

Unleash the Greatness in Your Child



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

An “I Care” Positive Parenting Workbook



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Introduction

The “Unleash the Greatness in Your Child” Workbook

It’s during the preschool years that children begin to develop foundation skills upon which later learning will be built. By teaching and practicing these skills with your child, you are laying the groundwork for success. The activities in this *Unleash the Greatness in Your Child* Workbook are built around many of the foundational concepts and skills your child will need. 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



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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 & Watching 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 and videos that reinforce the month’s concept may be used if the recommended ones 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	Kindergarten	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade
January	Goal-Setting	Dream	Dream	Imagine	Hard Work	Persevere	Persist	Set Goals	Plan
February	Self-Aware	Recognize Feelings	Recognize Feelings	Sensitive	Humility	Consistency	Monitor Thinking	Integrity	Set Personal Standards
March	Value Achievement	Recognize Achievement	Recognize Achievement	Accomplishments	Accept Recognition	Dedication	Appreciation	Productive Thinking	Push Limits of Abilities
April	Value Others	Unique Qualities	Unique Qualities	Make Friends	Value Differences	Hospitable	Forgiveness	Loyalty	Tolerance
May	Self-Control	Self-Control	Self-Control	Self-Discipline	Cautious	Punctual	Endurance	Control Impulses	Respond to Feedback
June	Caring	Caring	Caring	Respect	Compassion	Gentle	Generous	Sympathetic	Dependability
July	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible	Follow Procedures	Dependable	Prudence	Thorough	Accuracy	Willing to Accept Blame
August	Citizenship	Positive Attitude Toward School	Positive Attitude Toward School	School Pride	Oversee Environment	Understand Consequences	Thriftiness	Cooperation	Stands for Right
September	Life-Long Learner	Read	Read	Discover	Listen	Alertness	Creative	Find Facts	Express Feelings
October	Self-Confidence	Self-Confidence	Self-Confidence	Self-Reliance	Optimism	Courage	Joyful	Problem Solving	Right Choices
November	Respect	Courteous	Courteous	Polite	Fairness	Patience	Honor	Open-Minded	Positive Attitude
December	Trustworthy	Honest	Honest	Sincere	Loyalty	Truthful	Reliable	Self-Knowledge	Virtuous



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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 to Dream

Teach My Child to Understand and Recognize Feelings

Teach My Child to Recognize Achievement

Help My Child to Be Aware of Unique Qualities

Teach My Child Self-Control

Teach My Child to Be Caring

Encourage My Child to Be Responsible

Help My Child Develop a Positive Attitude Toward School

Encourage My Child to Read

Teach My Child Self-Confidence

Teach My Child to Be Courteous

Teach My Child to Be Honest



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

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“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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Parenting Activities

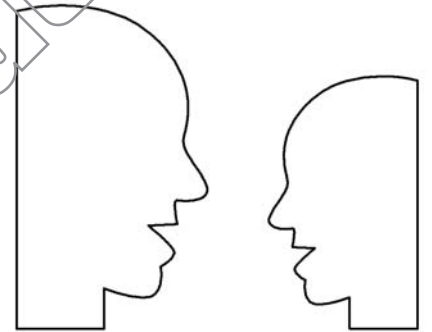
Message to Parents

Being considerate of others will take your child further in life than any college degree. Teach your child what it means to care: being concerned about others, doing things for others even when we don't want to or before we're asked to, etc. Teaching behaviors that say "I Care" is the place to start.

1. COMMUNICATION

I Know Who That Is

Help your child recognize different members of your family. Look at family pictures together and share a few family stories. Ask her to identify people by name, even if she doesn't yet understand how everyone is related.



2. ROLE PLAYING

Model It

Model caring behaviors with family members in your home. Examples could be greeting each other, helping each other, saying kind things, smiling a lot, etc.





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Caring

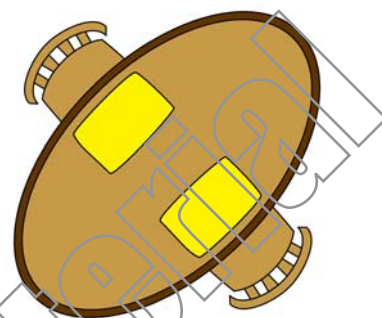
Parenting Activities

3. TABLE TALK

Talk About It

Discuss the following with your child:

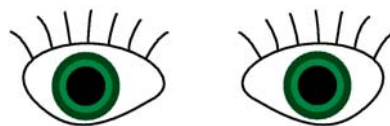
- (Grandmother) is special because (she is always saying nice things). What can we do to show how much we love her?
- Let's play "What If . . ." What if someone were hit by a ball while playing and started to cry? How could you help him?



4. WATCHING

Thinking and Learning

As a family, watch *Franklin and the Green Knight*. Talk about what Franklin thinks about sharing with others and having a new baby in the family. What mistakes did Franklin make? What did he learn?



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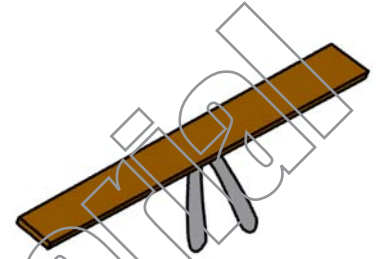
Caring

Parenting Activities

5. PHYSICAL

Pretend

Have fun with your child talking about how parents have to take good care of their children and teach them how to live in the world. Act this out by pretending to be a mama or papa bear that is teaching it's cub how to get honey, catch a fish, climb a tree, sharpen claws, or any other activities common to bears. No words are allowed, only demonstrations, nudges, and maybe a growl or two. The object is to have fun and emphasize that parents show that they care in a lot of different ways.



6. READING

Share Fond Memories

Make some hot chocolate and sit down with your child to sip it and read the book *Lucky Pennies and Hot Chocolate* by Carol Diggory Shields. Talk about some of the fond memories you have of your grandparents and your child's grandparents, or of a grandparent figure.





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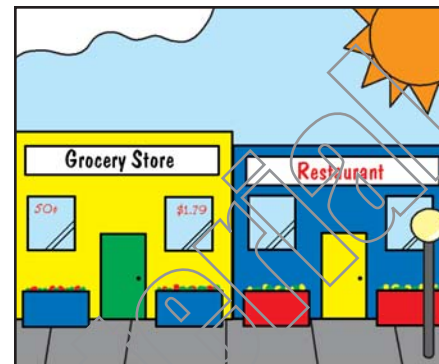
Caring

Parenting Activities

7. COMMUNITY

Take Care

Let your child practice what it is like to take care of someone else. The next time you go to the store, have her select a stuffed animal to take, wrapped in a towel like a baby. Have her be the “big sister” whose job it is to take care of the baby, making sure he is held properly the whole time you are in the store. Keep an eye out to make sure the “baby” stays upright, wrapped up, and safe.



Successful Parenting Practices

- You can help preschoolers learn caring by helping them see how caring behavior makes other people feel.
- The more ways your child explores the idea of caring, the more she will understand it.

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Caring

Enrichment Activity

Activity 1: Art-I Promise

Talk about what the word *promise* means. Help your child create a "Promise Poster," pledging to act kindly toward others. Using finger paints, either homemade or from a craft store, help your child write the words "I promise to be kind." Then, dip her hand in the paint and make a handprint. Let the poster dry, then hang it where your child can see it as a reminder.

Homemade Finger Paint

1/2 cup of cornstarch
1 package of unflavored gelatin
food coloring
water

In a bowl, mix $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cold water with the cornstarch. Soak the gelatin in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cold water, set aside. In a saucepan, bring 2 cups of water to a boil and add the cornstarch mixture to it slowly. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture comes to a boil and clears up. Remove from heat and add gelatin. Cool and divide into small jars or bowls. Add the food coloring and blend.





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Caring

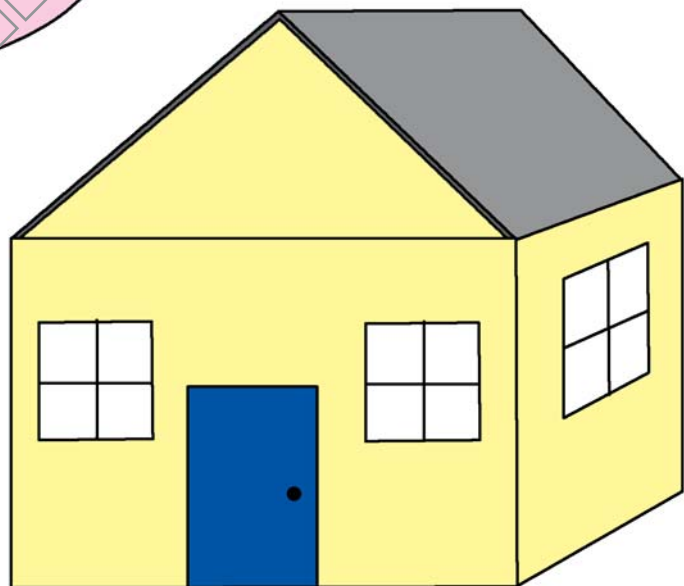
Enrichment Activity

Activity 2: Project—"I Care"

Help your child learn to care for family members and friends. Celebrate special events such as anniversaries, weddings, graduations, birthdays, new jobs, new neighbors, a new house, a new car, the birth of a child, etc.



