



How to Create an Affirmation Chart with your Child

An activity to help your child think and
speak more positively

by

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Introduction

Your child is on the daily Zoom call with her math teacher. The teacher is deep in the algebra weeds explaining how to solve linear equations with two variables and two equations. You hear her muttering, "I'm so stupid. I'll never understand algebra. Everyone else is so good at this, but me." This isn't the first time you've heard this type of comment and you are a little worried about how often you are hearing her talk like this. When the call is over you have a heart-to-heart talk about what you overheard. You encourage her and tell her that what she said is not true. You do your best to convince her to keep trying, keep an open mind, and ask for help. You warmly remind her that it is only the beginning of the semester and with time she will understand.

What if you could help her to monitor her own self-talk? To learn to think and speak differently to herself about herself?

This guide will help you to create an affirmations chart that will help her to find new ways to speak about who she is and what she is capable of doing!

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What are affirmations?

In their simplest form, affirmations are positive statements that, when said repeatedly, create a change in how your child views himself. By saying the positive affirmations to himself, your child will disrupt the circuit of negative words. Over time, the goal is for the positive affirmation to win out over the negative self-talk as your child's thinking becomes re-wired. Using affirmations does not deny the current reality ("Algebra sucks and it is really hard!"), rather it will give your child another lens through which to view himself. He will respond better to the challenges of life and have more favorable feelings about himself.



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What you need:

- Construction paper/cardstock
 - Stickers
 - Glitter
 - Glue/glue stick
 - Markers/crayons/colored pencils
- You may want to create a document in Word or a graphic in a design app like Canva (this may be an option for older kids/teens)



Step One

Planning

Talk with your child about her positive qualities. Jot them down. Next, talk about the qualities your child would like to develop. With the algebra example I gave above you might craft an affirmation that says: "I can understand algebra by asking for help and working hard." or "I have the ability to learn anything, especially algebra." If your child is mainly frustrated because she feels it takes quite a long time to master the concepts in algebra, she might write: "It is okay for me to learn something at my own pace." If your child struggles with waiting her turn, an affirmation might be: "I can wait patiently." Write down a combination of the top 10 positive qualities and qualities to be developed.



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Step Two

Designing the chart

Draw a rectangle on your construction paper/cardstock about an inch in from the outer edge of the paper.

Inside the rectangle have the child write out the ten statements you came up with together. In the border around the affirmations, have your child decorate the chart with the stickers, glitter, original art, etc. Let your child personalize this chart in a way that is important to her.

In a graphic design app like Canva, a teen could use one of the templates, like the poster template, to draft their list of affirmative statements. They can use varying colors for the text, add pictures or upload their own images as well as the design elements in the app to create something which is truly their own. This same sort of poster can be designed using Word.



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Step Three

Explain the purpose of the affirmations chart and how to use it

Talk to your child about the importance of the words we use to speak to ourselves. These words have power! We can use these words to build ourselves up or to tear ourselves down. Tell him that he will be learning to use words that will help him to believe positively about who he is and what he can do in the world.

Hang the chart in a place where you will see and admire it every day (in the bathroom, on the refrigerator, on the wall by the bed).

Once daily read through the affirmations on the chart. This is something that can happen naturally as you are in the bathroom washing faces in the morning, grabbing an afternoon snack from the fridge or right before you turn off the light at night (depending on where you have hung your chart).

Speak these positive words over your child by telling him that you see these qualities beginning to form in him. When you hear your child naturally using more positive self-talk, be sure to call it to his attention and give him a high five!

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For Therapists

The planning activity listed above could take place during a session with you. The child can then take home the list you have created together to finish making the actual chart. Once the chart is completed, the child can bring their work back to a session with you. You might review the list and ask the child what each statement brings up for her or in which situations she is most likely to respond negatively instead of using one of the affirmations. Ask her if she notices if she is able to catch her words before saying something negative. Is she able to replace it with one of her more positive affirmations? Have the child read her affirmations to you.

An affirmations chart is a powerful tool for helping kids to become aware of the power of their words. They also learn that they have the ability to change the shape of their reality by choosing to express themselves in a more self-accepting way.



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