

Spring 2022

A Newsletter for Parents



The Parent Line

Basic Principles of Good Parent and Child Communication

Communication is important when interacting with your child and anyone in general. Communication does not mean you talk to people only when you want something done, but it also means active listening, being open-minded, and having meaningful conversations. Here are some tips to have good communication practices with your child.



- Set aside time each day to talk and play with your child. Turn off the television or put your phone down when your child wants to converse. Avoid taking phone calls when your child has something important to tell you. You want to get rid of distractions so you can give your child your full attention. How do you feel when you are talking to someone and they are constantly on their phone? It will make them feel like you care about what they have to say when you do not have distractions. Creating a special time and playing with them as well lets your child know they are important because you are setting aside time in your day to be present with them.
- We are all busy as parents. Active listening is an important part of communication. If you are tired, you will have to make extra efforts to be a good listener. Genuine active listening is hard work and is difficult when your mind and body are already tired. Active listening will show you care and you are trying to understand how the child feels about what is happening. Sometimes all someone ever really wants is to be heard.
- Unless other people are meant to be included, hold conversations in privacy. The best kind of communication between you and your child will occur when others are not around. Embarrassing or putting your child on the spot in front of others will lead to resentment and hostility, the opposite of good communication. Also using put-down statements: dumb, stupid, lazy, is derogatory and makes them feel very little of themselves. Just imagine how you feel when someone calls you those statements.
- If you get angry about a behavior or incident, don't attempt to communicate with your child until you regain your cool. Stop to think, settle yourself down, and when you are ready, talk later. This helps so you don't say things you will regret. Thinking of the right words and how to say it is important.
- Praise your child's efforts when they communicate with you. The more positivity you promote, the more your child will continue those behaviors because those behaviors will get attention from you as parents. Accept them for who they are and make sure you let them know they can reach out to you with anything and at any time.



Principles of good communication starts with you and letting your children express their thoughts, feelings, and actions to help them get ahead and problem-solve challenges as they go through life. If you have any other parenting questions, please do not hesitate to contact The Parent Line. We are available and ready to assist.

THE PARENT LINE IS HAWAII'S PREMIER RESOURCE ON CHILD BEHAVIOR, CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND PARENTING SUPPORT WWW.THEPARENTLINE.ORG

Suggested Readings

List compiled by the *Edna Allyn Room for Children* at the Hawai'i State Library. Mahalo!

Speak Up

By: *Miranda Paul*
(Ages 4-8)

Hello! Hello!

By: *Matthew Cordell*
(Ages 3-6)

I Will Talk to You, Little One

By: *Phyllis Grann*
(Ages 0-3)

Ask Me

By: *Bernard Waber*
(ages 4-7)

Adult Books

How to Talk so Little Kids will Listen: A Survival Guide to Life with Children Ages 2-7

By: *Joanna Faber*



Fourteen Talks by Age Fourteen

By: *Michelle Icard*

Talk Story Game!

This spring edition is about promoting open communication between you and your keiki. Here is a little game you can play together as a family asking and answering questions. Set up a quiet time, no TV or phones, and no judging of answers. The left side is questions parents can ask children, and the right side is what children can ask parents. This is a list of questions you can use if you need somewhere to start. Have fun!

Makua (Parents)

Would you rather give up TV, candy, or your friends?

What are the 5 best things about you?

What is your best birthday memory?

What is the hardest thing about being a kid?

What makes you happy? Sad? Mad?

What is the funniest thing you've ever seen?

What makes you feel loved?

Keiki (Children)

What memories of special family traditions do you remember?

If you had to live life all over again, what would you change?

What scares you most?

What are your hopes for me?

How do I know you're proud of me?

How did you meet mom/dad?

What is the hardest thing you had to deal with in your childhood?

Spotlight on Safety

Having a Healthy Relationship with Social Media



Social media is a great way to stay connected with family and friends and finding out information all around the world. However, there are many scams and uncertainty that can occur so it is important for you as parents to be able to understand how to use it to keep our keiki and teens safe so they can form a healthy relationship with social media. This conversation cannot just happen one time in their life as social media is constantly evolving so going through this regularly is important. Below are some tips on how to educate your children on the world of apps.

1. Set boundaries. Limit time on their phone or media daily. Collaborate with your child and ask them what they think is an appropriate amount of time and come together on a solution for setting those boundaries. It is also useful to think about when and how they are using social media. Setting these guidelines together will help ease your trouble as parents as you can talk through on what apps or social media your child will be on.
2. Educate them about staying safe. On a neurological level, young people and teens have not fully developed the ability to gauge and assess risk accurately compared to adults so as parents we need to support them with this. Teach them the importance of protecting their personal information and that anything posted online will be there forever so thinking twice when interacting with someone online.
3. Take interest in what they are doing online. Just like you're interested in how their school day was or how their soccer game went, be interested in what they're doing online. By being curious and asking questions you will be better informed as parents in the online world and become closer to your child.
4. Don't demonize social media. We want our children to have a healthy relationship with social media and it doesn't mean dismissing it altogether. Find how they are using social media because there are positive ways to utilize it.
5. Encourage real life connections. Learn to be okay with your children using social media, but it's important they have other sides to their life as well. Guide them in finding that balance. Encourage them to keep up with clubs and/or their hobbies where they can find those in-person connections.

