

Communication Tips for Parents

Effective communication is very important to our relationships. We email, phone and write to clients and co-workers everyday. Effective communication is just as important at home as it is in the workplace. Here are some helpful tips for parents from the American Psychological Association.



Be available for your children

- Notice times when your kids are most likely to talk—for example, at bedtime, before dinner, in the car—and be available.
- Start the conversation; it lets your kids know you care about what's happening in their lives.
- Find time each week for a one-on-one activity with each child, and avoid scheduling other activities during that time.
- Learn about your children's interests—for example, favorite music and activities—and show interest in them.
- Initiate conversations by sharing what you have been thinking about rather than beginning a conversation with a question.



Let your kids know you're listening

- When your children are talking about concerns, stop whatever you are doing and listen.
- Express interest in what they are saying without being intrusive.
- Listen to their point of view, even if it is difficult to hear.
- Let them complete their point before you respond.
- Repeat what you heard them say to ensure that you understand them correctly.



Respond in a way your children will hear

- Soften strong reactions; kids will tune you out if you appear angry or defensive.
- Express your opinion without putting down theirs; acknowledge that it's okay to disagree.
- Resist arguing about who is right. Instead say, "I know you disagree with me, but this is what I think."



Parenting is hard work

- Listening and talking is the key to a healthy connection between you and your children. But parenting is hard work and maintaining a good connection with teens can be challenging, especially since parents are dealing with many other pressures.