

## ENCOURAGING OUR CHILDREN AND OURSELVES

- Begin by granting yourself the right to be wrong, to be imperfect and to make mistakes.
- Treat mistakes as opportunities to learn.
- Accept your child "as is, " rather than waiting until he or she "succeeds."
- Acknowledge participation and effort more than achievement; involvement is most important- progress will eventually follow.
- Emphasize strengths and faith in your child's ability to handle difficulties.
- Attention, attention, and love are what a child thrives on. Listening shows love.
- Express appreciation to your child for his or her help; remember to say "thank you."
- Affirm your child as a special individual. Say what you enjoy and admire about him or her.
- Be patient with your child and with yourself; you both need time and love to grow.
- Learn to ask each other for forgiveness, and also to forgive yourself for things you do and regret.
- Each day check your level of energy and optimism, or frustration and discouragement.
- Take time for yourself- to rest, to play, to be alone, to be with others.
- Be sure to ask your partner for support. If you are on your own, ask others.
- Talk to other parents.
- When you talk to professionals about your child, be sure your concerns are heard and adequately considered. When you need help, see that you get in.

*Do not expect yourself to be totally consistent in any of these things.*

*HARRY IRETON, Ph.D.*