

Maarif Family Bulletin
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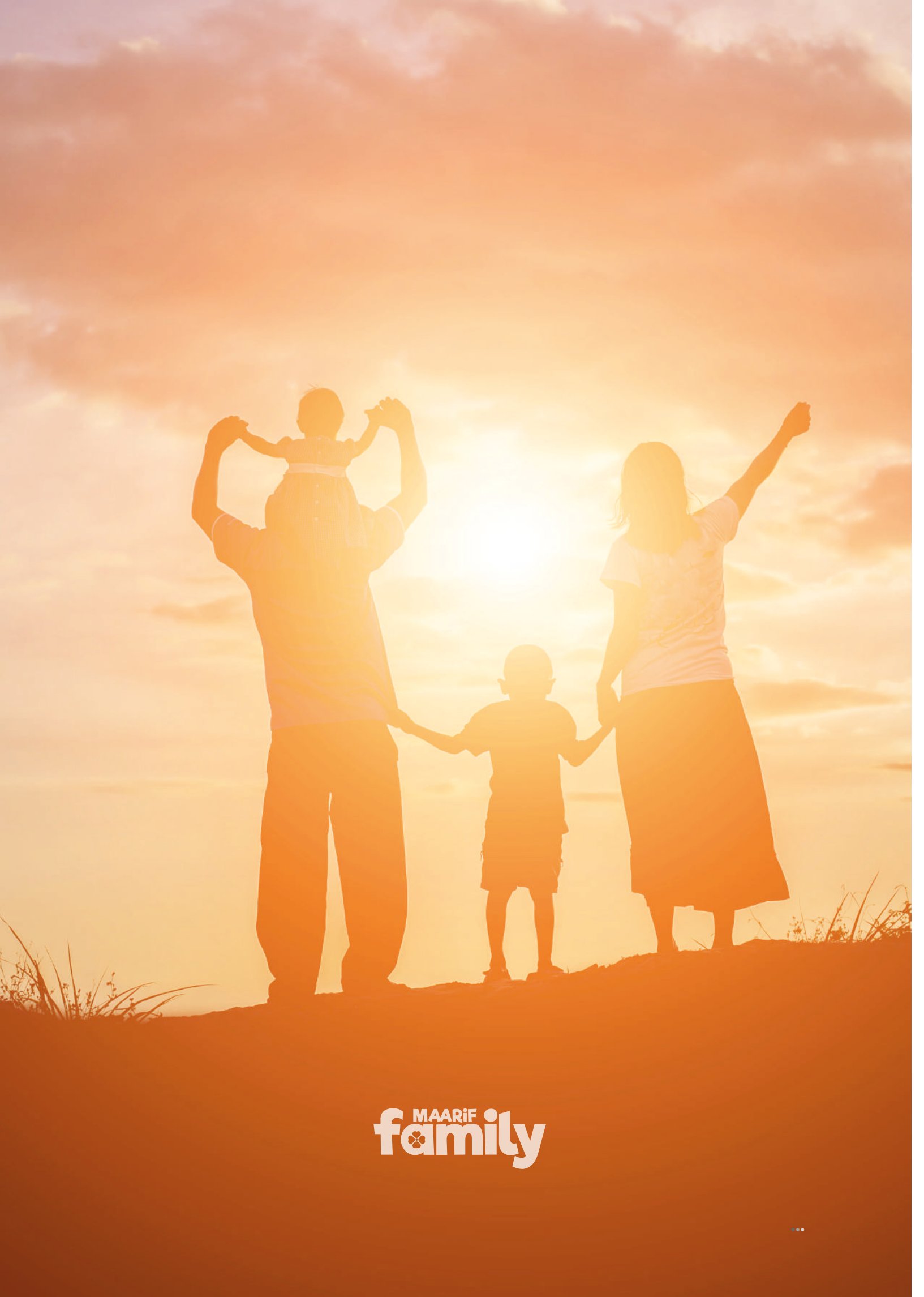
MAARİF family



08 Why is Family
Communication
Important?

16 The Impact Of
Technology On Family
Communication

Family Communication



MAARIF
family



presentation

Mahmut M. Özdil
Turkish Maarif Foundation President

Dear Parents,

Turkish Maarif Foundation, which carries out formal and non-formal education activities all over the world, operates internationally to share Türkiye's experience and knowledge in the field of education. Our foundation, in accordance with the principles of Law No. 6721, is authorized to establish and operate international educational institutions from preschool to higher education. In addition, it provides scholarships and housing support to students, conducts research and development activities in education, develops curricula, organizes international education fairs, and prepares periodic and non-periodic publications. Our Foundation acts with the mission of raising "Virtuous People" by blending humanity's common heritage and values. A good and virtuous person is one who uses his/her intellect, has willpower, has a conscience, and is always active. We believe it is necessary to create suitable conditions for good people to grow. At this point, as Turkish Maarif Foundation, we act with the awareness that every child is unique and has their own individuality. We know that each of our students has a unique color, voice and style, and we strive to offer them the most appropriate approach accordingly. Thus, we aim to help our children realize their own potential. In this regard, we highly value collaborating with our most important educational stakeholders, our parents. With the support we receive from our parents, we grow stronger as we carefully prepare each of our children for the future.

The family has an important role in the child's education process. Children gain their first experiences of life with their families. Children need the loving guidance, support and direction of their families to grow up healthily, prepare for life and acquire the necessary skills. This education process starts in the family, and the school builds on this foundation laid by the family by adding knowledge, skills, and values. The cooperation between school and family has a positive impact on children's development and provides them with great strength on their educational journey.

As Turkish Maarif Foundation, we see involving parents in the educational process as an important responsibility in preparing our children for life. Maarif Family Bulletin is prepared for you, our valuable parents, as a requirement of this responsibility. Maarif Family Bulletin aims to guide our parents and increase school-family cooperation to support the physical, mental, emotional and academic development of our children in the best way possible. In each issue, we provide you with information, recommendations, and activities within a special theme. We believe that this work, prepared with great dedication and effort, will raise awareness among our parents, contribute to the development of our students, and we present Maarif Family Bulletin for your benefit.

Mahmut M. ÖZDİL

President of Turkish Maarif Foundation



IN THIS Issue

Publisher:

On behalf of Turkish
Maarif Foundation
Mahmut M. ÖZDİL

Editorial Board:

Ahmet TÜRK BEN
İsmail ÇUHADAR

Editor:

Doç. Dr. Muhammet Ü.
ÖZTABAK

Author:

Ayşe Reyyan BOLAT
Sarenur AK
Şeyda ŞİMŞEK
Zeynep Betül ARDIÇ

Traslator:

Rezzan AYDEMİR

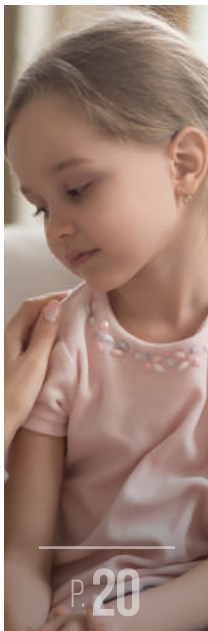
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Abdullah Aydın DEMİR
Semih EDİS

Dear parents, in this issue, we have addressed the topic of “Family Communication” for you. Strong and healthy communication within the family strengthens family ties and ensures a peaceful family environment. In families where communication is strong, children feel valued and safe. Parents form the basis of communication within the family. By fostering an environment of respect and love within the family, they lay the foundation for healthy communication. On this foundation, communication is built through actions such as effective listening, acceptance, expressing emotions, etc. Based on this, we have prepared information, suggestions, and activities for you, our valued parents, who form the basis of communication. We are excited to present this issue, prepared with the aim of enriching and strengthening the family environment where our children grow and thrive alongside their parents. We hope you enjoy reading.

Guidance and Psychological Counseling Coordinatorship

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COMMUNICATION

On average, a person uses 16,000 words a day.

One of the most common words we use today is "communication". But do we really communicate, or do we just talk?

On average, a person uses 16,000 words a day. But how many of these words truly serve to build a real connection, convey emotion, and enable meaningful interaction?

Communication refers to the transfer of feelings, thoughts, and information between people. Identifying the appropriate form of communication between parent and child forms the basis for developing a strong and healthy relationship. There are two types of communication: verbal and non-verbal.

Oral Communication:

Verbal communication is a type of interaction where people express themselves using words. Talking, telling stories, asking questions, and responding are the basic methods of this type of communication. As parents, the open and loving conversations you have with your children play an important role in their development.

