your child might face.

4. WRITING

Funny Feelings

Safety experts say that instinct is one of the best protections against danger. Talk with your child about the funny feelings you get when something doesn't feel safe. Think of the things that might cause this feeling: someone being too friendly, being touched or hugged the wrong way, when someone slows down or stops near you in a vehicle, strangers who ask for help. Act as scribe while your child describes some of the funny feelings he's gotten in the past.





Be Cautious

Parenting Activities

5. PHYSICAL

Scream!

Children need to know that there are times it's okay to scream at the top of their lungs. Go back over the list of funny feelings that your child made in the writing activity. Would screaming be an appropriate response for any of them? Practice how to scream. "No. Get away!" or "This is not my mother!" To avoid causing fear in your child with an activity like this, talk about how he has to know some rules if he wants to earn more freedom, to walk in the mall with friends or down to a neighbor's house.



6. READING

Find the Magic

After reading *The Magic Fan* by Keith Baker with your child, discuss Yoshi's great discovery. Where did he find the magic?



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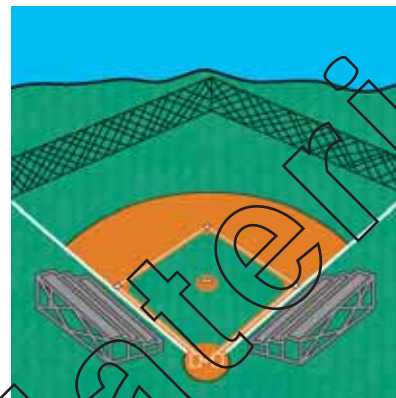
Be Cautious

Parenting Activities

7. COMMUNITY

It Takes Work

Take your child to a sports event. While you are watching, talk about the kind of self-discipline athletes must have in order to develop their skills, even when they have natural talent. Discuss how important it is for them to be cautious to prevent injuries.



Successful Parenting Practices

- With all the media attention given to violence against children, you may want to assure your child that what's in the news is not what happens all the time. Fearful children are easier to spot and victimize.



Be Cautious

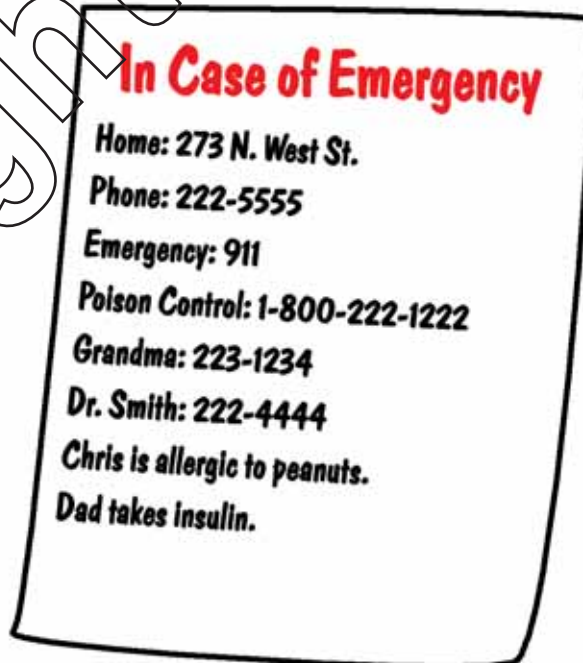
Enrichment Activity

Activity 1: Art-In Case of Emergency

Have your child create an "In Case of Emergency" poster that all the family can use. Post the following information:

- Home address and phone number
- Directions to your house
- Parents' work and cell numbers
- Emergency (911)
- Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222)
- Grandparents and neighbors along with telephone numbers
- Your child's doctor and number
- Life threatening allergies that anyone may have
- Medications that emergency workers would need to know about

Label the telephone numbers with identifying pictures so that someone in a panic will be more likely to dial the correct number. Make sure there is a copy of the poster at each phone.





Be Cautious

Enrichment Activity

Activity 2: Project—Become an Observer

Help your child become an expert observer. Begin with putting a collection of 10–12 familiar items on a table and covering them so he can't see what's there. Tell him he will have 10 seconds to memorize as many of the objects as he can. Remove the cover for 10 seconds. Once the objects are covered again, ask him to list the objects. Do this periodically, increasing the number of objects and using less familiar items. Now, take this observation game into the community. Cut out the game cards on this page, stick them in your car, and play from time to time.

Observation Challenge #3 (Give Me the Details)

Do this challenge at the mall. After you've come out of a store, ask you child:

- *Tell me everything you can remember about the person who waited on us.*
- *What did I say to the clerk?*
- *How many people were in line at the check out? Describe them.*

Observation Challenge #4 (What Did They Look Like?)

You can do this anywhere you will be seeing strangers.

- *See the man over there? Tell me what he looks like.*
- *What was the clerk wearing?*
- *How many people just passed us?*
- *What color was the woman's hair who just passed us?*

Observation Challenge #1 (In the Car)

- *Where is the street sign?*
- *What is the name of the street we're on?*
- *Count the traffic lights until I say stop.*
- *Look at the license number of the car in front of us. See how much of it you can remember in 10 seconds. (Silently count to 10, then tell your child to close his eyes and tell the number back to you.)*

Observation Challenge #2 (What Color Was It?)

- Ask your child to watch out the window as you drive. Without taking your eyes off the road, direct his attention to vehicles you pass.
- *What color was that van we just passed?*
 - *How many people were in the van?*
 - *How many doors are on that truck?*
 - *What color was the sign on that truck?*



Be Cautious

Enrichment Activity

Activity 3: Project-Sign Identification

Make sure your child is familiar with the signs below. Ask him to cut them out and place them in the needed locations at home. He can personalize the signs with his own statements of caution.



