

# PRACTICAL PARENTING



## Communicating with Your Child

Good communication between you and your child is important for developing a positive relationship. As your child gets older, good communication will make it easier for you to talk to him about things like alcohol and drugs. Good communication with your child can start early. Two skills that are helpful for good communication with toddlers and preschoolers are praise and active listening. You will learn more about these skills in this article.

**Webinar Discussion:** Practical Parenting

**Date Available:** April 21st.

**Topic:** Learn about different communication styles and how to communicate effectively.

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## **Keys to Communicating with Your Child**

- Praise your child when she does something right. The more you praise a behavior, the more likely it is your child will behave the same way again
- Pay attention to your child when he is talking to you or trying to communicate with you. Giving him your full attention will help you understand what he is telling you. It will also make him feel like you care about what he has to say.
- Set aside time each day to talk and play with your child. Creating a special time lets your child know she is important. It also strengthens the bond between the two of you.

### **Take time to listen to your child.**

When your child is upset, active listening can go a long way in helping your child know that you hear him and understand what he is trying to say. Active listening can also be helpful in calming a situation and preventing a tantrum before it starts!

### **Let your child know when you think she has done something good.**

Praising your child is an important way to encourage good behaviors. Sometimes it can also help; to let your child overhear you praising him to someone else like a grandparent, teacher, spouse or even a toy if no one else is around. When the praise seems sincere and honest, it can reinforce good behavior.

### **Read with your children.**

Reading with your children helps to strengthen their vocabulary, knowledge, and understanding of their world. It also creates opportunities for you and your child to spend time enjoying each other. It is never too early to begin reading to your child, and no book is ever too short.

### **Make time to laugh and be silly.**

So much of parenting is making sure your children are fed, clean, clothed and doing what they are supposed to be doing. Taking time to just talk or play with your children shows them how much you care about them and want to be with them.

### **Avoid distracted parenting.**

In the rush to get everything done, you may find yourself trying to have an important talk with your child while doing a million other things like cooking dinner, folding laundry, or paying bills. Changes are if you are multitasking, your child may be too. He may be playing or doing something else that keeps him from listening. Stop what you are doing and make the conversation a priority.

Walk over to your child and talk to him face-to-face. This will help both of you focus on the issue at hand.



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