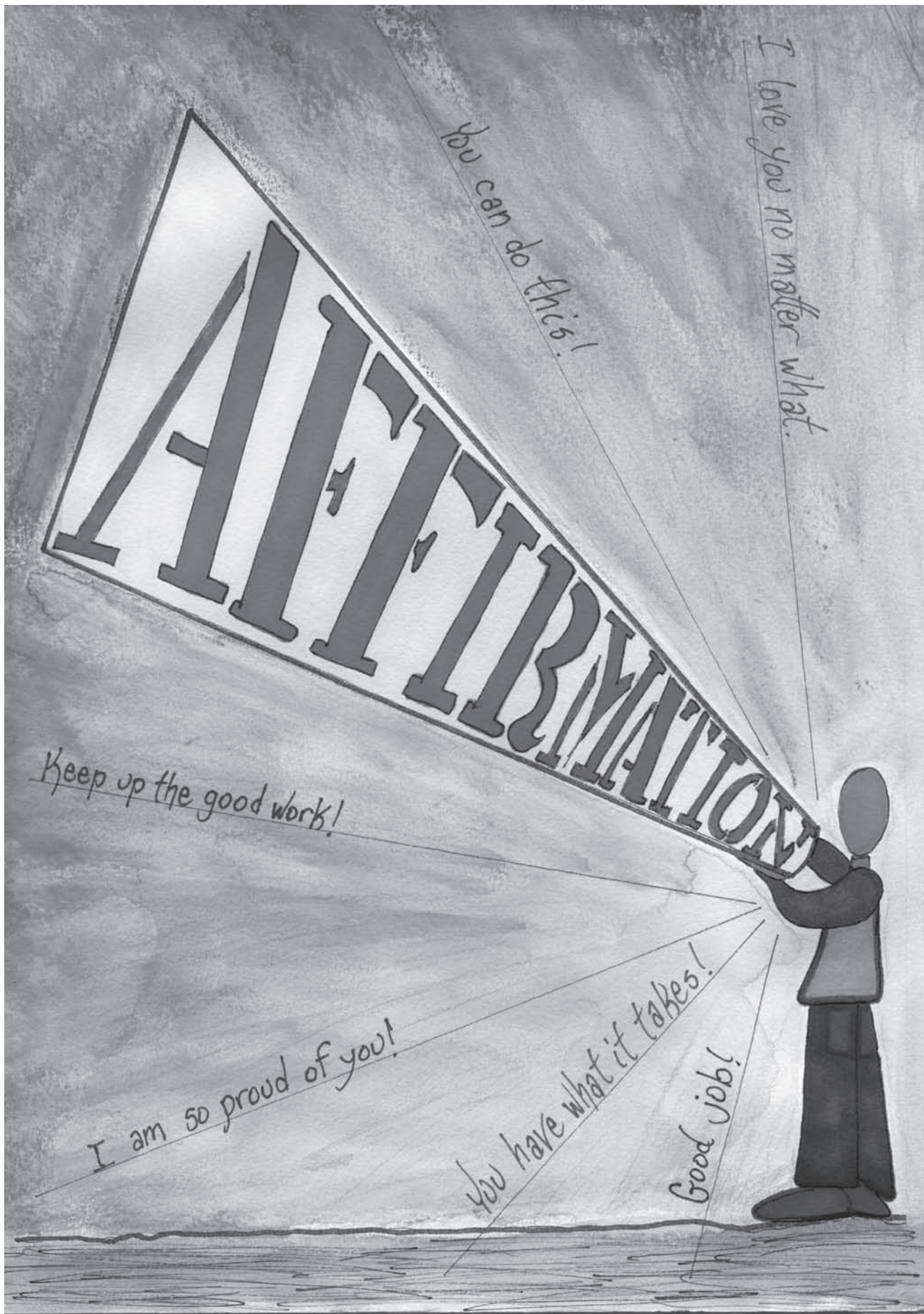


The ABCs



Affirmation

*Speaks to a basic form of communication that focuses on the positives
and the acceptance of someone for who she is.*

Show interest in and care for your child in the moment by –

Looking into her eyes

Rubbing her head when you pass by

Holding her hand and requesting she squeeze your hand as hard as she can

Affirm your child’s thoughts, feelings, and experiences by asking –

“How hard was it for you to try something for the first time?”

“What did it feel like when you _____?”

“What are you looking forward to in starting a new school year?”

Show affirmation for how your child treated you by saying –

“I enjoy seeing your smile the first thing in the morning.”

“I appreciate you being responsible by putting your belongings away without being asked.”

“I loved getting this card from you just because. It made my day.”

Applaud and affirm your child by saying –

“I am so proud of you for taking a risk by _____.”

“I appreciated seeing that you didn’t give up when something was hard to do.”

“Good job in making a good choice by _____.”