Non-verbal Communication:

Non-verbal communication is a type of interaction where people express themselves without using words. Body language, gestures, facial ex-

pressions, communicating with the eyes, tone of voice, and touch fall under this type of communication. As parents, making eye contact, smiling, hugging, and touching your child can increase the power of communication.

People often believe that conflicts arise from differences in opinion or personal incompatibilities. However, most of them do not stem from a lack of communication, but from miscommunication or incomplete communication. Therefore, the problem is often to respond without hearing or understanding the other side. This affects all our relations, not only within the family, but also from work life to friendships.

Communication is not just about words. Tone of voice, body language, eye gaze, moments of silence... All of these are part of the message we convey to the other person. A sentence can be supportive or hurtful, depending on how it is said. Effective communication, therefore, encompasses not only what we say but also how we say it.² Every person has a different way of communicating. Some may prefer to express their feelings directly, while others may choose to express them in more indirect ways. Recognizing these differences and approaching them accordingly makes it easier to understand the other person. Empathy, in particular, is the foundation of effective communication. To understand someone, we don't need to have experienced the same thing, we just need to try to look at it from their perspective. Relationships are built with words, but bonds are strengthened by understanding.



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In the rush of everyday life, sometimes we don't find the time to pause and truly listen to one another. But the first step to building meaningful relationships is to listen to each other. Perhaps one of the most valuable communication skills is learning to listen. Sometimes understanding is more valuable than responding.

To improve your communication skills, you can do the following:

- You can put aside distractions (phone, TV, etc.) while listening to the other person.
- You can focus on not only what is being said but also on how it is being said.
- You can make eye contact and use supportive body language.
- You can try to understand, before reacting, and ask questions to help the other person express himself/herself more clearly.



WHY IS FAMILY COMMUNICATION IMPORTANT?



In particular, non-judgmental and empathy-based communication styles that allow children to express their feelings play



A baby's first word, a teenager's first angry sentence, a mother's quiet "Are you okay?" question, or a child resting their head on his/her father's shoulder... Family communication is built not only with words, but also with emotions. And this communication is the most important factor in how a child holds on to life, how secure a spouse feels, and how united a family is in times of crisis.

Communication within the family plays a fundamental role in individuals' identity development, emotional balance, and social skills. Especially, the types of relationships established in childhood affect all future relationships. Research shows that children who grow up in open, supportive, and empathetic communication environments develop higher self-esteem, stronger social skills, and greater emotional resilience.³ In particular, non-judgmental and empathy-based communication styles that allow children to express their feelings play a critical role in building emotional safety.

Communication within the family is not limited to solving problems; it is also a space where love, acceptance, belonging, and trust are transmitted. When communication is sustained, especially in times of conflict, children learn to express their feelings and overcome the difficulties they face in healthy ways.⁴ Establishing a healthy communication foundation within the



Family communication is a necessity, not a luxury. Strengthening it means shaping the future.



family is essential both for the bond between spouses and the emotional development of children. Unfortunately, in many families, communication can turn into ordering, questioning, criticizing, or keeping silent. However, in an environment where family members approach each other openly, without judgment and with unconditional acceptance, it helps strengthen both individual and relational well-being. The family is like a person's first mirror. The more attention, understanding, and love that are reflected in this mirror, the stronger the sense of self the person grows up with. Family communication is a necessity, not a luxury. Strengthening it means shaping the future.

Therefore, how can you make family communication healthier?

- You can try to spend face-to-face and interactive time together each day, even if it's just for a short while.
- You can offer your child a safe space to express his/her feelings.
- During discussions, you can focus on understanding first, not on solutions.
- You can regularly share your feelings with your partner and strengthen your emotional bond through small gestures.



THE EFFECT OF PARENTING STYLES ON COMMUNICATION

The main people who constitute communication within the family are the mother, father, and children. Children reflect their parents. Children learn communication by observing their parents. One of the key factors in family communication is the quality of communication between spouses. If spouses listen to each other effectively and communicate openly, this contributes to the development of children's communication skills. Therefore, both the communication between spouses and the communication between parents and their children affect family dynamics. At this point, the attitude of parents in communication affects communication within the family.

Parents' attitudes and behaviors are important factors in family communication. At this

point, knowing the impact of parenting styles on communication can help identify negative situations in communication and improve it. Parenting styles can be classified as authoritarian (oppressive), overprotective, indulgent, uninvolved, inconsistent and indecisive, and democratic.⁵ These are general classifications of parenting styles. Although parents generally reflect the characteristics of a particular parenting style, this does not mean that they fully embody all the characteristics of that style.

