

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS WITH CHILDREN AND TEENS

How many times have you heard the phrase, “You just are not listening to me!”? Sometimes this can be heard from either parent or child. When some one we love dies, it can be hard to effectively communicate all of our emotions and thoughts. When family members are grieving we are often caught up in our own separate worlds of pain. Connecting and communicating with our children takes time and effort; it starts with listening. Here are some building blocks to effective listening that may help you and your children to better understanding.

Eye contact

When talking to your child, make sure to stop and look them in the eye. Let them know that you are focused on them and that they are important.

Posture

Stop what you are doing and be comfortably attentive to child with your posture. Let them know that you are at ease with them sharing.

Encouragement

Use small words of encouragement to let them know you are listening. Be open to what they are saying first, before making judgments.

Truly listen

Be completely attentive what your child is saying. Let go of your thoughts and emotions; focus 100% on them. Open your heart to their words first, you can discuss, advise or interpret later.

Reflect back

Check back with your child to make sure you heard correctly. Try saying “what I hear you saying is”