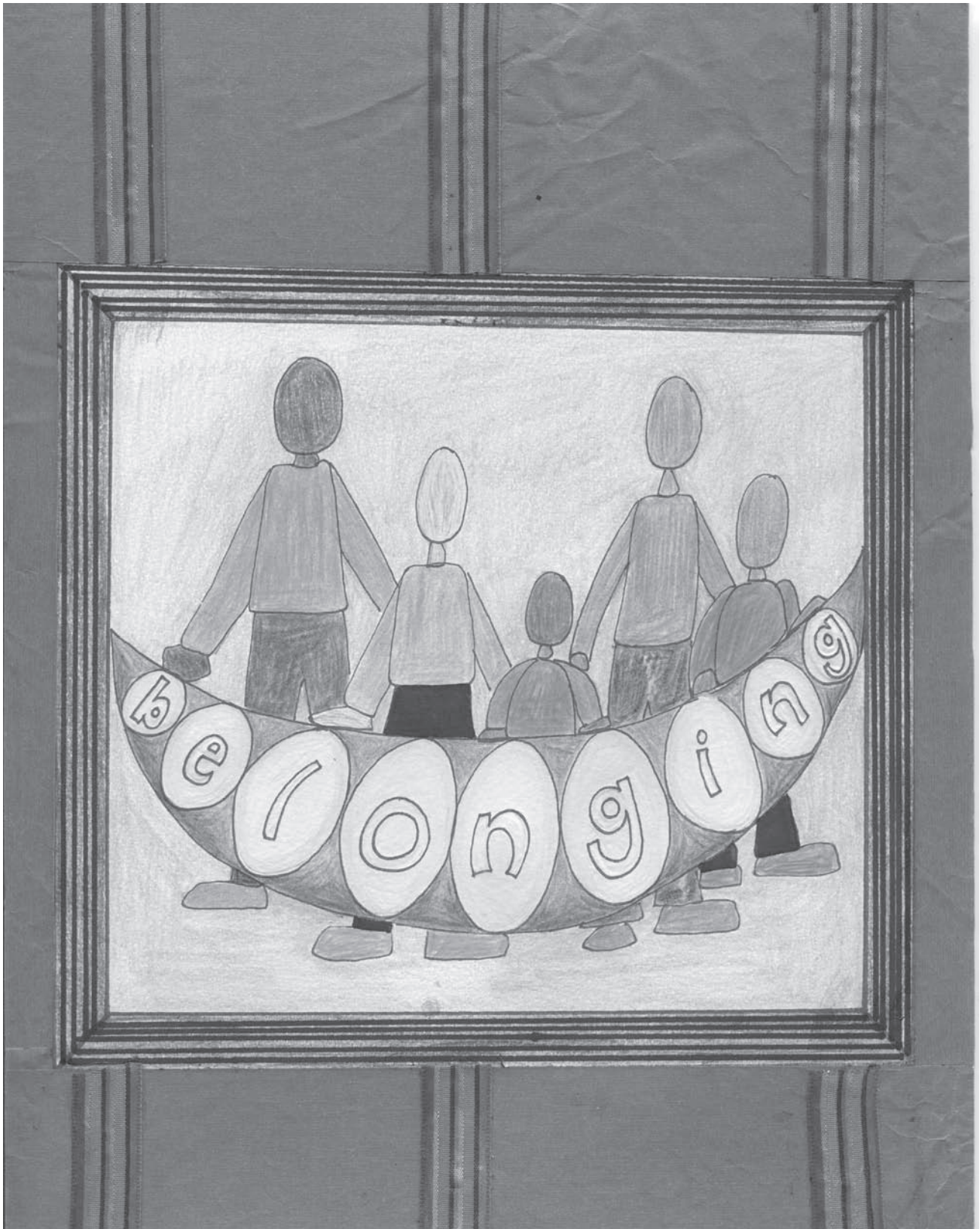
How do you show affirmation to your children?

Other A words to ponder and personalize:

accept
attend
applaud
be accountable

advocate
answer
appreciate
acknowledge

agree to disagree
apologize
aspire
adapt



Belonging

Refers to a child's basic need for attachment that imbues a sense of safety and security.

Let your child know he belongs by saying –

“I value your presence in my life.”

“I feel more whole having you as part of my life.”

“I look forward to being a part of you growing up.”

Show your child belonging by –

Having special rituals to say good-bye, good night, and hello

Having time and space to be together

Getting things that interest, engage, and comfort him

Tell your child –

“I love you to the ends of the earth and beyond.”

“I believe in you and want the best for you.”

“I hope you have a better day.”

