

# Individual Matters

Discover.  
Act.  
Grow.

Newsletter — March 2024 Issue

## The Power of Words

*What we say — and how we say it — greatly influences outcomes, relationships, and our own mental wellness.*

As teachers and parents, we can harness this power for our students by being intentional and mindful about our chosen words. Being intentional with what we say and how we say it can promote confidence, happiness, and connection, which are key ingredients to learning and growing as human beings.

### 1. Script

Complement your child or student on doing what you want them to do even before they do it.

### 2. Notice

Catch them getting it right and tell them about it! For example, as you head out to recess, tell a student. “I really loved that you asked that question today in class.” “Thanks for speaking up in class today! I really like when you do that!”

### 3. Stack the Deck

Praise at a ratio of 10:1. Whether big or small, praise is powerful! Children crave positive affection and a sense of being loved. Praise is a powerful way to communicate your value and appreciate them.

### 4. Rewrite the Story

Change the narrative and the words to reflect what you want. When a student says, “Wait, what did you ask me to do?” Avoid saying, “Why weren’t you paying attention?” Instead, say, “I like that you are checking back in.” or “Way to catch that you zoned out! I like that you are taking ownership of that!” or “Thanks for speaking up...there may have been other students who needed it repeated, too.” (Of course, such statements may need to be said privately.)

## **5. Speak the Alternative**

Tell them what you want, not what you don’t want. Replace “Stop running” with “Walk next to me.” Replace “Stop talking” with “I am announcing your assignment, please listen.”

Giving a student what to do instead of what not to do increases compliance significantly. It also changes your own chemical and emotional state. For example, right now, say “NO!” aloud. Notice how you feel. Now say “Yes!” aloud. Notice how you feel. Your words not only impact others..., but your words affect your own mental state on the neurochemical level!

Give these a try! Pick one or two strategies to implement intentionally and consistently for one week. Hopefully, you will experience the magical power of words for nurturing your student’s mind and yours as well!

**Words are also powerful when asking questions.** For more, check out our podcast: [“Getting More Out of After School Conversations.”](#)

GETTING MORE  
OUT OF  
AFTER-SCHOOL  
CONVERSATIONS

Individual  
Matters

---

## **The 2024 Learning About Learning Symposium was a success!**

Thank you to all the wonderful parents who attended last Saturday's workshop about Executive Function!

We had a fun time experiencing the skills (and struggles) of EF, learning new strategies and mindsets for supporting our kiddos at home and school, and sharing stories, laughs, and even a few tears.

Keep your eyes peeled for more workshops later in the year!



---

As we move through 2024, we encourage you to remember the power of your words - and to strive for love and positivity in all you think, say, and do. Wishing you a happy and healthy March!



**Dr. Katrina Katen**  
Clinical Psychologist



**Andrew Katen**  
Executive Director



Copyright (C) 2024 Individual Matters

Individual Matters® is a registered trademark of Individual Matters, LLC.

2530 E. Foresight Circle  
Grand Junction, CO 81505

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe

