



## Develop Pragmatic Skills by Teaching Your Children Independence, Self-Confidence, and Appreciation of Objects!

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During the time children are developing language skills, they are developing in other important areas as well. Strong development in these areas helps strengthen speech and language skills in the future. As a child's speech therapist, parent, or teacher, make it your responsibility to help these children grow strong in all areas. By teaching children independence, self-respect, and appreciation for objects, you help build strong social and pragmatic skills that will last a lifetime.

### ► Use Personal "Treasures" to Develop a Child's Appreciation for Objects

Everyone needs a place to keep things that have a special or personal meaning. Start a "treasure" box with your child. Talk with your children about items they consider special and encourage them to keep these things apart from everyday play things. Explain that they wouldn't play with their "treasures" because they would not want to hurt or lose them. If your children make a special place to keep their treasures, they will always know where they are when they want to look at them.

Complete a great activity with your children by making a "treasure" box together. Choose the size of the box that works best to keep their treasures safe. Help your children decorate their treasure boxes to make them very special and unique. Fill this box with anything your children consider a "treasure." If your children have trouble deciding which objects to put in their boxes, suggest pretty pictures, pretty rocks, seashells, cards from family members, or anything else they might consider special. To begin, let your children pick three or four things to put in the box or start a box when your children find something they consider special. As they find new "treasures," add them to the box.

This activity helps children learn to appreciate things not because they cost a lot, but because they have a special meaning. Also, children learn to make independent choices for their "treasures" which helps build individuality. This makes for a great group of things to talk about in the future years and instills a sense of value within a child.

## ► **Making Crafts Builds Self-Confidence**

Working on crafts or projects with your children provides a great opportunity to spend quality time with them and helps build their self-confidence at the same time. Spend time coloring, cutting, pasting, or doing other activities with your children. While completing your project, let them make choices to share ownership. During these types of projects, try hard to let your children share in the responsibility for making the work or activity a



“masterpiece.” Foster creativity by encouraging them to use their imaginations by making things “out of the ordinary.” Sometimes it is okay if they want a purple sun! Not only will they feel a great sense of accomplishment, they will enjoy having your attention focused on them.

Making crafts, coloring, or doing other projects also teaches your children about giving. Help them create something for someone special in their lives. Encourage them to pick out the items they need to make a special project for that person. Your children will learn about making someone else happy and build their own confidence at the same time.

## ► **With a little help, your children will learn values that will last a lifetime!**



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