Create a home environment that –

Welcomes your child to grow and develop through life's ages and stages

Is physically and emotionally safe (i.e., an environment that eliminates physical and verbal aggression, that allows access to activities based on your child's age and ability, that fosters a sense of respect for persons and property, and where caregivers speak and act in a manner they want their children to emulate)

Invites having a balance between work and play

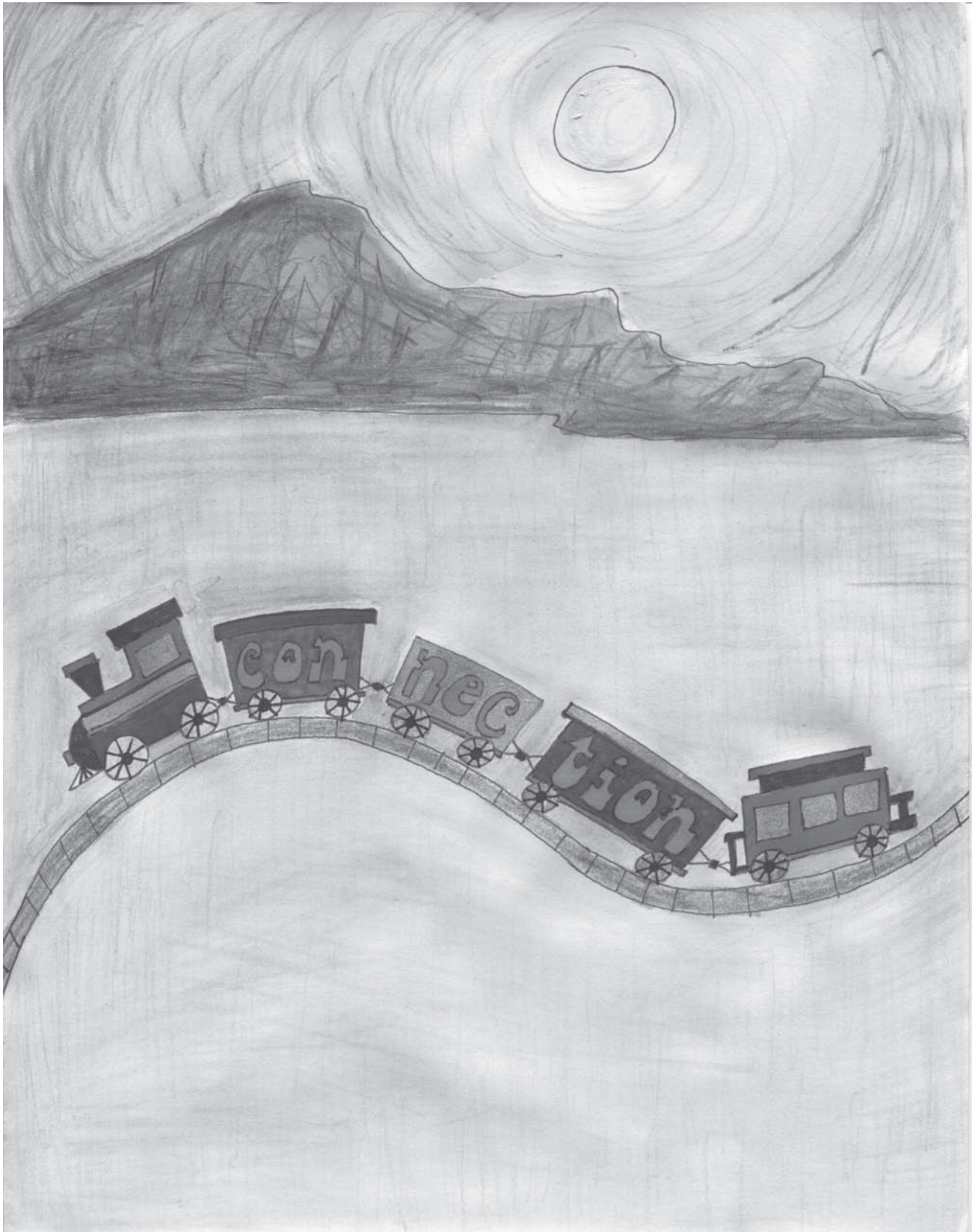
How do you show belonging to your children?

Other B words to ponder and personalize:

build up
balance
bargain
be present physically and emotionally

have beliefs
celebrate birthdays
give blessings
bloom

bolster
practice boundaries
show bravery
build bridges



Connection

*Acknowledges the child's need for her family to interact with each other
as well as with the community for work, school, and recreation.*

Find ways to be with one another by –

Playing together (e.g., games, toys, puppets, or dress up)

Talking in silly voices and making silly faces

Showing how to do something for the first time (e.g., cook, tie a shoe, ride a bike)

Tell your child –

“I am looking forward to hearing about your day.”

“I am always here for you no matter what.”

“I want to know what you want or need from me.”

Teach your child how to –

Express thoughts and feelings in the moment or in reflection

Take risks and learn new skills even when it feels scary or uncomfortable

Get along with other people whether she likes them or not through tolerance and acceptance of differences; this includes some family members

Learn about your child –

By asking, “How do you know that at your age?” without expecting a verbal answer

By showing an interest in what she is telling or showing you

By commenting about differences in her appearance or mood

How do you show a sense of connection to your children?

Other C words to ponder and personalize:

have courage
show curiosity
celebrate
compromise
cheer

cherish
chip in
cuddle
clarify
coach

collaborate
be creative
be consistent
comfort
compliment