

B

Section

LIFE

Praise kids early, often

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK—What do you say when your kindergarten ties his shoe all by himself?

Or your toddler makes it to the potty on time?

Or even when your baby takes her first steps?

"Good job!"

It's become the catch-all compliment for today's generation of kids, and praise certainly is important in building children's self-esteem and confidence, which helps in building the rest of their character.

But Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer, a British parenting counselor and consultant, says that more specific praise—and, especially, gender-specific praise, would be even more valuable to the youngsters.

Boys don't react as well to gushing praise because they're uncomfortable with anything that's too emotional, so they might tune out words of support, Hartley-Brewer says, whereas girls just soak up glowing superlatives.

Still, don't lay it on too thick, Hartley-Brewer advises. "Girls like to please. The danger for them is they take everything personally. If parents look at their homework over their shoulder and say, 'Good job, that's great,' the girls hear, 'Mom thinks I'm great.' It's a temporary fix of pleasure but could undermine self-esteem because they're relying too much on others."

Hartley-Brewer also recommends de-emphasizing perfection, noting that might lead girls to be overachievers—which can cause other stresses in their lives.

Since boys are more sensitive to the power struggle between parents and children and they might view praise as a parents' tool of manipulation, compliments should be very matter of fact so boys can make the link between their own action and their parents' reaction, she adds.

Hartley-Brewer, a social and education policy adviser to the British prime minister in the 1970s and '80s, wrote a pair of new books, "Praising Girls Well: 100 Tips for Parents and Teachers" and "Praising Boys Well: 100 Tips for Parents and Teachers," both published by DeCapo/Lifelong. She also co-authored, wrote and developed "The Effective Parenting Program," the first U.K. school-based program.

"The word I really love is 'impress' or 'impressive,'" says Hartley-Brewer in a telephone interview from her home in England. "It focuses on what they've done. You're not judging the child, you're judging their work. Always keep it simple. 'Well said' goes far. To make it meaningful, be specific."

She suggests replacing "good" with "clever," "thoughtful," "helpful" or "creative."

Parents looking at their children's paintings should take note of the colors and style, not only complimenting them but also asking questions. An insightful conversation could emerge from a parent asking, "What were you thinking about while you were painting this?" This helps turn the focus back to the children and what they've accomplished instead of parents' approval, Hartley-Brewer explains.

Don't be too wordy, though. The more words you use, the more chance you leave for misinterpretation, Hartley-

Please see PRAISE/3B



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION/MONTY RAMSEUR

Too sexy for TV

Explicit videos damage teens, UNC study finds

By Cheris F. Hodges

cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

If there was any doubt that too many sexually-explicit videos are damaging to teens, a new study from UNC-Chapel Hill removes it.

According to the study, teenagers between the ages of 12-14 who use media with high sexual content are twice as likely to have sex by the time they are 16 than those who use less.

"Unfortunately, the

media aren't the best sex educators. The media tend to leave out the crucial three C's: commitment, contraception and consequences," said Jane Brown, the principal investigator on the study and UNC journalism professor.

Findings from the study include:

- White teens who had a high sexual media diet when they were 12 to 14 were more than twice as likely as those with less

exposure to have sexual intercourse two years later. The relationship was not as strong for black teens as it was for whites.

- Both black and white teens who reported that their parents didn't want them to have sex were less likely to have engaged in sexual intercourse by the time they were 16 than those who perceived less parent disapproval.

"Teens are defaulting to

entertainment for sexual information because they aren't getting this information in other places," Brown said.

According to the National Institute on Media and the Family, an organization examining the impact of electronic media on families, children between the ages of 2 and 17 watch almost 25 hours of television per week and one in five watch more than

Please see TEENS/2B

OPINION

Former BET video host shows hypocrisy

By Cheris F. Hodges

cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

Hypocrite, thy name is AJ Calloway.

In a recent talk with students at South Carolina State University, the former co-host of BET's "106 & Park" blasted the video show he hosted for five years. The Associated Press quoted Calloway as saying "I couldn't watch my own show with my niece on my lap."

He went on to say "I felt like I was hurting you by doing what I was doing."

But Calloway did it for five years and according to friends of mine who

saw his last show, Calloway cried like a well, you know

So now all of a sudden, he has grown a conscience? Give me a break. Now I could see if all of a sudden the videos that BET showed had gotten raunchy, but that's not the case. And while he was host of the show, Calloway lauded the rappers and R&B singers when they brought their "new joints" to the screen.

His sudden concern and the effects of the smut he promoted for five years rings false. Now that he's not getting a paycheck from BET, he feels he can criticize it?

