Try these tips to increase positive interactions in the lives of all young children—and watch their behavior improve!

**Teacher-child interactions**

- **Try this with kids...**
  - Engage in self-reflection
    - Ask yourself questions
      - (A self-reflection tool like this one can help!)*
  - Use “I” messages
    - *“When you dump food on the floor, I have to stop what I’m doing and clean up the mess. It makes me feel frustrated.”*
  - Start positive, organic conversations
    - Ask kids about their interests
      - Let them lead the discussion
    - Communicate genuine interest in their thoughts & feelings
  - Listen more than you talk
    - Take time to hear what the child is saying
    - Don’t jump in with advice right away
    - Repeat the message back in different words
    - Encourage child to think about the problem and identify a solution

**Teacher-parent interactions**

- **Try this with parents...**
  - Wonder out loud with them
    - Use gently probing questions to unearth parent insights
    - “I wonder what could be causing stress for Ben?”
  - Practice active listening
    - Don’t take a parent’s frustration or criticism personally. Try to hear the worries behind the criticism and focus on how to help.
  - Reassure them with info on developmental norms
    - Brush up on developmental milestones and share your knowledge with parents to ease their anxieties and help them adjust expectations.
  - Respect their perspective
    - Parents are experts on their kids!
    - Recognize the value of any ideas or solutions they offer.

**Child-parent interactions**

- **Share these tips with parents...**
  - Cultivate optimism
    - Reframe negative thoughts as positive thoughts.
      - (This book can help!)
  - Establish a clear family vision and expectations
    - Family Rules
      - Be kind
      - Be respectful
      - Clean up after yourself
      - Listen to your parents
  - Organize the home to minimize frustrations
    - Is there enough storage for everyday items?
    - Does furniture placement allow for easy child supervision?
    - Does each family member have enough personal space?
    - Have safety issues been addressed?
    - Are items needed for activities easily accessible?
  - Use reinforcements
    - Reinforce positive behaviors with small incentives or visual aids.

*You can find the self-reflection tool in Addressing Challenging Behaviors in Early Childhood Settings

The information in this infographic is adapted from the following early childhood resources:

- Addressing Challenging Behaviors in Early Childhood Settings, by Dawn M. Denno, Victoria Carr, & Susan Hart Bell
- Little Kids, Big Worries, by Alice Sterling Honig
- Using Skilled Dialogue to Transform Challenging Interactions, by Isaura Barrera & Lucinda Kramer
- Optimistic Parenting, by V. Mark Durand
- Parenting with Positive Behavior Support, by Meme Hieneman, Karen Childs, & Jane Sergay