Authoritarian (Oppressive) Parenting

Parents with an authoritarian style constantly try to control and supervise their child. In this

style, they are insensitive to the child's physical, mental, and emotional states. In addition, the child's interests and needs are ignored, strict rules are set, and discipline is enforced in this way. They attach too much importance to following the rules they set. Failure to follow rules can be perceived as defiance of their authority. Disobeying rules and defying authority are, therefore, considered grounds for punishment. For them, the most important function of punishment is to discipline the child. The type of punishment may involve depriving the child, or it may vary from family to family. At this point, beating, verbal humiliation, blaming, shaming, and frightening the child may accompany punishment.

Overprotective Parenting Style

A parent with an overprotective style takes too much interest in his/her child. So much so that the parent's whole world becomes his/her child. He/She worries too much about the child. Mobilizes to protect his/her child in all circumstances and situations. With this approach, the parent believes that he/she is creating a very good environment for their child. However, this leaves the child very vulnerable to the outside world, unable to identify situations in which they need to protect themselves, and unable to acquire the necessary skills to protect themselves. Generally, mothers may be more protective of the child than fathers. This may be due to the father's lack of involvement in the family and the mother's emotional loneliness.

Indulgent Parenting

In the indulgent parenting style, parents tolerate all kinds of behaviors of the child. For example, when the child hits a sibling, insults elders, or tells lies, they do not intervene or warn the child in any way, nor do they set any boundaries. This situation paves the way

for the child not to develop healthy boundaries and to violate the boundaries of others. In these families, the child has the final say. Parents accept all the child's demands unconditionally. With this approach, they believe that they are raising their children in a loving environment. However, fulfilling everything a child wants does not make the child feel loved or valued. These children may be unable to form healthy relationships with others as adults and may become individuals who are never satisfied with anything.

Uninvolved Parenting

Parents with an uninvolved style ignore the child's interests, wishes, and needs. At the same time, it sets no limits for the child and does not impose any consequences for negative behaviors. In this style, parents do not interact with the child, spend little time with him/her, and do not show their love and care. In certain cases, the presence of the child is perceived by parents as a burden, an obstacle to their personal activities and responsibilities.

Inconsistent and Indecisive Parenting Style

Inconsistent and indecisive attitudes stem from parents' lack of consistency in their feelings, thoughts, and decisions. This inconsistency may be due to the individual characteristics of the parents, but it may also be due to differences of opinion between the parents. When family decisions aren't consistent and consequences for negative behavior are sometimes applied and sometimes not, it creates confusion and inconsistency. An unstable attitude can confuse children, and the decisions made often lack continuity. This often results in communication problems and, particularly during adolescence, may lead to conflicts between parents and teens.





Authoritative Parenting

An authoritative parenting style is the ideal one for healthy communication between parents and children. Democratic parents are sensitive to children's wishes, interests, and needs, set limits, and maintain balanced supervision. When a decision is to be made in the family, parents share these decisions with the child and create a space for him/her to express his/her feelings and thoughts. At the same time, when they are going to set rules, they are defined and explained in a way that the child can understand. At this stage, helping the child feel valued, recognizing their presence, creating space for emotional expression, respecting their rights, setting clear boundaries, and maintaining a supportive attitude form the foundation for healthy family communication.⁶ In addition, mutual respect for boundaries between parents and child is an important factor that improves this communication.

COMMUNICATION WITH DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS

Depending on the developmental level of children, there may be differences in their perception of events and their communication with their environment. Parents should build different communication languages for children of different age groups, considering their level of development. The following tips can help parents communicate more effectively with children across different age groups.

0-3 Age :

Love Language

In this period, children communicate through gestures and facial expressions rather than words. For this reason, a warm tone of voice should be used when communicating with the child, and emotions should be conveyed through facial expressions. Sometimes, simply hugging the child can help them feel loved and emotionally secure.

3-6 Age:

Game, Storytelling

Children in this age group, which includes preschool, explore the world through playing games, making friends, and listening to stories. As parents, you can participate in their world by creating games, accompanying them in different worlds through stories, and strengthening your communication by listening to them and patiently answering their questions.

6-12 Age:

Open Communication

During primary school years, children's vocabulary and cognitive abilities grow. This means that longer and deeper conversations can be carried out with them. By engaging in deeper conversations with them in this age group, parents can discover their thoughts and emotional world while also enriching the quality of their communication. You can strengthen your communication with them by answering their detailed questions.

