

# 20 Ways to Enhance Communication with Your Child

## Prevent Child Abuse Illinois

Communication is the way we express our thoughts, feelings and ideas and the way we connect to one another. We communicate when we talk, laugh, sing, smile and when we yell. We also communicate when we listen, show concern, and reach out to others. Communicating positively with children helps them develop confidence, good behavior, and a positive view of the world and of themselves. Good communication between parents and children is important, must start early and doesn't stop even when our teens may have stopped talking to us! Here are 20 suggestions (in recognition of Prevent Child Abuse Illinois 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) to help enhance communication with your child.



1. Make sure to smile, touch, and make eye contact with your child every day in a positive and loving way.
2. Set aside one night per week for family dinner. Encourage everyone to talk about their day.
3. Start when your child is young letting them know that you are willing to listen to whatever they have to say, even if you don't always agree.
4. Write encouraging notes to your child and put them in surprising places like backpacks, pillow cases, and coat pockets.
5. Don't yell. If you are angry all of the time it is your problem to solve, don't take it out on your child.
6. Teach your child early to identify their feelings so that they can tell you and other adults what they feel inside.
7. Turn off the radio in the car and talk about whatever your child is interested in.
8. Ask questions that must be answered with more than a yes or no.
9. Listen, Listen, Listen. Ask permission to give advice. Sometimes our children only want to vent, they don't want us to solve the problem.
10. Read to your child, or have your child read to you no matter how old they are, then talk about the story, both the positive and the negative parts.
11. Learn how to speak your child's language even if that means learning how to email, send texts, and use Facebook.
12. Be respectful to your child in front of his or her friends.
13. Be a safe place to come and talk.
14. Include your child in family discussions about everyday things like paying bills, doing chores and planning events.
15. Talk with your children's friends when they are around.
16. Use a dry erase marker on the bathroom mirror to leave fun notes, and reminders for appointments and chores.
17. Create traditions that keep you in contact with your children.
18. Play games together.
19. Attend your child's activities.
20. Tell your child that you love them and give them a hug each and everyday.

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## Prevent Child Abuse Illinois

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