

Student Mental Health Promotion Newsletter

-Year 2021-

Strategies On Parent-Child Communication (For Parents Of Middle Schoolers)

This year, due to COVID19, the start of school is delayed. And because of the unprecedented execution of online classes and the on-and-off condition of offline classes, our children had to stay home most of the time. Thus, children's mistakes become more visible to the parents' eyes, and because of this, parents' stress level increases, which leads to raising their voices to their children. And, more particularly, it is not easy to talk to children undergoing puberty. They are often rebellious and seem to ignore their parents. Many parents find it difficult to communicate with their children undergoing adolescence, and their children also avoid talking to their parents as well. In line with this, we are providing this newsletter which introduces communication skills that can help our children feel comfortable talking to us, parents.

1 Communication with our children starts with lending our ears to them.

- It's important to listen to our children, not interrupting them while talking, and not criticizing or correcting their behavior. Help your child feel that he or she is being heard by empathizing with his/her feelings and by nodding your head while he/she talks.
- Also, it is better for parents to gently speak and calmly ask questions to their children so that children can fully explain the reasons for their feelings, thoughts, and actions. Since the question 'Why?' can sometimes sound critical, so we can ask more gently by asking 'how' or 'Is there a reason for...?'



- "Oh, really? I see. Could you tell Mom (Dad) more about it?"

"So, that is the situation between you and your friend.

How did (do) you feel about it?"

"I did not know you were thinking like that. How did you come up with that idea?"

2 Wrap up how your child stated his/her story.

- When your child relates a story, the order, situation, and emotions may be mixed. If you calmly summarize his/her story in order, he/she will be able to see things more objectively and will likely have more conversation with you.

3 Listen to your child's point of view and feelings first, express empathy, and then relate your point of view.

- You can show that you respect your children by listening to them first. Also, by empathizing with your child, he or she can listen to you in a relaxed manner.



4 Respect your child's space and sense of self.

- Do not touch your child's belongings or make decisions without his/ her permission.
- Refrain from attacking or criticizing your child in front of others.
- Avoid words and actions that insult your child's personality, and do not compare him/her with other children.

Why do you act like that? (X)

How come you act differently from your younger brother/sister? (X)

- In order to solve a problem, instead of saying 'Don't~', it is better to use a positive expression such as 'I hope you stop ~'.
- The following methods are recommended when speaking to your child.

- If you don't inform me/us that you will be late~ → **Behavior Problem**
- Mom worries. → **Conveying Emotion**
- Because, there might be something that will happen → **A Reasonable Cause**
- Please inform me/us if you will be late. → **Communication**



5 If you see problems about the child's behavior, ask first why he/ she acts that way.

- Children may have their own reasons for their particular behavior. You should guess ahead and ask their intentions and their thoughts about their behavior before you get angry or scold them.

It's 12 midnight and you are still in front of the computer. Turn it off right now! (X)
Oh, you are still in front of the computer. Can you tell me what you are doing? (O)

6 Responding to your child with a negative emotion and giving punishments do not help.

- Because the brain during puberty period is still immature, the child's behavior is uncontrollable. So, it is not good to react too emotionally. Take a deep breath first, and then talk.
- Punishments have no effect on correcting problem behavior.
- Punishments can make your child become gripped by fear and anger and that may trigger him or her to stop thinking. He/She will have the tendency to not know what wrong thing he/she has done and how to correct it.
- Experiencing punishments makes the child believe that violence can solve the problem and it may lead him/her to do a violent solution to things.



7 Talk to your child in this manner.

- Child: I took the test today and I messed it up.
- Parent: Aren't you upset? **(Empathize.)**
- Child: I was so nervous to the point that I wrote the words I know in a wrong way.
- Parent: Oh. If you had not been nervous, you would have been able to take the test better. I know how upset you are right now. **(Show reaction.)**
- Child: I studied more for this test than the previous one. But when I got the test questions, I was so nervous.
- Parent: You studied more, but you didn't get a good score because you were nervous. But you know, Mom is still proud that you worked harder than the last time. **(Summarize.)**

This newsletter is “Love Your Children”, produced by the Student Mental Health Support Center of the Ministry of Education commissioned by the Korean Neuropsychiatric Association. For inquiries regarding this newsletter, please contact us by phone or email.

