

# DESCRIBING BEHAVIOR EXERCISE

Children are concrete thinkers. Meaning they don't grasp the full meaning of words that are abstract or vague. A "lousy" attitude does not give a child information to know what makes them lousy. Instead, you should give a clear description of the behavior. **Behavior is what people do or say; anything a person does that can be seen, heard, or measured. Behavior is not personal.** A clear message might be, "When I asked you to do something you mumbled, 'Get off my back,' and walked away from me."

## DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF BEHAVIORS

- My daughter talks on the phone for one hour at a time.
- When I ask my son to do something, he rolls his eyes and walks away.
- When my kids come home from school, they put their books away and ask if there's anything that needs to be done around the house.
- When I tell my daughter her jeans are too tight, she whines and screams, "Why are you such a prude?"

List six of your child's typical behaviors—three positive and three negative—focusing on what they said and did.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_