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Be Cautious

Cut out the signs on the other side of this page for the Project Activity.

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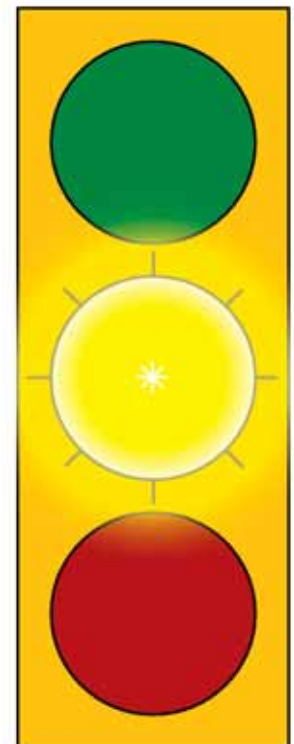
Be Cautious

Positive Message

Activity 4: Visual Learning

Discuss with your child what each of the symbols below the positive message means. Post the message in a visible location for your child to see it often during the month. At the end of the month, complete *Activity 5* on the other side of this sheet.

Caution is avoiding danger. I'm proud that you are cautious.





Be Cautious

Reinforcement Activity

Activity 5: I Am Cautious When I . . .

Record examples of when your child has been cautious and post in a visible location.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

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Be Cautious

Reflection Activity

Activity 6: Reflection Log

Summarize your child's positive interactions during the month and reward yourself for a job well done.

Child's Name _____ **Date** _____

Name of Parent(s) _____

Record the number for each of the following questions in the box on the right.

A. How many of the workbook activities did you do with your child?

B. How many positive recognitions did your child receive from teacher(s)?

C. How many positive recognitions did your child receive from family members, friends, etc.?

D. How many positive recognitions did your child receive from you, the parent(s)?

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Be Cautious

D. Record five self-initiated positive activities you did with your child that were not in this month's workbook activities.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

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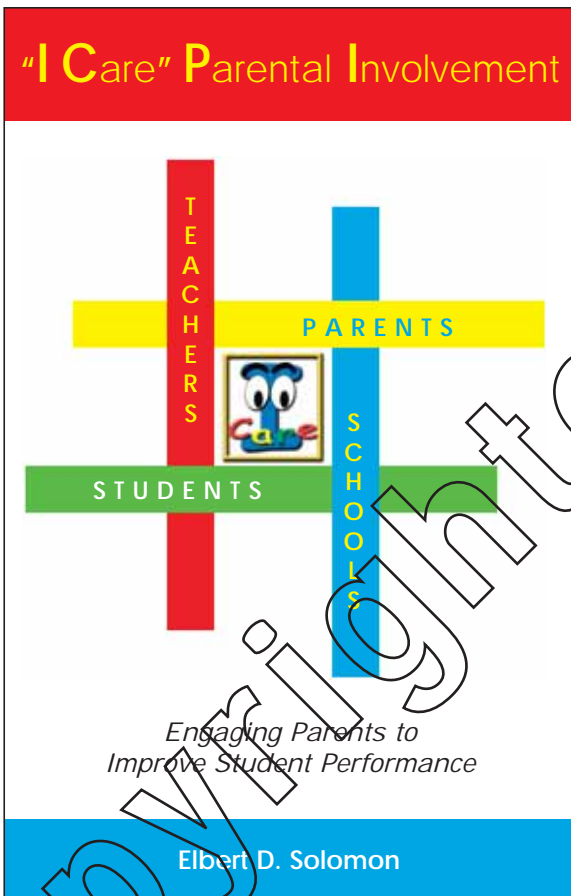
50 Ways Parents Can Say "I Care"

1. Post & Discuss Positive Messages
2. Attend Teacher/Parent Conferences
3. Take Family Portraits
4. Post Affirmation Pledges
5. Eat Meals Together
6. Post Daily Schedule
7. Assign Chores
8. Make Scrapbooks Together
9. Cook Meals Together
10. Award Certificates
11. Watch Movies Together
12. Visit Theme Parks
13. Volunteer at School
14. Read Books to Each Other
15. Attend Family Events
16. Give Parties for Special Occasions
17. Schedule Board Game Nights
18. Visit the Zoo
19. Help with a Class Project
20. Monitor TV Programs
21. Attend Parenting Workshops
22. Send Get Well Cards to Friends & Family
23. Lunch with Mom
24. Lunch with Dad
25. Encourage Hobbies
26. Attend Sport Events
27. Attend Local Theatre
28. Provide Enrichment Activities
29. Schedule Ice Cream Socials
30. Visit the Library
31. Go Shopping Together
32. Attend Friends' Events
33. Help with Homework
34. Post a Child Affirmation Pledge
35. Enroll Child in Book Club
36. Go Fishing Together
37. Go Skating Together
38. Encourage Creativity
39. Discuss Child's Day
40. Praise Good Efforts
41. Say *I Love You* Often
42. Write Notes to Recognize Achievement
43. Document Positive Activities
44. Talk About Positive Activities
45. Role Model Desired Behaviors
46. Support Extracurricular Activities
47. Schedule Family Nights
48. Attend Community Events
49. Help with School Projects
50. Set Limits



"I Care" Parental Involvement Book

"I Care" Parental Involvement—Engaging Parents to Improve Student Performance, by Elbert D. Solomon, is full of research-based, field-tested implementation practices and measurement tools and introduces an innovative curricular approach to parental involvement that will delight parents, teachers, and students. More importantly, it will improve student performance, help parents to initiate more positive activities with their children at home, and enable educators to get beyond the difficulties of involving parents. Available in English and Spanish.



| | |
|---|---------|
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| S & H @ \$5.00 or 10% (whichever is greater) | \$5.00 |

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