Special Occasions



New House

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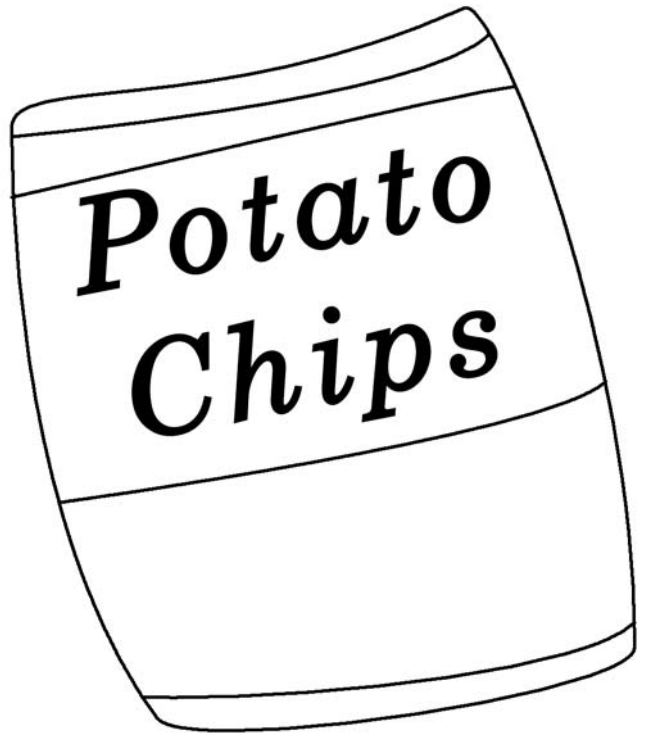
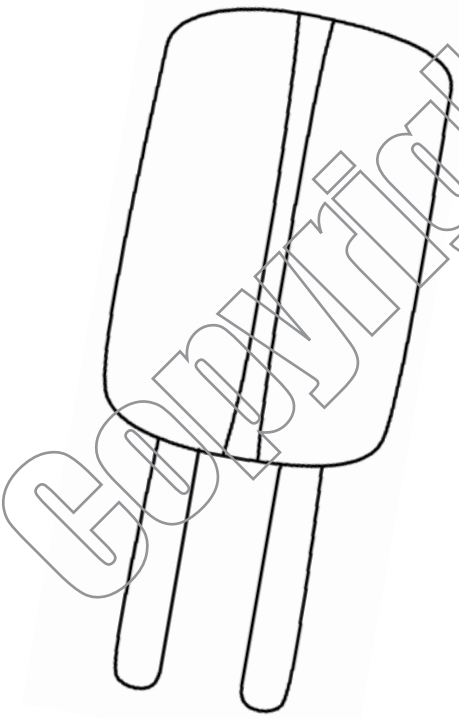
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Positive Message

Activity 3: Visual Learning

Discuss the importance of sharing with your child and ask her to color the items below the positive message that she can share with her friends. 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 4* on the other side of this sheet.

I like sharing.





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Caring

Reinforcement Activity

Activity 4: Nice Things I Do for Others . . .

Record examples of nice things your child does for others below and post in a visible location.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

