



I R E N E

Family Learning to Address Domestic Violence

Workshop #1 – Healthy Communication

TABLE OF CONTENTS



01 **HEALTHY COMMUNICATION**
How to enhance healthy communication in families

02 **COMMUNICATION TOOLS**
Tools you can use to create healthy communication

03 **REMAINING CALM**
How to remain calm in tense situations

04 **CONCLUSIONS**
Summary

01

HEALTHY COMMUNICATION

In this unit, you will learn:

- What is healthy communication?
- How to encourage healthy communication
- Steps to developing active listening skills

HEALTHY COMMUNICATION

Healthy communication helps to build relationships in good times, and mend relationships in difficult times.

(University of Nebraska, 2008)

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication makes up 55% of what we communicate which is why it is important that we understand how we use our body language.

Facial expressions



Eye contact



Arms crossed



ENCOURAGING POSITIVE COMMUNICATION



ACTIVE LISTENING

Try to stop what you're doing and listen to family members with your full attention. Give them the time to express their feelings



ENCOURAGE WITH PRAISE

Encouraging children with praise after they have completed something such as homework or chores builds healthy communication

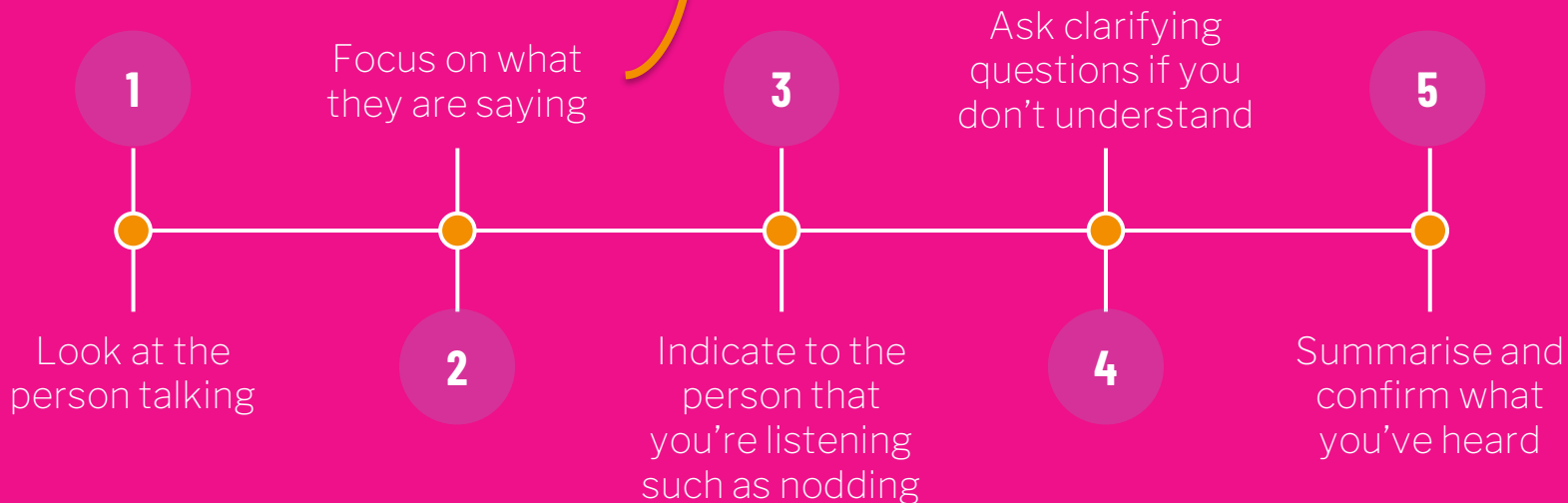


DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Plan for difficult conversations and be open to talking about difficult things such as drugs, alcohol, sex, and money

DEVELOP EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

To increase your ability to listen effectively:
Focus on the message, not the person
Focus on their thoughts, not your own thoughts



ACTIVITY #1

I'M LISTENING

- Split into pairs!
- You will be given two handouts which you must not look at until the facilitator says so.
- Take the time to run through the two scenarios on the sheet. You have 3 minutes for each scenario.
- Once you're finished, complete the reflection exercise, and run through scenario #3 using the communication techniques you learned in this unit.



02

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

In this unit, you will learn:

- about open communication;
- how to enhance communication;
- “luv-listen” techniques

OPEN COMMUNICATION

ONE-ON-ONE TIME

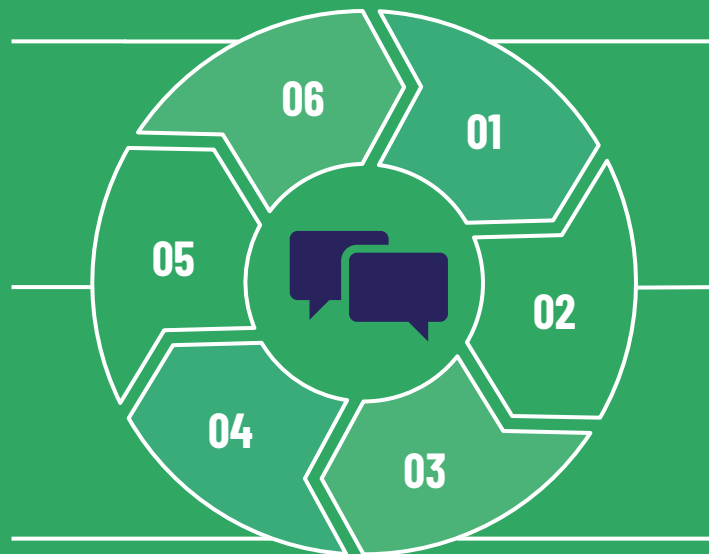
Set aside time for one-on-one time between you and other family members