12-18 Age:

Respectful Communication

Adolescence is a period when children discover their own identities and gain independence. Young people want to have new experiences to discover what they want to do. They express these desires to those around them and occasionally make attempts to try them out. During this period, the family should develop a respectful attitude toward the child's ideas. This does not mean approving of every idea of him/her. However, it is only by respecting your child's ideas and allowing them to express themselves freely that you can keep the door to communication open and build healthy interactions.



THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Today, technology has become an indispensable part of family life. Smartphones, tablets, televisions, and computers are not only used as entertainment tools; they are also fundamentally transforming the way we communicate. But this transformation may have more profound effects on family interaction than you think. When family members are in the same place, are they really communicating with each other, or is everyone just focused on their own screen?

In case of unconscious and intensive use of technology, communication within the family weakens. Especially when family members tend to turn to digital devices during the time they spend together, face-to-face communication decreases, and this can lead to



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emotional bonds being weakened. While digital tools reduce the physical distance between family members, on the other hand, they increase the emotional and psychological distance.⁴ What matters here is not only the length of time spent together, but also the quality of that time.

Research has found a significant relationship between technology addiction and family communication.⁵ This finding highlights how technology use impacts the quality of time that family members spend together. The use of technological devices at meals or during shared time at home can weaken emotional bonds. This can lead to feelings of loneliness and behavioral issues. That's why it's important to try to enrich time at home through face-to-face interaction.

When used correctly, however, technology is not merely a threat; it can serve as a tool to strengthen communication within the family. For example, you can make video calls with family elders living far away, watch documentaries together, and then chat afterwards to create shared experiences. How and for what purpose you use technology is the key factor determining its positive or negative impact.

As a parent, you can set an example for your child in the use of technology. Constantly checking your phone around your child might unknowingly communicate the message, "I don't think you're worth talking to." However, creating an environment where devices are put aside, eye contact is made, and family members listen attentively to each other helps your child feel valued and seen.

Technology has a permanent place in our lives; it is not possible to ban it completely, but it is always possible to use it in a conscious and balanced way. You can limit screen time as a family, plan non-tech activities together, and create environments that encourage conversation. Keep in mind: screens are temporary, but the bonds of family are forever.

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IMPROVING FAMILY COMMUNICATION

The child learns about the world through his/her family. The world takes shape within his/her family. The safety, health, and love in this world depend on families embodying these very qualities. For this order to be safe, healthy, and loving, there must be a healthy communication network within the family. So what needs to be done to strengthen this network?

1. Listening

Children like to tell and ask about what they see, hear, and wonder about. At this point, the most important thing a family can do to strengthen communication is to truly listen to what the child is saying. Listening conveys an important message to the child: "I value you and I value what you say." This has an impact

on the child's self-confidence and is important for their development.

2. Expressing emotions

Many things happen during the day. These incidents can occur at school, at home, and on the street. Parents ask children questions about these events. However, beyond the events themselves, it is also important to discuss what kinds of emotions they may evoke in children. The child's emotional world should be revealed with questions such as "How did what you experienced make you feel?", "Did anything happen at school today that made you happy?" "Did anything happen today that made you sad?" etc. In this way, children realize their feelings. Those who can share their feelings without being judged feel safe.

3. Guidance instead of criticism

Children do not always display positive behaviors. Especially childhood, the period of discovery, is full of "wrong" behaviors. Parents help them "learn" by telling them that these behaviors are wrong or by showing them the right behaviors. On this teaching journey, parents should use a guiding tone rather than

a critical one. Instead of getting angry, criticizing, or humiliating when the child makes a mistake, they can adopt an approach that involves questioning the behavior.

4. Spending time together

Speaking, listening, and the words that bring them to life are all very valuable. But beyond that, just being there with someone physically present means so much. Playing games together, going outside together, having picnics, and having family reading hours can help family members meet in a common space. The feelings and thoughts shared by the family in such an environment can strengthen communication.

5. Being a model

Children take as examples what their parents do rather than what they say. Because what they see, more than the words spoken, are the "behaviors" their parents display every day. Behavior occurs in a natural environment, but words may sometimes appear spontaneously. For this reason, parents should pay as much attention to their behavior around their children as to the words they say.





