



Family Communication Do's and Don'ts



Do's

- Set aside quality time each week for family members to talk. Maybe during dinner or just before bed
- Be a good role model for your children. Demonstrate respectful, non-abusive, effective ways of speaking and listening.
- Discuss values and beliefs and take responsibility for personal thoughts and actions.
- take time outs when needed to cool down.
- Pay attention to facial expressions, tone of voice and body language rather than words. They can tell you a lot.
- Become a better listener. Let your child express their whole story without interruption. Put aside your own opinion's, thoughts and conclusions until the end of their story.
- Ask questions. Clarify your understanding. Repeat back what you heard them say to ensure you understood them correctly.
- Use "I Statements" when talking.
- Practice, Practice, Practice. Communication skills take time to master.

Communication is the key to creating a loving and supportive family environment. All families will have conflict and disagreements. However, if the family members feel that they can express themselves openly and honestly the family bond can grow along with mutual respect. Being a part of a family brings special rewards such as love, friendship and a sense of belonging.

If you would like more information on this topic please contact
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Don'ts

- Don't interrupt others when they are speaking. If this is hard to do use an object (like a talking stick). The person holding the object is the one to speak until they are done.
- Don't point the finger and say something like you always or you never. This is a fast way to shut down the line of communication
- Don't have distractions like the tv or the phone. Give 100% attention to the conversation.
- Don't appear uninterested. Use eye contact, nodding and lean forward to show you are listening.
- Don't assume that others know what you are feeling. Express your thoughts and feelings.
- Don't try to "win" the conversation. When you do this nothing gets resolved.
- Don't yell, name call or make personal attacks. If you are too angry, take a time out to cool off and then come back to the conversation
- Don't think your answer is the only answer. Consider another person's point of view.