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# **LISTENING SKILLS**

## **YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND IF YOU CAN'T HEAR**

Probably the single MOST IMPORTANT skill parents need to learn in order to have a better relationship with their teenagers is how to LISTEN. You had your chance to talk when they were 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 etc. years old and still listening. Now teenagers want to feel that their ideas and their feelings are understood, valued, and accepted by their parents. This does not mean that you will agree with their thoughts and perceptions. However, it's important that you validate their reality and their separateness as a person. Here are some tips to help you talk and listen with your child.

**BE OPEN:** Encourage your teenager to talk to you by using verbal signals like, “yes”, “uh huh”. Also, take the time out from your chores to stop and listen. So often we are busy when our children approach us, and if we go on working the message is “so what?” It can be a powerful message of love and support if we stop and say, “I can tell this is important to you. Let me put this aside for a minute so we can talk”.

**CLARIFY:** Ask questions to get more information or check to see if you understand. Try saying things like, “Do you mean...? Would you tell me more about...?”

**RESTATE:** Repeat the main points. Put ideas into your own words to let him/her know you are listening. For example, “So, she said she would call and then she never did...”

**REFLECT FEELINGS:** Listen to hear how your son/daughter FEELS. Say thing like, “I’LL bet you’re really mad about that!” This shows you care and helps your child think about his feelings.

**SUMMARIZE:** Go over the main ideas, feelings, and problems, expressed. Try, “So your two main problems are...”

**VALIDATE:** Show that you appreciate and respect your child’s sharing of thoughts, feelings. Let them know you’re glad you were included in the conversation. “Thanks for telling me about that.” “...That must have been hard for you to go through. Thank you for letting me know”.

## **BLOCKERS TO AVOID**

None of the above works if you return to old habits and insert many of the communication blockers that seem to come so natural to us as parents. Try to avoid these sure –fire turn offs to your child’s attempts to communicate with you:

### **RESCUING/EXPLAINING**

First, and most important, DO NOT become a problem solver, the advice giver. If your child really begs you for a solution, try brainstorming possibilities with him/her, but beware! If you give advice, it may not work, and it may be more difficult for your child to learn to take responsibility because the outcome will always be your fault.

### **JUDGMENT PASSER**

Second, put aside your judgment hat. If teenagers fear that you will immediately launch into a lecture about right and wrong, they will avoid bringing you their problems. Since early childhood you have instilled in them a value system. Call upon it now by asking what they feel is right.

### **DIRECTING/ORDERING**

Third, try to avoid telling your child what to do in such a way that it leaves little or no room for choice and/or negotiation.

### **USING “ADULTISMS”**

Fourth, “Adultism-ing” is a process in relationships of requiring other people to read our minds and to think as we do. Examples of these sound like...”How come you’re never...? Why can’t you ever...” Surely, you realize...! How many times do I have to tell you?”

# Counselors' Corner

Lil Locke

Duncan Brown

**Discovering and creating an emotional connection with our children  
What do they need? What do we all need?**

Each human being has six basic needs. If these needs are met then we can each feel happy, confident and fulfilled in our lives. It is important to know that people will do whatever it takes to get these needs met. Take a look below and consider the people important in your life including yourself. Are you getting your needs met? Are you children's needs being met?

## Six Human Needs

1. **Love and Connection**-everyone wants to feel love and connection to others and to the world.
2. **Significance**- we all need to feel important and that we have value.
3. **Certainty**-we must know and trust that there is consistency with people, places, things and routines. We need the confidence that we can be certain and that there is consistency in life.
4. **Uncertainty/Variety**-we also need to know that life will be different/interesting and changing. Life can have variety and that adds excitement and challenge to life.
5. **Growth**-every individual needs to feel that they are growing as individuals and that they are moving forward in their personal life, relationships, and intelligence etc.
6. **Contribution**- all people have a great need for contribution. We want to feel that we are giving of ourselves to help others and/or are making the world a better place for all to be. It feels awesome to give back to others and to the world.