EXPRESSING EMOTIONS IN COMMUNICATION

Children first learn to communicate and express themselves in the family. Expressing feelings and thoughts is at the heart of communication. Expressing emotions helps family members to understand and empathize with each other and strengthens the relationship and communication between them. This also helps them to communicate in a healthy way.

Parents need to create an appropriate environment for children to express their thoughts and feelings. During the learning process, children may not express themselves fully, may express themselves inaccurately, or may make communication mistakes. At this point, the environment that parents create within the family is very important. If the child makes a mistake in expressing himself/her-

self, the parents should deal with it constructively and teach the child the correct way by guiding him/her. When the child expresses his/her feelings and thoughts, shaming, humiliating, belittling, silencing, and scolding negatively affect the parent-child relationship and communication. This can be a hindering factor in the development of the child's communication skills. However, children who are unable to express their feelings and thoughts constructively may turn to behaviors such as shouting, screaming, insulting, and attacking.

Parents should encourage their children to express their feelings. When parents first express their own feelings and thoughts constructively, their children will express themselves as they do. To achieve this, it is

necessary to know emotions and alternative sentences. In the section below, examples of negative expressions are marked with an “X,” while examples of positive and constructive expressions are marked with a “✓.” Following

this, a sample list of emotions has been prepared for parents. By reviewing this list, parents can reflect on emotions, recognize them, and practice how to express these emotions in possible situations.

EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SENTENCES

X

"You little brat, how dare you talk like that!"

✓

"I don't think that's an appropriate way to say it. I'm very upset that you're communicating with me like this. I don't want our communication to keep going like this. Because continuing this way could be emotionally draining for both of us."

X

"Stop talking nonsense, that's enough, shut up!"

✓

"It is important for me to understand you. It is difficult for me to have this conversation right now. Let's talk after we calm down a bit."

X

"Put the goddamn tablet down!"

✓

"You have been playing with the tablet for too long. Please put the tablet down. Instead, we can play games or chat together."

X

"You're so clumsy, you can't do anything right."

✓

"Sometimes there may be some disruptions. You can be a little more careful. You can ask me for help when you're having a hard time."

EMOTION LIST

Anxiety	Enthusiasm	Worthlessness
Fear	Anger	Grief
Joy	Disappointment	Sorrow
Bitter	Excitement	Guilt
Confused	Desperation	Guilty Conscience
Courage	Sad	Longing
Concern	Curiosity	Compassion
Enthusiasm	Mercy	Peaceful
Hope	Pride	Jealousy
Enjoyment	Love	Envy
Fidelity	Trust	Regret
Disgust	Frustration	Inadequacy
Embarrassment	Loneliness	Dispirited
Shame	Tense	Doubt
Hate	Resentment	Cheer

A DAY FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

ACTIVITY

Participants:

Parents and children

Materials required:

A calm environment (in nature if possible), paper, colored pencils.

Implementation:

- Family members go to a quiet place where they can listen to each other. This could be a park, a picnic area, or a desk at home.
- Everyone takes turns to tell what they did during the day, how they felt, and the things they were happy and sad about.
- Family members describe how they perceive the others who share their feelings.

For example, they can make different comments such as: "I felt that you were sad today. It might be good for you to rest like this." This helps strengthen empathy among family members.





MISTAKES IN COMMUNICATION

- Communicating without considering the child's developmental stage. For example, children under the age of 10 may not understand abstract concepts. For this reason, when abstract concepts are used extensively in communication, they may not fully perceive the content of the message and may be confused.
- Regardless of the age group, clear and simple expressions should be used during communication. Otherwise, misunderstandings may occur.
- When body language doesn't match what's being said, it can cause confusion. For instance, saying 'Everything is fine!' without making eye contact, because of your resentment, can result in the message being misunderstood.
- Inconsistent and contradictory statements may confuse. For example, it is inconsistent when a parent says they value their child yet insults them at the same time.
- Belittling attitudes toward a person's sense of self damage self-esteem.
- Assuming what the other person is thinking and making judgments can lead to arguments or worsen ongoing ones. This situation can lead to a communication deadlock.
- Accusing the other party by using the "you" language neither improves communication nor prevents parties from becoming angry with each other; instead, it often results in unresolved conflict.
- Interrupting a speaker is considered a sign of disrespect toward them. Moreover, this leads to mutual disagreement and a communication breakdown.
- To make a generalization about a topic. For example, if your child forgot his/her keys at home, you might say, "You are always forgetful. You never fulfill your responsibilities." Associating a separate issue with different issues like this may lead to misinterpretations.
- Rolling your eyes, looking away, or mocking someone while they are speaking sends the message that they are not being listened to. Meanwhile, the person explaining themselves may not feel understood. This can lead the person to become angry.
- Avoiding the topic or trying to close it down interrupts communication and can lead to a lack of conclusion.
- Adopting a defensive attitude is like building a wall between yourself and the other person. In such cases, the individual focuses so much on self-defense that the other person's message or emotions become unimportant. This person often starts sentences with "But...". In addition to the defensive approach, he/she may often make excuses.
- When a disagreement occurs, sulking, giving silent treatment, or refusing to talk can lead to a breakdown in communication and prevent the problem from being resolved.
- Paying attention to other things during a conversation can make the other person feel dismissed or as if they don't matter.
- Assuming what the other person is thinking, known as mind reading, is one of the main barriers to healthy communication. This can also be called reading intentions. Guessing what the person thinks rather than what the person says and acting with a lot of faith in that guess can lead to misunderstandings.



