

# What Every Parent Needs to Know About Praise

*Written by Laura Markham for Aha! Parenting.*

Most parents know that negative judgments undermine children, and at least try to bite their tongue instead of saying “*What?! Are you an idiot?!*” But positive judgments like “*What a smart boy!*” also sabotage children. Kids who are told they’re smart don’t want to disprove it, so they avoid situations in which they may not appear so smart, such as learning new things they might have to work at. They often simply give up at a task they could master with a little effort.

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