I challenge you all to give these human needs serious consideration. We all need to do what ever we can to help our children meet and understand their needs. This is a wonderful guide to help us all. Let's all love and really emotionally connect to others. Offer variety and consistency so our children know that they can count on us but we will be fun too. Keep growing and contributing so we can be great role models for our children. If we listen really well to what our children are and hear what they are not saying, I truly believe that we can make the critical emotional connections with our children and those we love. If we work and help each other we can protect and assure that the important people in our life lead a happy, loving and fulfilled life. Enjoy Life

# LIMIT SETTING

Since “All talk and no action” is an ineffective way to raise a child, every parent must have a clear plan for dealing with issues of discipline and responsibility. Here are some tips to help keep your home life hassle free. Teenagers will still make mistakes, test limits and cause you worry, but having a reasonable discipline plan in place can prevent major blow-ups and angry encounter.

1. Rules should be simple and communicated to your teen. In areas where you disagree and argue about rules and expectations, sit down and calmly discuss your needs, giving your teen a chance to give his/her side of the issue. Use your listening skills. Remember that children have a very clear sense of what is fair. Enlist your child’s opinion in helping to solve the problem.
2. Consequences for breaking a rule should be understood in advance. Long term punishments are worse than ineffective. They can lead to anger, resentment and rebellion from teenagers. Save restriction for a month, selling the Nintendo, etc., for severe offenses. For example, if your child steals a valuable item and is required to replace it, then selling the Nintendo may be an option your child can consider to solve this problem. In general, it’s best to keep the consequences immediate, short term (light should be at the end of the tunnel), and appropriate to the offense. Sometimes removal of a privilege for a day, making it something that can be earned back the following day with improved cooperation, e.g., doing the dishes as requested, is very effective because it places the responsibility on the shoulders of your child for his own choices.
3. Discuss consequences in terms of “choices” your child made. For example, if your daughter misses the curfew you and she agreed to ask, “What is your understanding of the consequence for being late?” Your teen will remember the agreement, “I have to be home by 8:00 tomorrow”, and you can say, “Yes, that is the choice you made by being late. Next week you can return to your 10:00 curfew.”
4. Even though you may be angry and disappointed when your teen breaks the rules, don’t discuss the situation until you are calm and can stay in control. Teenagers have a difficult time staying in control of themselves. They need good role models. When adults explode, it’s easy for teenagers to tune us out and lose respect for us if they feel we have no respect for them.
5. Be prepared to pay a price as a parent. Parenting is a huge commitment. Some of the consequences you may negotiate will require you to have to give up your time to supervise a teen that made a poor choice. Don’t set consequences you aren’t you aren’t prepared to enforce. Follow through is crucial. Kids will break rules and test parents who give them multiple chances and don’t stick to enforcing the consequences.
6. Consistency is the watchword. Whether the child is living in one household, or spends time between separate households, the rules need to be consistent between parents, regardless of the time-sharing responsibilities.

# HASSLE FREE HOMEWORK

If your child is not doing his homework, or you are spending more time on his homework than **he/she** is, here are some tips:

1. Assist your child in choosing a distraction free work space, with good light, stocked with paper, pens, pencils, tape, hole punch, white out, sharpener, scissors, glue, ruler, stapler, index cards, dictionary, compass, protractor, calculator, atlas, thesaurus. He should not need to wander the house for anything.
2. Use the daily or weekly schedule planner, available in counseling, and let him fill in all scheduled commitments, dentists, dinner, athletics, and especially “fun times.”
3. Be sure your student keeps an agenda book or assignment sheet in the front of his binder.
4. Develop a mutual understanding of what homework is. Though he may claim that there is no homework on that day, reading ahead reviewing notes and worksheets, reworking math problems, and reading a book for pleasure are all homework activities that can be done during the designated homework time. Seventh and eighth graders need to set aside ½-2 hours per evening, ninth graders need 3 hours.
5. Be available to answer questions, but avoid doing the work for your child or trying to be the teacher. If you do, you will be giving the subtle but very powerful message that he is not capable of doing it himself.
6. If your child is very dependent on your help, use encouragement and help him review. For example, say, “Let’s start with the directions, please read them to me.” Keep the ball in his court, but break the work into steps until he gains confidence.
7. Praise your child’s efforts. “You have really tried hard! Good job! I’m delighted to see you studying so hard.” “Eighty percent. Great improvement! Your hard work is paying off. I bet you feel good!”
8. Some students are motivated by incentives (rewards). Unfortunately, long range rewards don’t always work because young people can’t stay focused on a distant goal. Keep the rewards short range and tangible, e.g. an upcoming weekend, a special evening outing, an afternoon with a friend.
9. Think of your parenting in management terms. Don’t over manage (pressure, nag) a motivated and capable student, as over control often produces resistance. Some students would rather fail than submit to parent control. Similarly, too much sympathy and too little direction for the unmotivated student can be disastrous. Know your child’s abilities and attitudes and tailor your involvement with school work accordingly.
10. If your student has a history of poor school performance, don’t “hang back,” hope for the best, and then become furious when the grades come out. Act early and be a support for your student. Talk to your child’s teachers and counselor to devise a proactive plan for realizing success.