TIPS FOR POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

The family is a social system that plays a crucial role in children's identity development, emotion regulation skills, and secure attachment structures. The functionality of this system is directly related to the quality of communication between family members. Positive communication enables family members to understand each other better, be sensitive to emotional needs, and contribute to the development of supportive relationships. The main communication strategies that can be implemented to strengthen this structure can be summarized as follows:

1. Active Listening

Active listening is not only about hearing the words, but also about recognizing what is being

said, the emotions, and the needs in the background. This form of listening strengthens the emotional bond between family members. Listening to the person speaking without interruption, paying attention to non-verbal communication elements (eye contact, gestures, body language, etc.), and using short feedback to show understanding supports this process. Especially for children and adolescents, this form of listening fosters feelings of being "heard" and "cared for".

2. Using I Language

The use of I language during communication allows a person to express his/her own feelings and needs without blaming the other person. Using statements such as "I feel neglected in this situation" instead of generalizing and

judgmental statements such as "You always do this" reduces conflict and encourages emotional openness. This approach allows one to convey one's own internal process without shifting responsibility onto the other party. As a result, communication becomes more empathetic, and cooperation based.

3. Empathize

Empathy is not only about relating to another person's feelings, but also about trying to understand another person's life from their point of view. An empathic approach within the family environment helps individuals feel understood and accepted. Especially during adolescence, a period of intense developmental changes, an empathetic approach strengthens the emotional confidence of the individual. Empathizing often makes it easier for us to see the basic needs underlying conflicts.

4. Using Positive and Encouraging Language

Words have the power to shape the emotional atmosphere. The preference for positive language in the family positively affects people's perceptions of self-worth. A simple "Well done, you did very well" or "I trust you," not only fulfills the need for appreciation but also increases children's motivation. Constant criticism delivered in a negative tone harms communication, while positive and constructive expressions strengthen the sense of trust.

5. Spending Quality Time

The quality of time spent with family members is more important than its duration. Quality time includes joint activities that are carried out with mutual interest and without

distraction. This could include reading a book together, going for a walk, playing a game, or reviewing the day briefly. Such interactions strengthen family ties and deepen communication between individuals. On this subject, you can check "Family Bulletin – Issue 15: Productive Family Time."

6. Being Patient and Understanding

Being patient, especially, during emotionally intense moments of communication is key to maintaining a lasting relationship. The way people express their emotions can vary and for some it can take time. In such cases, hasty and insistent attitudes should be avoided, and the pace of the person should be respected. Patience creates a basis for communication that does not undermine the relationship of trust.

7. Set Clear and Consistent Rules

The healthy functioning of family order is only possible with boundaries that are understood and accepted by all. Rules based on shared values clarify the roles and responsibilities of family members. Consistent application of these rules both strengthens parental authority and teaches children life skills. In addition, children's participation in the decision-making process reinforces their sense of belonging.

8. Paying Attention to Daily Small Interactions

Communication is shaped not only in moments of great crisis, but also in ordinary days. A "Good morning!" when you wake up in the morning, a hug when you get home in the evening, asking questions at the end of the day

like "Did anything make you happy today?" quietly strengthen the bonds in a relationship. Over time, these small interactions form the basic foundations of relationships.

