

# Children and Communication

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Here are a couple of strategies to help build your child's communication skills:

As kids develop, they go through a variety of situations that will test their ability to act in healthy and respectful ways. Building communication skills can help your child through these situations.

## The Do's and Don'ts of Communication:



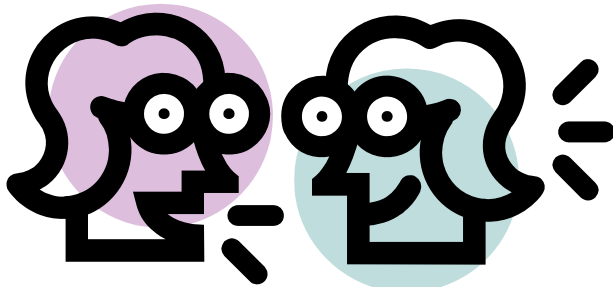
### Do:

- Do ask questions
- Do use KEEP CALM
- Do be polite
- Do be honest
- Do talk out your feelings
- Do be your BEST-*sitting or standing straight, giving direct eye contact, and using kind words in a calm and clear voice*



### Don't:

- Don't include others uninvolved in the issue
- Don't raise your voice
- Don't spread rumors
- Don't assume (to think without really knowing)
- Don't ignore that there is a problem
- Don't bottle it up inside



- **Modeling:** Children watch how you interact with others and look to you for cues. Modeling can be helpful in dealing with awkward interactions.
- **Role Playing:** Rehearsing is a great way to prepare for the real thing. It provides the opportunity to practice thinking on their feet in a non-threatening situation.
- **Journaling:** Sometimes kids have hard time communicating verbally. It may be easier to have them draw or writing down what is going on and then they can refer back to their journal to help them communicate.
- **Identifying Social Cues:** Pointing out body language and facial expressions can help kids in identifying possible messages.
- **Problem Solving/Questioning:** Kids often have a hard time seeing another's perspective. Questioning gives them the opportunity to reflect on someone else's point of view. Taking the time to stop and think this way help build empathy.
- **Providing Feedback:** Share with your child how they handle social situations. Providing feedback, positive and negative, is very important in helping them to identify areas where they need to improve.
- **I-Message:** When your child is upset, they can use this script to help them convey their feelings and wishes.  
*I am \_\_\_\_\_ (feeling)*  
*Because \_\_\_\_\_ (action making them upset)*  
*I wish \_\_\_\_\_ (what they want to happen)*
- **Keep Calm:** Your child should be calm when communicating with you or their peers. Deep breathing, playing with play dough, drawing – something they really enjoy doing can help them to calm down and maybe even communicate more with you!

Working on communication skills can help children feel more confident when interacting with both their peers and adults as well!