(Adapted from: Curing the Homework Blues, by A. Miranda, district counseling department chair)

# HINTS FOR TIME MANAGEMENT

## 1. Use Short Time Slots

It's better to read or review a subject in four 30 minute sessions than one two-hour marathon where fatigue and boredom set in.

## 2. Reward Yourself With Breaks

Don't work until you fail because of fatigue or frustration. Break every hour—you'll prevent clock watching and increase your concentration. Research shows 50 minutes on and 10 minutes off is the most efficient.

## 3. Use Daylight Hours

Research shows that one daytime study hour is equivalent to 1 ½ hours at night.

## 4. Read Before Discussion Classes

Have the material fresh in your mind anytime you're expected to participate or contribute.

## 5. Study Notes After Lecture Classes

Memory and understanding are aided by a review of your lecture notes immediately after class.

## 6. Allow enough Sleep-Time

Make no mistake about it; the quality of mental work depends on sufficient sleep. Research shows you can increase your memory by sleeping after studying.

## 7. Eat Well-Balanced Meals

Dietary deficiencies lead to lack of pep, irritability, distractibility, and mental slow down.

## 8. Make a Plan for Living

Time Management must include physical, mental and psychological R & R. Leave out recreation and exercise and you'll sacrifice concentration, memory, and creativity.

# TV Viewing Test

The role of media in influencing the choices that youth make has long been an issue of concern for proponents of alcohol, tobacco and drug prevention. We thought this excellent “TV Viewing Test” was applicable to not only violence, but to alcohol, tobacco and other drug issues as well.

Never Always  
0-1-2-3-4-5

1. **WE DECIDE HOW MUCH TV OUR FAMILY WILL WATCH EACH WEEK.**  
We set limits on the number of hours we watch each week and we stick to it! \_\_\_\_\_
  2. **WE PLAN OUR TV VIEWING.**  
Our family attitude is that television should be turned on only to watch specific shows, not to “see what’s on.” We choose our shows ahead of time, using a weekly television program guide. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. **WE’VE DEVELOPED FAMILY GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING PROGRAMS.**  
Our children know our media values and why they are important. We check channel listings, including cable, and note reviews of programs with themes and subjects that match our family guidelines. We look for shows and videos that offer different viewpoints and that contribute to our children’s education. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. **WE MAKE TV WATCHING AN INTERACTIVE FAMILY EVENT.**  
We watch TV together and use every opportunity to talk about what we see and here. We use storylines or characters to stimulate conversation on topics that can be difficult to discuss: family relationship, alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, sexual behavior, divorce, death, etc. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. **WE TALK BACK TO OUR TV**  
When appropriate, we express our opinions by “talking” directly to the TV as we watch. We challenge commercials and programming that try to sell us products, attitudes and unhealthy lifestyles. \_\_\_\_\_
  6. **WE LET TV EXPAND AND ENLARGE OUR WORLD**  
We find related books and magazine articles at our public library, and go on family outing based on ideas we’ve seen on TV. We keep an atlas or globe next to our television and find places mentioned in the news. \_\_\_\_\_
  7. **WE’RE POSITIVE ABOUT TV’S CONTRIBUTION TO OUR WORLD.**  
We know television is the dominant force in our media culture and an important part of our children’s lives. We evaluate television fairly, not denigrate it. \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Score** \_\_\_\_\_

## The Family TV Viewing Scale

### 28-35: Incredible!

Your family is totally media literate! Bravo!

### 21-28: Excellent.

You have great family TV viewing habits.

### 13-20: Good.

There’s still room for improvement, but you’re above average.

### 0-12: Average

The viewing habits in your home may need some review.

