

Opening Lines of Communication at Home (2 min read)

Every family has different needs when it comes to communicating and keeping each other up to date with the upcoming events in their lives. Especially for big families, it can be a real challenge to make certain everyone is informed of important news and issues. Below are some tips and techniques that will help make certain the communication needs of your family don't go unheard.

For Your Partner

- Make a point to set aside time to spend together each week
- Set aside time for a date night one night out of the month
- Be willing to set aside time to discuss critical issues related to your relationship or family
- Avoid discussing sensitive issues or conflicts as soon as you come home
- Refrain from arguing with your spouse/partner in front of your children, especially arguments related to how to handle your kids

For Your Children

- Actively listen to what your children have to say, even if they can't form complete sentences, because you might have to piece together what's happening
- Avoid interrupting or talking over your children
- Listen to everything that's said, even if you disagree with it and won't change your mind
- Be willing to take time to think about what your children have said; rushing to a judgment might give the impression that you're not taking what's been said seriously

Being on the Same Page

- Support the decisions of your partner and avoid contradicting those decisions
- Make a point to do things together as a family and set aside special family days as needed to bring everyone together
- Find activities that can help everyone share experiences and develop closeness

How to Communicate a Positive Message

- Avoid saying anything that might alienate a family member or seem accusatory
- When you're angry, try to keep your discussions to a minimum to avoid saying anything you might regret
- Be willing to take time outs, walk away, or engage in activities that help cool tempers before you engage in discussions that might become even more heated
- Before you blurt out something hurtful, count to 10 to calm yourself and defuse your anger

Use these steps as a starting point to develop positive communication techniques in your home. As your family grows and expands, you might need to try out other methods to keep everyone informed of what's happening. If you make a point to put these techniques into practice now, you'll be better prepared for adjusting to new techniques in the future.

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