

Wellbeing Team Wisdom:

Because emotional wellbeing impacts academic and social success, here is a quick, research-supported curiosity to consider implementing, courtesy of RCHK's Wellbeing Team :)

As you know, the quality of our relationships greatly impacts our wellbeing, and that of our loved ones. Knowing that our communication affects the quality of our relationships, people often ask themselves how they can improve the communication between themselves and the people they care about.

In this excerpt, poet - Jessie Swick - shares some insight into what people want (and don't want) when they are sharing something from their day or their life with someone else.

This poem often resonates with both children and parents.

Please Just Listen

When I ask you to listen to me
And you start giving me advice,
You have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me
And you begin to tell me why
I shouldn't feel that way,
You are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me
And you feel you have to do something
To solve my problem,
You have failed me,

Strange as that may seem.

Listen! All I ask you is listen.
Don't talk or do—just hear me.

Advice is cheap
And I can do for myself; I am not helpless.
Maybe discouraged and faltering,
But not helpless.

When you do something that I can



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And need to do for myself,
You contribute to my fear and
Inadequacy.

But when you accept as a simple fact
No matter how irrational,
Then I can stop trying to convince
You and get about this business
Of understanding what's behind
This irrational feeling.
And when that's clear, the answers are
Obvious and I don't need advice.

So please listen, and just hear me.
And if you want to talk, wait a minute
For your turn—and I will listen to you.

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On the topic of good listening and communication that supports positive relationships,
here are some wonderfully practical suggestions for parents
from an article on the American Psychological Association website
<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/communication-parents.aspx>

Communication tips for parents (with a few edits)

1. Be available for your children: Notice times when your kids are most likely to talk for example, at bedtime, before dinner, in the car and be available.

2. Start the conversation; it lets your kids know you care about what's happening in their lives. Initiate conversations by sharing what you have been enjoying rather than beginning a conversation with a question.

3. Find time each week for a one-on-one activity with each child, and avoid scheduling other activities during that time.

4. Learn about your children's interests--for example, favorite music, activities, games and show interest in them. Ask them to show or teach you. Share what you enjoyed about them.

5. Let your kids know you're listening: When your children are talking about concerns, stop whatever you are doing and listen.

Express interest in what they are saying without being intrusive.

Listen to their point of view, even if it's difficult to hear.

Let them complete their point before you respond.

Repeat what you heard them say to ensure that you understand them correctly.

6. Respond in a way your children will hear

Soften strong reactions; kids will tune you out if you appear angry or defensive.

Express your opinion without putting down theirs; acknowledge that it's okay to disagree.

Resist arguing about who is right. Instead say, "I know you disagree with me, and this is what I think."

7. Focus on your child's feelings rather than your own during your conversation.

Remember: Ask your children what they may want or need from you in a conversation, such as advice, simply listening, help in dealing with feelings, or help solving a problem.

8. Kids learn by imitating. Most often, they will follow your lead in how they deal with anger, solve problems, and work through difficult feelings so talk to your children don't lecture, criticize, threaten, or say hurtful things. Kids learn from their own choices. As long as the consequences are not dangerous, don't feel you have to step in.



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9. Realize your children may test you by telling you a small part of what is bothering them. Listen carefully to what they say, encourage them to talk, and they may share the rest of the story and sharing it with you may be helpful to them.

10. Parenting can be enjoyable and hard work listening and talking is the key to a healthy connection between you and your children. Maintaining a good connection with teens can be challenging, especially since parents are dealing with many other pressures. If you are having problems over an extended period of time, you might want to consider consulting with a counsellor to find out how they can help.