 <Ministry of Education Student Mental Health Support Center>

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Student Mental Health Promotion Newsletter

-Year 2021-

Guiding Children In The Right Way
(For Parents of Grade Schoolers)

This year, due to the COVID19, the start of school is delayed. And because of the unprecedented execution of online classes and the on-and-off condition of offline classes, our children had to stay home most of the time. Thus, the children's mistakes become more visible to the parents' eyes, and because of this, parents' stress level increases, which leads to raising their voices to their children.

Giving children unconditional love and attention is an important virtue for parents, but it is also important to teach them what to do and what not to do. When children make mistakes, without proper guidance, children are unable to correct their misbehavior. This will also lower their self-esteem and will seriously and adversely affect the parent-child relationship.

How about reading this newsletter with a cup of tea while browsing the information below about guiding our children?

1 Praise them a lot.

- Praise is more powerful and more effective than punishment. Pay more attention to what your child is doing well rather than what the child is doing wrong. In a positive parent-child relationship, guidance works effectively.



2 We, as parents, must take control of our feelings first.

- Your child's brain is developing. Because they are not yet fully mature, their behavior may be out of control. Guidance for children is teaching, not punishment. Take one big deep breath before you talk to them.

3 Respect your child's sense of self.

- Refrain from blaming your child in front of others.
- Avoid words and actions that can insult their personality. Do not compare them with other children.

Why do you act like that? (X)

How come you act differently from your younger brother/sister? (X)

- In order to solve a problem, instead of saying 'Don't~', it is better to use a positive expression such as 'I hope you stop ~'.
- The following methods are recommended when speaking to your child.

- If you don't inform me/us that you will be late~ → **Behavior Problem**
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4 Guiding your child requires specific plans and strategies.

If you decide to talk to your child about him or her saying harsh words and/or showing strange behavior to his/her friends, first put in mind **how and when to talk, and how to set rules** (time, rewards and punishments, etc.)

❖ Do it in this manner.

1. Convince your child by talking enough about the reasons for setting the rules.

2. When determining reward and punishment, it is good to decide through an agreement with the child.

- When deciding on a reward, give your child something he or she likes in order to motivate him or her. Recommended punishment is limiting the child's privileges, such as limiting him or her to watch TV .

3. The application of the rules must be consistent for both parents.

4. Rules and punishments should be pre-determined and specific so that anyone can determine whether the rules have been followed or not.

Listen to Mom. (X)

Have a good relationship with friends. (X)

Do homework after school. (O)

Do not curse friends. (O)

5. Immediate punishment for wrongdoing is effective.

※ What if your child does not keep his promise and curses his/her friend?

→ In a low and resolute voice, say, 'Because you said bad words, you can't watch TV for a day according to our set rules.'

And this is done immediately.

6. When giving a reward, look into your child's eyes and verbally praise his/ her efforts.



5 There should be no punishment under any circumstances.

- Punishments have no effect on correcting problem behavior.
- Punishments can make your child become gripped by fear and anger and that may trigger him or her to stop thinking. He/She will have the tendency to not know what wrong thing he/she has done and how to correct it.
- Experiencing punishment causes the child to believe that the problem can be solved through violence, which can lead to further violence and will negatively affect his/her personality .

6 Children grow as to how their parents believe they will grow.

- If the parent's heart is full of distrust and dissatisfaction with the child, the child will perceive himself lacking. On the contrary, if parents have trust and gratitude to their children, children's self-esteem will increase and parental guidance will have a good effect.

7 Take advantage of emotional coaching that can help you manage your child's emotions.

- The core of emotional coaching: In order to relax your mind, you need to acknowledge the emotions contained in the words rather than the content of the words.

< 4 Steps of Emotional Coaching >

Step 1 : Decipher your child's emotions.

- Parent: You look annoyed, so I guess you are feeling bad right now.

Step 2 : Use the opportunity to get closer to your child.

- Child: "I was annoyed at school today. I had a bad time with my friends."
- Parent: "Are you in a bad mood because something bad happened with your friends at school?"

Step 3 : Listen and empathize with your child's feelings.

- Child: "During lunchtime, my friends were mumbling about what they did when I missed school the last time."
- Parent: "I see. Your friends were talking about things you don't know. You might have felt 'out of place' at that time."

Step 4 : Help your child express himself/ herself.

- Parent: "I see that you also want to join in what your friends are talking about and that you also want to hang out with them."
- Child: "Yes. When my friends talked about things I wasn't interested in, I felt left out and sad. I hope that my friends can explain and share things I don't know."

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