But A.J. should have asked some

of the stars that he interviewed over the past five years why they felt the need to sex it up on screen. Maybe he should have asked the programmers at BET if it was really appropriate to show a video with a woman wearing only pasties before 10 p.m.

His so-called concern now is too little too late. Especially when he told the audience, according to Allhiphop.com, "There's nothing like '106 & Park,' it's been a staple in the African American community for a long, long time. Five years strong and hopefully it will continue with whoever's in the reigns without

Please see FORMER/2B

At Jumper Classic, it's OK to horse around

By Cheris F. Hodges

cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

There'll be a lot of horse-power at the Charlotte Bobcats Arena this weekend, and you won't have to lift a hood to see it.

More than 200 horses will compete Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Charlotte Jumper Classic, the Carolinas' premier equestrian event. The three-day Grand Prix show jumping event features 10 classes of competition and more than 80 of the world's best riders vying for \$300,000 in prize money.

Horses and riders will team to navigate an obstacle course of 15-20 fences set on a twisting, turning course without dropping a rail or dismounting. Net proceeds benefit the Presbyterian Hembly Children's Hospital.

In addition to the horse show, there will be entertainment for the entire family.



PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BOBCATS

Some of the world's best equestrians will compete for more than \$300,000 at the Charlotte Jumper Classic.

The competition kicks off Friday at 6 p.m. with the E.E. Waddell High School JROTC Color Guard presenting the colors along with a performance of the national anthem by Samuel Hererra. Between classes on Friday night, Cynthia Payne, an accomplished dressage competitor will treat fans to a performance

to 1970s and '80s music atop her horse Laredo.

Saturday is Presbyterian Hospital Kids Fun Day. The afternoon session begins at 1 p.m. with members of the Buffalo Soldiers presenting the colors and gospel group Serenity performing the national anthem. Between competitions, kids can participate in stick horse races,

get their faces painted, have balloon animals made and see magic acts throughout the concourse.

After the conclusion of the afternoon session, a free horse and rider clinic will be given. A rider and groom will explain how to care for a horse, the different breeds and personalities of a horse,

Please see ITS/2B

The People's Clinic
 THE MAYA ANGELOU RESEARCH CENTER ON MINORITY HEALTH
 MEDICAL CENTER

Silent killer remains a problem

Hypertension is the most common primary diagnosis in America.

For African Americans, it is more common, more severe, develops at an earlier age and is more likely to result in serious complications! According to Health, United States, hypertension affects more than 40 percent of African-American males and 43 percent of African-American females over the age of 20. If uncontrolled, it can result in kidney failure, heart attack, heart failure or stroke.

They call it the "silent killer." Hypertension is a medical term for "high blood pressure." Blood pressure indicates how hard the heart is working to pump blood throughout the body. When blood pressure is high the heart must work extra hard to get the job done! One of the reasons hypertension is so dangerous is because it often has no physical symptoms. In other words, you can't always feel it.

- What causes hypertension? While there is a genetic predisposition to high blood pressure, other contributing factors have been identified. These include excess body weight, increased salt intake, reduced physical activity, inadequate fruits, vegetables and potassium in the diet, stress and excess alcohol. These are risk factors that can be controlled by lifestyle changes such as diet and exercise. In addition, hypertension increases with age with more than 1/2 of people aged 60 - 69 years old and 3/4 of people over age 70 affected.

- How do you know when you have hypertension?

Blood pressure is measured using an instrument called a sphygmomanometer. Most drug stores have portable machines or see your healthcare provider to measure it for you. For adults, current classifications are as follows: normal blood pressure - less than 120/80 mm Hg, pre-hypertension - 120-139 / 80-89; and hypertension - more than 140/90. If you have diabetes or kidney disease, blood pressure of less than 130/80 is recommended.

- How can it be treated?

With pre-hypertension, medication is not recommended but you should adopt lifestyle changes (such as diet and exercise) to prevent the development of hypertension. If you have hypertension, the goal of treatment is to 'prevent' heart and kidney disease. Target blood pressure of "less than 140/90" has been shown to prevent these complications. Lifestyle modifications, such as weight loss, regular physical activity, reduction in salt intake, a diet high in fruits and vegetables, and decreasing alcohol intake are important. However, drug therapy is often required and two-thirds of people will require more than one drug to control their blood pressure.

Remember... Blood pressure control is key to the prevention of heart disease, stroke and kidney failure! If you are over age 20, have your blood pressure checked at least once a year. And if you have hypertension, see a healthcare provider immediately. By Kristy F. Woods, MD

For more information about the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health, visit www.mfjunc.edu/minorityhealth, or call (336) 713-7578.

