



Communicating With Children

The Facts

When it comes to communicating with children, it may sometimes feel like parents are speaking a different language. However, communication skills are important to maintain a parent and child relationship. It bridges two worlds together and helps parents understand and guide their child's life. When parents and children learn positive communication skills they will be taking a step towards avoiding negative consequences of poor communication, which may include: manipulation, violence, bullying, aggressive behavior, whining, coldness or distancing. Benefits of good communication will become apparent with one's relationships, work and social development.

Communicating Effectively

As a parent you can effectively communicate with your child by:

1. Listening to and remembering what your child tells you.
2. Not interrupting your child's sentences and thoughts.
3. Taking advantage of the good times, that are available for talking with your child (i.e. while driving, eating meals, walking, shopping or playing).
4. Showing respect in conversations with your child.
5. Initiating positive reinforcement with support and encouragement.
6. Communicating the truth to your children in age-appropriate ways.



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7. Letting your child be a child.
8. Acknowledging your child's feelings and emotions.
9. Avoiding any type of teasing, which may damage your child's feelings.
10. Asking your child questions other than "yes" or "no" questions.
11. Apologizing when you make a mistake.
12. Taking time to learn something from your child.
13. Putting your child's effort at communication above other tasks, like reading or watching television.
14. Praising your child for his/her accomplishments.
15. Not jumping to conclusions about what is going on in your child's life.
16. Trying to look at things through your child's point of view.
17. Complimenting your child by telling them that you love them and are proud of them.

Four important key notes to remember about effective communication:

1. Be honest and open with your child.
2. Be willing to listen to your child.
3. Be patient and understanding with your child.
4. Always ask questions.

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