\*Provided courtesy of San Dieguito Alliance for Drug-Free Youth

# Creating Character for Life

**Courage**- using fear to your advantage

**Integrity**- being accountable for ones own actions

**Honesty**- same on the inside as the outside

**Perseverance**- using reserve energy to keep going

**Responsibility**- willingness too be held accountable

**Humor**- important, honest, learning to laugh at yourself

**Flexibility**- prepared for the unexpected, controlling responses

**Patience**- making time work for you, enjoying the process

**Confidence**- believing in what you do, who you are, optimism

**Good Health**- healthy attitude, respect you body, lifestyle

**Achievement**- getting beyond failures, personal philosophy

**Goals!**

**What do I want to do?**

**What do I want to be?**

**What do I want to see?**

**What do I want to have?**

**Where do I want to go?**

# Creating Character for Life

**Values**- The abstract concepts of what is right, worthwhile or desirable, principles or standards. Character traits.

**Principles**- A personal or specific basis of conduct. A guiding source.

**Integrity**- Soundness of moral principle, rectitude of character, uprightness of character.

## Book of Virtues

**Self Discipline**- even the desire is a good mark

**Responsibility**- to be answerable, accountable

**Friendship**- being a friend is most important in character

**Work**- what we put ourselves into, learning how to

**Courage**- acting bravely when we don't feel brave, standing our ground

**Perseverance**- persisting in effort, hanging in there

**Honesty**- to be real, genuine, authentic, open and reliable

**Loyalty**- caring seriously about one's country or others

**Faith**- discipline, power and meaning in life

# HOMework FOR PARENTS

To find out how well you know your teenager, try to answer these questions. No fair asking! Do it completely by yourself the first time. Have your son/daughter grade you when you're finished. If you can answer 17 or more correctly, you are an expert! You listen well to the likes and needs of your children. Scoring between 12-16 means you know quite a bit about your child, but you could improve. Between 0-11 means you and your child need to communicate more. Good Luck!

1. Who is your child's best friend?
2. What embarrasses him/her the most?
3. What is his /her greatest fear?
4. What is his/her favorite kind of music?
5. What person outside the family has most influenced your child's life?
6. What is his/her favorite and least favorite subjects in school?
7. What is your child's biggest complaint about the family?
8. Of what accomplishment is your child the most proud?
9. What sport does your child most enjoy?
10. What is his/her favorite television show?
11. Who is your child's favorite teacher?
12. If you could buy your child anything in the world, what would he/she ask for?
13. What really makes your child angry?
14. What one thing about his/her appearance would your child choose to change?
15. What household chore does your child dislike the most?
16. What would your child most like to do on vacation?
17. What is your child's favorite food? Least favorite?
18. What is your child's most prized possession?
19. What is your child's most favorite memory?
20. What would your child like to be when he/she grows up?



# Develop Good Study Habits

Doing your best in school can become a **HABIT**, something you do on a regular basis - every day!

## **BIG IDEAS**

### **Study a little each day.**

Make a keep a study schedule.

Divide your time among different subjects.

Arrange for a well-lit, quiet place to study.

### **Review class and reading notes every day.**

Read your class notes and fill in details.

use a dictionary for exact meaning, spelling and pronunciation of words.

### **Stay up to date in you homework.**

Use your student planner/agenda

Schedule time for long-term projects

### **Keep a positive attitude.**

Spend time with classmates who have good study habits.

Get enough sleep and eat well.

Congratulate yourself for your academic successes.



# Develop Good Study Habits

List your good study habits:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

List study habits you want to develop:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

***Think about it!***

Look at your study habits and identify people who can help you develop good study habits.

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## Math Sequence

One of the most often asked questions about math placement in middle school is “What are the implications for my child in high school math courses?” The “Mathematics Course Sequences” chart that follows shows the normal flow from 7<sup>th</sup> through 12 grades for students who are successful at each grade level. In regular classes, the prerequisite for the subsequent math class is an A, B, or C in the current class. In honors classes, the prerequisite for the subsequent math class is an A or B in the current class. Please note that beginning with Algebra I, all courses are college preparatory courses. The minimum math requirement for students planning to apply to the University of California or a California State University is 3 years of college prep math in high school and 4 years in highly recommended.

