



Presented at: **Good News Church**
239 W Washington Blvd Pasadena 91103
English and Spanish classes on Thursday 6:30pm- 8:30pm

1. **Communication, Active Listening, Acknowledging Feelings**
Comunicación, Escuchando con oído activo, Reconociendo sentimientos
2. **Effective Encouragement, Family Meetings**
Eulogio y recompensas, Reuniones familiares
3. **Parental Function, Defining My Parenting Style**
Función de padres, Definiendo mi estilo de crianza
4. **Five-Step Problem Solving / Children's Court / Parent's Rights**
Cinco pasos para resolución de problemas, Corte de menores
5. **Single Parent and Multiple Parent Families**
Padres solteros y de ambos padres
6. **Domestic Violence, Self Control, Anger Management**
Violencia domestica, Autocontrol, Control de Ira
7. **Teens and Gangs**
Adolescentes y Pandillas
8. **Teaching Principles, Values / Family Rules / History of my Family**
Ensenando principios, Valores, reglas familiares y la historia de mi familia
9. **Education Guidance / Show & Tell**
Orientación educacional, Enseñar y demostrar
10. **Natural & Logical Consequences / Structure**
11. **Mild Social Disapproval, Ignoring / Point System, Contracts and Bargaining**
12. **Structure, Establishing Limits & Boundaries**
13. **Human Sexuality and Teens**
Sexualidad Humana, El desarrollo sexual en los adolescentes
14. **Family Health Nutrition and Child Safety**
Salud familiar, Nutrición, Seguridad de niños
15. **Teens, Drugs and Alcohol**
Adolescentes, Drogas, Alcohol y Tabaco
16. **Family Group Support, Skills Evaluation, Potluck**
Grupo de apoyo familiar, Habilidades de evaluación, Platillo para compartir

Daily Homework

Active Listening and acknowledging feelings
Five Step Problem Solving
Hug and Kiss your child

Lesson # 1 - Communication, Active Listening, Acknowledging feelings

Homework Assignment

Write a paragraph:

- 1) What I learned
- 2) What I tried

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Listening and Talking to Young children

In order for our children to respect us, we have to respect them. **Effective Communication** requires **Respectful Communication**. This is true for all relationships-both in adult relationships and in relationships with children.

Here is an example of **Effective Communication** with a friend.

Myles and his friend, Horacio ...

We treat our friends with respect and value their friendship so that when they have problems or make mistakes, we think about their feelings when we respond to them. Treating our children the same way helps us build a closer relationship with our children. Our children are more likely to share their problems and feelings if we listen to them without judgment.

When you're upset, you might talk to a friend about it. You want your friend to listen and understand and to accept what you are feeling. Your child wants this too.

Children communicate by talking but they also communicate through their body language. Pay attention to what your child's face and body are telling you. Be sure to pay attention to your own body language too. Your actions show your child how you are feeling. They show whether you understand and respect your child.

How Can I Be a Good Listener?

Communication has two main parts-listening and talking. We can make it easier for children to communicate with us by showing that we care enough to listen to them and to speak respectfully to them.

Parents need to do a lot of listening. When we listen well, our children feel understood. We can help our children learn how to deal with feelings and problems and how to become good listeners as well.

Children may not always remember what we say or do but they do remember how we make them feel. This is especially important for young children who are constantly learning how to communicate from those around them.

Listening starts when we respond to our baby's first cry. That cry can mean many things-hunger, tiredness, pain, discomfort, boredom and fear. Babies also use body language to show

what they are feeling. A child's smile may say, "I'm happy". Pulling away may say, "I'm angry". As babies grow, they learn which sounds and actions get a parent's attention.

A toddler learns how to point for food in the kitchen. Sometime after the child turns one, they start using words. Later the words become full sentences.

Young children have many reasons for wanting us to listen. Often what they tell us is simple and direct, "I want a cookie". Our response can also be clear and direct, "Yes, you can" or "No, you cannot". This kind of listening is easy.