SCHEDULE FAMILY TIME

Create family rituals such as Game Night or Films after Sunday Roast

CONFRONT THE PROBLEM

And not each other, and allows to focus on specific problems



OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Ask questions that will require people to think a little more about the answer

DON'T BE JUDGMENTAL

It's important to remain non-judgmental when people are sharing feelings

EAT MEALS TOGETHER

Eating at least one meal together as a family has emotional and psychological benefits

ENHANCING COMMUNICATION

TURNING “YOU” INTO “I”

Remember the importance of using “I” statements to avoid accusatory language

USE SHORT, CLEAR DIRECT SENTENCES

Short, clear, and specific statements are easier to understand and answer

BE PLEASANT AND FIRM

If you make your position clear and do not undermine what you are expressing your relative will be less likely to misinterpret it

LISTEN CAREFULLY

Acknowledge that you appreciate their point of view and understand their feelings

BACK OFF FOR A WHILE

If your relative appears withdrawn and uncommunicative, back off for a while

GOOD COMMUNICATION

This is a matter of practice, persistence and using many of the skills you already have

“LUV-LISTEN”

LUV-Listen is an active listening technique that helps you to become a better listener. Using LUV-listen when talking to your children shows your interest and makes them feel supported!



Listen with a genuine desire to understand’ try to put yourself in the other person’s place.

Understand: repeat back the main points to make sure you understand. Ask questions to get more understanding.

Validate their feelings by expressing empathy for their feelings, circumstances, or point of view even if you disagree.

Another way to improve communication in families is to identify the barriers to open communication...

ACTIVITY #2

BANISHING COMMUNICATION BOULDERS

- This is a collaborative activity.
- Split into groups of 4-5.
- For the next 25 minutes, work towards identifying “communication boulders” which block positive, healthy, and open communication in the home.
- Try to identify as many as possible!

Using sarcasm would be an example!



03

KEEPING YOUR COOL

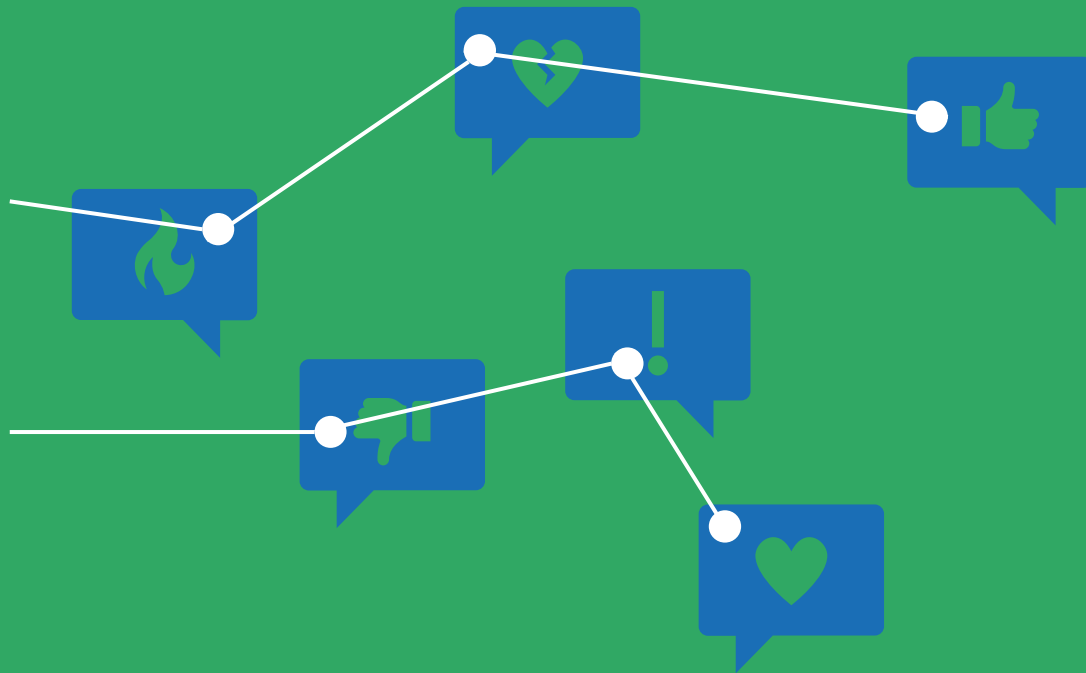
In this topic, you will learn:

- the importance of remaining calm
- tips on how to remain calm

REMAINING CALM

Sometimes it can be very difficult to maintain your calm when you have run out of patience.

It is important to find ways to help your child behave without hurting their feelings.



TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR COOL

- When stress takes over, it can make you lost your temper and say/do something that you regret later.
- To manage stress and anger, try to use the following tips to avoid saying something hurtful.



ACTIVITY #3

STAYING POSITIVE

- This is a reflective activity.
- Take some time to reflect on your relationship with your children.
- Using the handout provided, take the next 20 minutes to reflect on the relationships that you have with your children, and how you can aim to improve them in the future.



SUMMARY

Healthy communication is a huge part of building strong family relationships. Learning how to actively listen and support other family members is a great first step to strengthening communication.

Knowing how to keep your calm, and how to remove yourself from situations when things get a little too heated can help build positive family dynamics too!

IRENE

Family Learning to Address Domestic Violence

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