



Communicating with Your Child

Communication is the key to developing healthy, strong relationships. It takes work to develop the skills and patience required for good communication.

The goals of communication with our children are to...

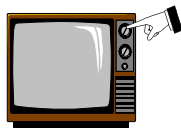
- ☞ completely understand the messages being sent by both you and your child,
- ☞ develop communication skills in your child so that he or she will be able to develop healthy relationships with others, and
- ☞ ensure that your child feels valued and respected.

How do you communicate with your child?

When talking to your child do you...

__Eliminate distractions before talking when possible (turn off TV, put down the laundry)?

__Get your child's attention?



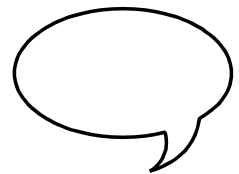
__Speak clearly and directly?

When your child is talking to you do you...

__Give your child your full attention (stop what you are doing, look at her face, get on her level)?

__Give feedback ("I didn't know that," nod your head)?

__Ask questions ("why did she do that?"; "what happened then?")?



When you are upset with your child do you...

__Explain your feelings ("I feel angry when you shout while I am on the phone.")?

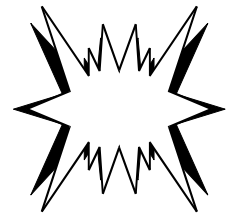
__Resist criticizing and shaming your child?

__Avoid ordering and threatening your child?

__Avoid blaming and accusing?

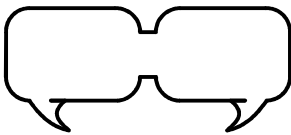
__Listen and allow your child to tell his/her side?

__Present an open and calm posture to encourage your child's honesty?



Talk and listen to your children with in the same manner as you would like to have them talk and listen to you. Try to notice the ways you communicate with your kids. Is it different from the way you talk to others?

Good communication with your children can prevent many problems and improve your relationship.



For more information contact:



The Center for Parent Involvement (FCPI) was funded by the U.S. Department of Education; Goals 2000, Educate America Act from 1994-1999. Guided by an advisory board of parents and professionals, the FCPI's goal was to tap the power of parents.

The FCPI gathered information on parent needs, coordinated the information, and created a series of resources organized by theme, including fact sheets for parents and professionals, "Beyond the Basics" resources, and resource identification lists. Many of the resources have been translated into Spanish language versions, and every effort has been made to preserve the meaning and flavor of the original English documents. This series of materials provides a wealth of current information for both parents and providers; the complete set of resources can be obtained in PDF format on the Department of Child and Family Studies Website at www.fmhi.usf.edu/cfs/dares/fcpi. The staff of the FCPI are hopeful that their work will continue to help children get ready to learn for many years to come.

The series' themes include:

- Family Empowerment
- Parent Involvement
- Parenting Support
- School Readiness
- Violence in the Lives of Children
- Transition to Kindergarten

The Center was one component of a project led by Hillsborough County Center of Excellence in collaboration with the Department of Child & Family Studies at USF's de la Parte Institute and the Florida Children's Forum. Other project partners include HIPPIY (Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters), Hillsborough County Head Start and Hillsborough County Even Start. For more information about these projects, call 813.974.4612.

Parenting Support Series, Parent Tip Sheets, #1: Communicating with your child.

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