

# Communicating with your child: Practicing active listening

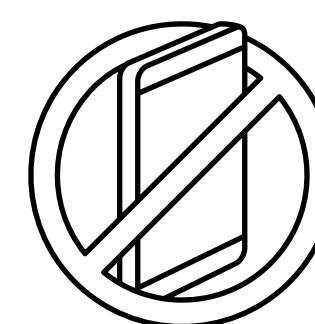
Active listening is more than just hearing the words your child says. It means **listening to understand their feelings and perspective, rather than listening to respond** with your own solutions or opinions.

When you give your child your undivided attention, and listen to understand, your child feels heard and valued. This reduces misunderstandings, builds trust in your relationship and can strengthen your connection. The more you practice active listening, the easier it becomes. You will also model healthy communication.

**1**

## Be present

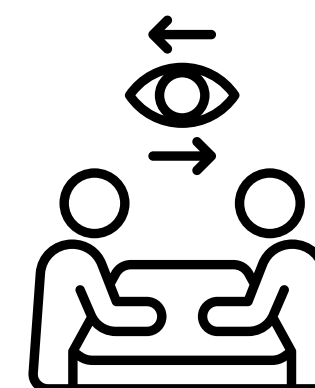
Remove distractions, like your phone or the TV, and give your child your full attention.



**2**

## Maintain eye contact

Eye contact shows you are focused and engaged. If your child finds direct eye contact uncomfortable, that's okay — what matters most is showing them you are fully present.



**3**

## Use supportive body language

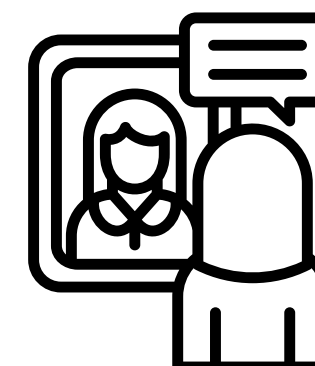
Relaxed posture, open arms, nodding, or smiling when it matters shows that you are tuned in.



**4**

## Reflect back

Briefly repeat or summarize what your child said to make sure you understood them correctly. This shows them you're really trying to understand, not just waiting to talk.



**5**

## Be patient and sensitive before contributing

As you listen, allow your child to finish their sentences and allow for silences.

