

Beyond the Classroom

The Evergreen School District Wellness Newsletter



Tips for How to Communicate with Your Children

Inspirational writer Sean Covey said, “I think the greatest challenge between child and parent is communication.” Isn’t it true that communicating effectively with your children can prove challenging at times, to say the least? Many experts agree that talking often with your children is key to creating an open relationship. Should you struggle while communicating with them, below are some helpful tips to overcome that challenge. These communication tools can work for all ages.

1. Ask your children to describe the best and worst parts of their day. You may be surprised about what you will learn.
2. Role-playing conversations may be helpful, especially when your children have difficulty explaining their feelings or articulating difficult happenings at school. Role playing with your children may help them to resolve uncomfortable situations (i.e. making new friends) and may encourage them to ask for help when necessary.
3. Should you be short on conversations, try using conversation starters, such as “What would an ideal day at school look like for you?” or “If you were going on a trip to the mountains, what three things would you take?”
4. Read together. Discuss the lessons being taught in a story or interesting facts your children have learned.
5. Ask your children for their opinions and why they believe the way they do.
6. Create a family journal together. This journal can include inspirational quotes, stories about family events, pictures, sketches, etc.
7. Have family meetings; they are a great way to plan fun activities, build cooperation, have shared decision making, problem solve and build communication between parents and their children.
8. Be a good listener. If your children want to talk to you, stop what you are doing and listen. You want to show them that you care and are interested in what they are saying.
9. Encourage compromise. Compromising is teaching your children to give and take. If we don’t listen or respond fairly to our children’s complaints, then they might grow to become resentful and angry. Problem solve, then find solutions together.

10. Be a loving parent. Tell your children often that you love them. Show them affection like you did when they were preschoolers. Do something together as a family, such as taking walks, cooking or playing a game together. Take time to have fun and laugh together!

It's important to remember that children will model parent behavior. When speaking with your children, remain calm, speak honestly and openly, and listen attentively so that they will be comfortable sharing their feelings, thoughts and ideas. Try to avoid being a nagger, giving harsh criticism or yelling to force compliance. Should you feel your communication is off track and arguments are increasing, think about:

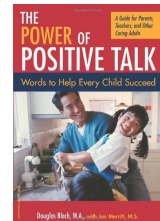
- identifying strategies that will help you to communicate better (like using one of the aforementioned ideas).
- picking your battles. Choose what is truly important, such as safety issues and showing respect.
- admitting your wrongs (apologize), if needed,
- showing encouragement.

Above all, enjoy your children and the time you have with them!

Suggested Books on Communication

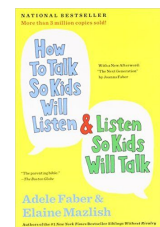
The Power of Positive Talk: Words to Help Every Child Succeed by Jon Merritt

This book leads readers step-by-step through the process of helping kids turn off the negative voice within and activate the powerful "yes" voice.



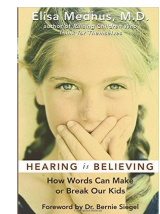
How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk by Adele Faber

This book will discuss how to solve common problems and build foundations for lasting relationships, including ways to: cope with your child's negative feelings; express your strong feelings without being hurtful; engage in your child's willing cooperation, set limits and maintain goodwill; use alternatives to punishment that promote self-discipline, understand the difference between helpful and unhelpful praise and resolve family conflict peacefully.



Hearing Is Believing: How Words Can Make or Break Our Kids by Elisa Medhus

This book demonstrates that the words we say to children can have a profound positive – or negative – effect; and it goes on to show readers how a few simple changes in parenting language can reward them with family harmony, turn parenting into a joy rather than a burden, and help them rear children with healthy self-esteem. This book suggests we can teach children how to think for themselves and learn to be rewarded with acceptance as a consequence of their contribution rather than needing acceptance and conforming.





Free Family Fun

First Friday Fiesta: Free Engaging Performances

The First Friday Fiesta Series at MACLA brings several of the Bay Area's most prominent Latin American music and dance companies to MACLA's Castellano Playhouse in the heart of Downtown San José for an evening of free, educational, and engaging performances.

Location: 510 S 1st St, San Jose, CA

Time: Friday, January 6, 2017 (8 p.m.)

Martial Cottle Park Experience

Explore the agricultural history at Santa Clara County's newest park. Meet at the visitor center to see items used on the farm in the 1890s, then take a short walk to learn about the park's current farming practices and partners.

Location: Martial Cottle Park

5283 Snell Avenue San Jose, CA 95136

Time: February & March (Saturdays and Sundays 2:30-3:30 p.m.)

History of Almaden Air Force Station

Learn about the history of this fascinating site, see key artifacts, and enjoy a slideshow of amazing historic photos of the radar station when it was in operation between 1958 and 1980.

Location: Almaden Quicksilver County Park

2175 Almaden Rd. San San Jose, CA 95120

Time: Sunday, February 5, 2017 (1:00-3:00 p.m.)

Willow Glen Friday Night Dinners (Free + cost of food)

Every Friday, the community of Willow Glen hosts a "feast," presenting 9 to 11 different trucks, followed with live music, and fun games for the family.

Location: Willow Glen VTA

2310 Canoas Garden Avenue

San Jose, CA 95125

Time: 11/4/16-12/29/17 (5:00-9:00 p.m.)

10 Tricks to Help You Actually Keep Your New Year's Resolutions (Courtesy of Huffington Post)

Keep your New Year's resolutions by trying the following tricks:

1. Set short-term goals for long-term results.
2. Make your resolution about the journey, not the outcome.
3. Schedule time for your resolution.
4. Employ the buddy system.
5. State your goals.
6. Keep records.
7. Get an app.
8. Celebrate little victories.
9. Reassess your resolutions.
10. Don't give up easily.



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