



## toolbox



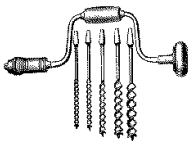
### Listening Skills For Parents\*

\*(and anyone else who has to communicate with other people)

For many, the most difficult aspect of communicating well is the ability to listen. Often rather than just listening we are making our judgements and thinking about how to respond. Anyone who knows his or her words will be listened to, respected and understood sees communication as a positive exchange. Below are some pointers to communicate that you value the person to whom you are listening.



- ✓ **Do** allow children to express themselves without interruptions.
- ✓ **Do** try to hear what your child is saying. Do not filter or edit the child's words to fit your expectations.
- ✗ **Don't** judge your child. Let the child have an opportunity to express his or her own point of view.
- ✓ **Do** put yourself in the child's shoes. Respond in a manner that lets the child know you understand what is being said (even if you disagree).
- ✗ **Don't** jump to conclusions. Let your child explain what happened before a judgment is made.
- ✓ **Do** repeat what the child is saying to show your understanding. Use a statement that demonstrates your appreciation of what the child has said. For example, if the child explains that he is anxious over an upcoming sports event, you can say, "*I know you're feeling nervous about what can happen.*"
- ✗ **Don't** finish your child's sentences for him or her. Wait for the child to finish before starting your response.
- ✓ **Do** affirm the child's feelings (as in the example above) rather than discounting them. Don't say, "*You're not nervous, you're a little excited.*" Respect your child's words and ability to know how he or she feels.



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