



## Mindscapes- Volume VI Edition 6

### Importance of effective parent-child communication.

*“The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice.”*



#### **Dear parent,**

This edition of Mindscapes will focus on the importance of effective parent child communication. It is very important to communicate openly and effectively with children at home. Open and effective communication benefits not only the children, but every member of the family. Relationships between parents and

children are greatly improved when there is an effective communication taking place. Good communication skills will benefit children for their entire lives. Children begin to form ideas and beliefs about themselves based on how we communicate with them. When we communicate effectively with our children, we are showing them respect. Children then begin to feel that they are

heard and understood by us, which is a boost to their self-esteem.

On the other hand, communication between parents and children that is “ineffective” can lead children to believe that they are unimportant, unheard, or misunderstood.



### Different ways to communicate positively with children:

➤ **Communicate at your child’s level.**

When we communicate with our children, it is important for us to come down to children's level both verbally and physically. Verbally, we should try to use age-appropriate language that our children can easily understand. With younger children, this can be done by using simple words.

Listening is a skill that must be learned and practiced. Listening is an important part of effective communication. When we listen to our children we are showing them that we are interested and we care about what our children have to say. Here are some important steps to becoming a good listener:

- **Make and maintain eye contact.**

When we maintain eye contact we are showing our children that we are involved and interested.

- **Eliminate distractions.**

When children express a desire to talk, we should give them our “**undivided attention**” for example don’t keep looking at the mobile phone when child is talking to us. We should put aside what we were doing, face our children, and give them our complete attention.

- **Let our children know they have been heard.**

After children are finished speaking, we can show them that we have been listening by restating what was said, only in slightly different words. This will also offer an opportunity for clarification if we are misinterpreting the message that children are trying to get across.

- **Keep conversations brief.**

Children find it more difficult to sit through long speeches. One good rule for us is to speak to children **for no longer than 30 seconds**, then ask them to comment on what was said. The goal for us is to pass on information a little at a time while checking that our children are paying attention to and understanding what is being said at regular intervals. We should let our children decide when enough is enough.



➤ **Ask the right questions.**

We should try to ask open-ended questions in our conversations with our children. Open-ended questions that begin with the words "what," "where," "whom," or "how" are often very useful in getting children to open up. We should try to avoid asking questions that require only a 'yes' or 'no' answer.



➤ **Admit it when we don't know something.**

When children ask questions that we can't answer, we should admit that we don't know.

For example, we can teach our children how to get the information they are looking for by taking them to the library, using the encyclopedia, etc.

Effective communication with children is essential to their relationships and development. Good communication involves listening and talking in ways that make children feel important and valued. Communicating well with children helps them to develop skills for communicating with others.

**References**

<https://www.kumon.co.uk/blog/the-importance-of-children-developing-good-communication-skills/>

<https://fosteringandadoption.rip.org.uk/topics/communicating-effectively/>

"Treat a child as though he already is the person he's capable of becoming."

-Haim Ginott