Other times it is not so easy to understand what our child wants or needs. They may be trying to express how they feel. When we listen to our children, they feel that they matter and their self-esteem grows. It may be useful to set a time to talk to our children. This might be at mealtime, at bedtime or while driving.

Listen for Feelings

Reflective listening is a special skill that shows your child that you value and respect your child's feelings. Your child learns that you understand what they are saying with their words and body language. By taking time to listen, we gain insight into what is going on in a child's life

How to use reflective listening

1. **Listen.** Show your child that you are listening with your body. Stop doing other tasks. Make eye contact with your child by getting down to their level by kneeling or sitting.
2. **Hear the feeling.** Listen to your child's words. Ask yourself, "what is my child feeling"? Try to come up with a word that describes what your child is feeling.
3. **Say what you've heard.** Think of yourself as a mirror that reflects your child's feelings and repeat back what you think your child is saying to make sure that you understand what your child is saying and feeling.

To reflect the feeling, use words like, "You feel" and "because".

"It sounds as if you think the teacher was unfair".

You believe that you shouldn't have been punished because you weren't there".

If you say, "The teacher did it for a reason" or "If you were punished, you deserved it, your child may not feel safe to tell you what happened, now or in the future.

Help children find the words

Children need to learn many words for feelings so that they can talk about how they feel. Many preschoolers do not have the vocabulary to talk about their feelings. When we use reflective listening we teach our children to name their feelings.

Five feeling words that parents use too much are *good, bad, happy, sad and mad*. These words don't always tell the whole story.

With your child's help, make a list of happy or positive feelings and then make a list of upset or sad feelings. Add to this list as your child learns new words.

Use words during the day to let your child know how you are feeling or to describe new experiences-“Strawberry is my *favorite* ice cream” or “ I am *excited* when I go to a new area for a hike”.

When to use Reflective Listening

Reflective listening will be new to you and your child. Here are some helpful tips.

1. **Listen for Strong Feelings.** Sometimes children will use strong language and actions. Their body language or actions may include crying, stiffening, laughing, hugging. They may use strong words-“I hate you”, “I'm going to run away”, or “ I don't like Tommy anymore.”
2. When you hear these strong feelings, use **reflective listening**-“”, “You're are feeling upset because it is time to go home from your friend's house”, or “You are angry with Tommy because he took your toy.
3. **Listen for hidden feelings.** Sometimes our children's feelings are below the surface. **Reflective listening** can also work for those situations.

Your 4 year old ...

Reflective listening can help her recognize what she is feeling and the next time she is bored, she can think of some things to do for herself. We are **teaching new skills**. Our goal is to teach our children to think and learn to deal with and express their own feelings in healthy ways. We may need to get help for ourselves by attending support groups or getting individual or group therapy in order to become better teachers.

4. **Reflective listening helps when you have to say no.** Sometimes we have to say no to our children. They may react by crying or yelling. This is another time to use **reflective listening**. This helps our children know that we have heard and understand their feelings (frustration often comes from the feeling that “nobody understands me!”). This is true even for adults and teens. Saying “no” to your child teaches them limits and boundaries.

5. Sometimes you can't listen. Young children think that they are the center of the world and they may want you to listen all of the time. This is natural but it isn't possible or desirable. If you don't have time to listen, say no. Tell the child that you talk later. "I can see that you are excited about the zoo, but I have to make a phone call first. Can you tell me later when I get off of the phone?" Be sure that you make time for them after the call. *Of course, if the child is visibly upset, listen to them immediately.*

How to Talk so Children Will Listen

It is important to listen to our child's feelings and to reflect to them what we have heard. It is also important to share our own feelings.

Speak with respect and encouragement. When we have a problem with our children, we need to talk about it with them. It is important to share our feelings in a respectful way without being judgmental.

Sometimes we are angry and speak angrily when we are disappointed with our children. Our anger can overshadow the message we want our children to learn. Anger can be communicated both verbally and nonverbally.

