

in their shoes

ATTENTION PLEASE! GREAT EXPECTATIONS

SCENARIO FIFTEEN – BY ANNE STONEHOUSE AM AND OSLO DAVIS.



What would you do if the only time others paid attention to you was when you misbehaved? Children need attention, and they learn from the adults around them how to get it. Sometimes they seem to decide that negative attention—

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being spoken to sternly, reprimanded, redirected—is better than being ignored. Children who receive attention when they do and say things we want to encourage will learn to behave in positive and constructive ways. One of our roles is to help children learn what to do, not just what not to do.

Children live up or down to our expectations; they believe what we tell them about themselves. Their self-concept comes largely from the messages they get from the important people in their lives. When children get messages that they are valued, that they make a positive difference in others' lives, they internalise that picture of themselves and act in ways that reflect that picture. If they are told often that they have little value, they will eventually believe it and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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