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Reflection Activity

Activity 5: Reflection Log

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

Child's Name _____ Date _____

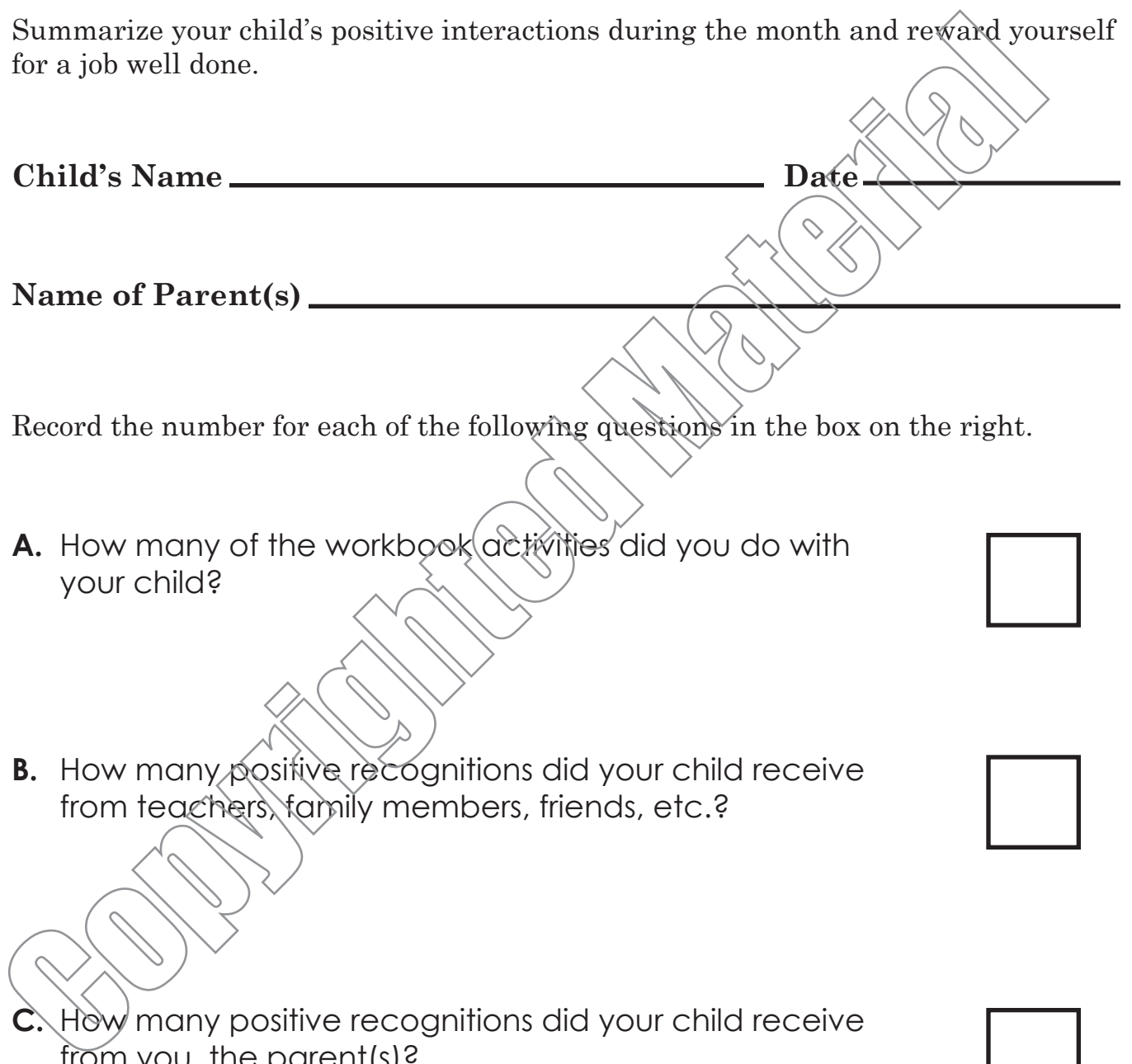
Name of Parent(s) _____

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 teachers, family members, friends, etc.?

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





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Caring

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

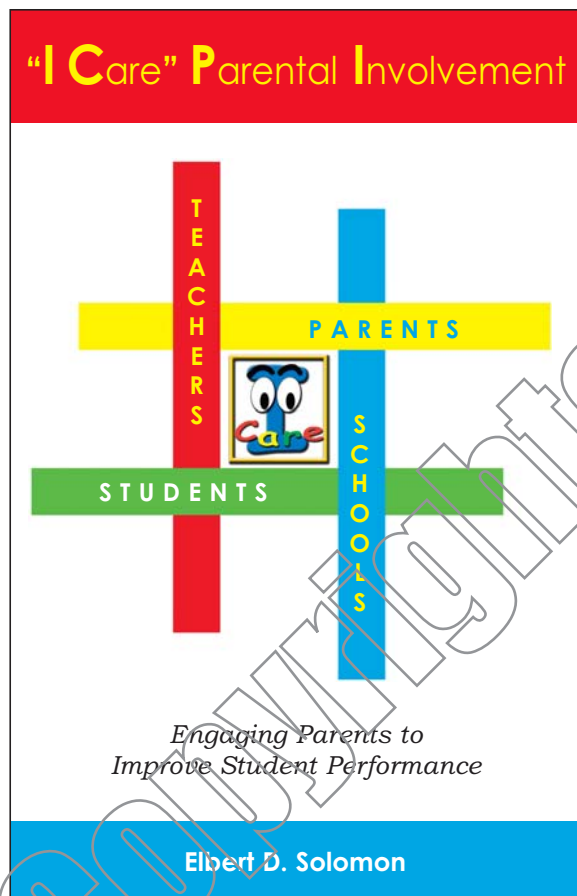


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"I Care" Parental Involvement Book

"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.



\$14.95
 Tax @ 7% \$1.05
 S & H @ \$5.00 or 10%
 (whichever is greater) \$5.00

Total: \$21.00