When we speak calmly, the child is better able to hear the information that we are sharing. Body language is important, too. When we are angry, our face shows anger too. Actions speak louder than words. When we are encouraging our children, it is important to have positive body language and a positive expression. It is also important to use words that the child understands. Be sure to listen carefully and to not interrupt.

Using an I-Message

When talking with children, we can use an "I-message" or a "You-message". "You-messages" nag, blame or put the other person down. These messages use the word "You": "You should know better". Children who hear too many **you-messages** begin to feel defeated and worthless. They may fight back or stop listening. "**You- messages** lower self-esteem and don't teach cooperation.

"**I-messages** show respect and tell the child how we feel. Rather than focusing on the child, these messages focus on the parent. I-messages tell how we feel.

When using **I-messages** we should state:

1. **What is happening.**
2. **How it feels.**
3. **Why you feel that way**

“When I see hitting, I feel worried because someone could get hurt.”

1. **When I see hitting**
2. **I feel worried**
3. **Because someone could get hurt.**

Avoid Angry I-Messages

It is important to keep angry feelings out of I -messages. Children often feel blamed when we speak in an angry way. Our goal is to avoid shaming or blaming so that we can have **effective** communication. Shaming and blaming creates defensiveness in others. We lose the chance to have a teaching/learning relationship. Our goal is to have our child understand our feeling of disappointment or concern.

You are in the store...

This is a typical scenario most parents have experienced. It is important to let the child know that we were worried and afraid. Giving the child a big, loving hug, we should say, “Thank goodness you are safe. I was really worried that you were lost. Please stay close to me.” Later, after calming down, we can go over the rules regarding staying safe in the market. Yelling does not help the child learn the rules. These safety guidelines need to be repeated over and over for years. When we are angry, the child focuses more on the anger than on the lesson to be learned. The child may have been just as fearful and worried as the parent in this scenario. Children don’t intentionally get separated from their parents. They have short attention spans and can be overwhelmed by the things around them.

Healthy communication helps to guide and educate our children, not control them. Even when children feel respected, they may not stop undesirable behavior. Don’t give up. Learning to communicate takes time.

Active Listening isn’t just for children

Respectful communication is important for adults as well as children. Think of a problem you had with your spouse or friend. You may have been silent *when you needed to speak out*. Or maybe you spoke in a blaming way. Most of us need to practice saying what we mean. With practice, we can learn to be respectful to others and firm without being mean. Remember the “Golden Rule”. Treat people the way you want to be treated.

Effective listening helps us identify and present the true feelings that we want to share and it leads to better communication and cooperation.

Practice Acknowledging Feelings/Choose the correct response

1. **Child:** I thought I was going to die when daddy pulled out my tooth.

Parent:

- a) It wasn't that bad
- b) Gee, it sounds as if it really hurt.
- c) Daddy did it for your own good.

2. **Child:** Because of that stupid rain, our teacher called off our field trip.

Parent:

- a) You must have been really disappointed; you really waited a long time for that trip.
- b) Don't let it upset you, you will still get to go
- c) Your teacher made a good decision

3. **Child:** I'm gonna run away from home.

Parent:

- a) Good, what do you want to pack?
- b) It's no fun living on the streets
- c) You sound very upset; I bet you're unhappy about something.

When we acknowledge feelings we ALWAYS:

- 1. **Validate Feelings** by showing we understand how one could feel the way they feel ... as opposed to dismissing or invalidating their feelings.
- 2. **Listen** and show we understand that their situation may feel complicated and painful to them, as opposed to giving solutions to ease their pain.

We acknowledge feelings by:

- 1. Showing a facial expression or uttering a sound such as "hmmm" or "I see".
- 2. Naming the child's feelings, "That must have been frustrating".
- 3. Fantasizing with the child-"I bet you wish you had a magic wand to fix it" or " I bet you wish you had Superman for that one".

Homework:

- 1. What I learned
- 2. What I tried