Common Mistakes

Common Phrases	Conscious Phrases (What to say instead)
"You are angry."	"You seem angry."
"Tell me why you are angry."	"Something happened?"
"Are you okay?"	"You fell down and bumped your elbow. That must have hurt."
"Thank you for cleaning up."	"You picked up all of the toys so others can find them later. That was helpful."
"Would you please come to circle?"	"It's circle time. Come sit on the floor like this (demonstrate) or like this (demonstrate)."
"Do you want to talk about what's wrong?"	"You seem sad. Something must have happened. You're safe. You can talk to me when you are ready."
"Is something wrong? Do you feel alright?"	"Your body is hunched over and your face seems sad. Something happened?"
"Are you cleaning up? What are you supposed to be doing? I don't see you cleaning up."	Tell children what to do and give usable information.
"Stop hitting!"	"You wanted _____, so you_____. You may not _____," etc.
"Don't talk when I am talking."	"Wait until I am finished, and I will be happy to listen to you."
"Don't make me have to ____."	"I'm going to _____."
"Go over there and think about what you did wrong."	"Think about what you could do right now that would be helpful."
"You are disrupting the class, group, reading," etc.	"Is Mary's talking bothering anyone? Then tell Mary, 'Please be quiet so we could hear?'"
"What is our rule about tattling?"	"Are you telling me to be helpful or hurtful?"
"How did that make you feel?"	"Did you like it?"