### MATHEMATICS COURSE SEQUENCES

| GRADE |                     |  |   |
|-------|---------------------|--|---|
| 7     | PRE-ALGEBRA I<br>↓  | PRE-ALGEBRA 7<br>↓                     | PRE-ALGEBRA HONORS<br>↓                     |
| 8     | PRE-ALGEBRA 2<br>↓  | ALGEBRA I<br>↓                         | ALGEBRA HONORS (P)<br>↓                     |
| 9     | ALGEBRA I (P)<br>↓  | GEOMETRY (P)<br>↓                      | GEOMETRY HONORS (P)<br>↓                    |
| 10    | GEOMETRY (P)<br>↓   | ALGEBRA II (P)<br>↓                    | ALGEBRA II AND TRIGONOMETRY HONORS (P)<br>↓ |
| 11    | ALGEBRA II (P)<br>↓ | PRE-CALCULUS (P)<br>↓                  | PRE-CALCULUS HONORS (P)<br>↓                |
| 12    | PRE-CALCULUS (P)    | AP CALCULUS OR PRE-CALCULUS HONORS (P) | AP CALCULUS                                 |

P- College Preparatory Class

# HIGH SCHOOL FOUR YEAR PLAN

| 9                                   |                      | 10                                  |               | 11                                  |              | 12                                  |  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| English                             |                      | English                             |               | English                             |              | English                             |  |
| Math                                |                      | Math                                |               | Math                                |              |                                     |  |
|                                     | Health<br>(One sem.) |                                     | World History |                                     | U.S. History | Gov./Economics                      |  |
| Science (one yr.)<br>Grade 9 or 10  |                      |                                     |               | Science (one yr.)<br>Grade 11 or 12 |              |                                     |  |
| General P.E.                        |                      | P.E.                                |               | Elective or Practical<br>Art or VPA |              | Elective or Practical<br>Art or VPA |  |
| Elective or Practical<br>Art or VPA |                      | Elective or Practical<br>Art or VPA |               | Elective or Practical<br>Art or VPA |              | Elective or Practical<br>Art or VPA |  |

### General Graduation Requirements:

1. The student shall complete a minimum of 230 credits.
2. The student shall pass the CAHSEE in language arts and mathematics.
3. Algebra I is now a state-required graduation requirement.

|   |  |                                |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| English<br>(40 Credits)                               | Mathematics<br>Algebra I (30 Credits)  | Social Studies<br>(30 Credits) |
| Science (20 Credits)<br>Biological (10) Physical (10) | Physical Education<br>(20 Credits)     | Health<br>(5 Credits)          |
| Practical Arts<br>(5 Credits)                         | Visual/Performing Arts<br>(10 Credits) | Electives<br>(70 Credits)      |

# COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

- **COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:**

No specific course requirements must be met prior to entrance. Any student may attend a community college if she/he has achieved any **one** of the following

- **18 years of age**
- Or**
- **A high school diploma**

- **PRIVATE AND OUT-OR-STATE UNIVERSITIES:**

Most private and out-of-state universities/colleges follow the UC/CSU guidelines. For out-of-state universities, contact the schools directly for current information.

- **CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY/UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA:**

The following are minimum requirements for students planning to apply to the University of California or a California State University:

| COURSES                          |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Social Science                   | 2 years: World History, U.S. History/Government  |
| English                          | 4 years: English 9, 10, 11, 12   |
| Math                             | 3 years of college prep math. 2 years is highly recommended. Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II |
| Science                          | 2 years of lab science. 3 years of lab science is recommended                                |
| Visual/Performing Arts           | 1 year of college prep course from Art, Music or Theater                                     |
| World Languages                  | 2 years same language*: 3 years recommended  |
| Additional college prep elective | 1 year of college prep electives   |
| Test requirements                | SAT I or ACT<br>SAT II in two subject areas  |

\*Students with competency in a language other than English may qualify for an exemption.

For flexibility in college choice, students need to take more than the minimum requirement of college preparatory classes.

**SEE THE UC APPROVED COURSE LIST AT YOUR SCHOOL SITE**  
**Or on the Internet at <https://pathways2.ucop.edu/doorways/list/>**

# **THE ROAD TO SUCCESS- EVALUATION**

What was the most valuable thing you learned today?

Was there something that was not discussed during the presentation that you wish we would have covered?

How would you feel about having your child present with you at this presentation?

Do you feel the length of the presentation was adequate? Was this a good time to offer this presentation or is there a time that is better for parents?

Suggestions or comments that might help us improve this presentation?

Other comments or feelings???