9. Sharing Your Feelings

Sharing emotions at the appropriate time and in the appropriate environment, rather than suppressing them, ensures emotional balance and increases mutual understanding. Parents' healthy expression of their own emotions to their children both models and encourages emotional openness. An expression like "I'm really tired today, but spending time with you

relaxes me" supports both emotional sharing and the relationship itself.

10. Admit Mistakes and Apologize

People make mistakes from time to time. What is important is the attitude after the mistake. When someone in the family, especially a parent, apologizes, it is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of strong character. This quality enables children to take responsibility and repair relationships. Apologizing is a sign of sincerity and respect in communication.

Let's examine positive communication tips through a case study.

Elif, a 10th-grade student, stopped by the library after school with a few friends to work on a group project. Since they had to do some research, time passed quickly, and Elif didn't realize how late it had become. When she returned home, it was already late in the evening, and her family was both worried and angry because they hadn't heard from her. The moment the door opened, her mother's voice rose: "Do you know what time it is? Where have you been? Don't you think about us at all?" Her father added harshly, "How can we trust you?"

Faced with such a reaction, Elif immediately became defensive. "So what? I'm just a little late! You're exaggerating," she said and quickly went to her room. At this point, communication moved away from mutual understanding and reached a breaking point.

However, in line with the principles of positive communication, parents could have managed this situation in a more constructive way. Now let's examine this example. It would have been more effective if they had first acknowledged their emotions and calmed down, and then spoken to Elif using non-judgmental language while making eye contact. Her mother could say, for example: "We were really worried when you were late. We felt worried because we didn't know where you were. We were afraid that something had happened to you." This kind of approach allows Elif to express herself without being defensive.

Elif explains that she was helping her friend with her project homework, but the research got long, and she forgot to check her phone. Upon this explanation, the parents, appreciating her sense of responsibility, may agree that in similar situations in the future, she should send a short text message. In this way, trust is preserved, Elif feels a sense of responsibility rather than guilt, and the open, supportive family communication is strengthened.

Could you solve an everyday family situation according to positive communication tips?

COMMUNICATION CARDS

Communication cards is a card game designed to increase communication between parents and children. Create a deck of cards by cutting out the boxes below. The deck of cards is placed in the center so that the writing cannot be seen. Everyone takes turns picking a card from the center. Answer the question on the card or follow the instructions on it.

<p>When someone interrupts you, how do you respond using I language?</p>	<p>Who in your family would you thank today and for what?</p>
<p>What was the most challenging thing for you at school or work this week?</p>	<p>Name one situation in the family that has been the most difficult for you. How can your family help you overcome this challenge?</p>
<p>Describe your family in one word.</p>	<p>Close your eyes and take a deep breath. What emotion are you feeling right now? Where in your body do you feel this sensation?</p>
<p>What does family mean to you? Think about it for two minutes.</p>	<p>How do you think your family members spent today? What emotions might they have felt?</p>
<p>What emotion would you feel if you were the person sitting in front of you today? Why?</p>	<p>Can you remember a kind act someone in the family did this week, perhaps we didn't thank him/her for?</p>
<p>Imagine a family activity we want to do together: Where and what are we doing?</p>	<p>Which boundary (rule) violation at home bothers you the most? What do you need to protect this boundary?</p>
<p>Today, name two positive behaviors of your family members.</p>	<p>What was the funniest family memory when you were little? Tell us.</p>
<p>Imagine an unforgettable vacation together: Where are we, how is our day going?</p>	<p>What is the quietest corner of the house? How can we make it more peaceful?</p>



QUESTION AND ANSWER CORNER

Question:

What is the importance of having a common attitude as parents of our child?

Answer:

A consistent attitude between parents creates a secure and predictable structure in the child's inner world. For children, being able to "anticipate an adult's reaction" is the basis of their emotional regulation and behavior control skills. If the mother sets a different limit and the father loosens it, the child is not only confused but also begins to question the authority of the rules. Over time, this can turn into a power struggle with the parent. There may, of course, be differences of opinion, but these should be discussed together in a calm environment, not in front of the child, and a common ground should be found and agreed upon.





Question:

It is not always possible to remain calm while communicating with children. What should we do in these situations?

Answer:

This is a natural human response, and "staying calm all the time" is not a realistic expectation. But what is important here is the difference between acting out of anger and being able to recognize and regulate it. Emotions are contagious; if the parent is angry, the child either becomes fearful or responds in the same tone. When we find it difficult to stay calm, it is very useful to take a break, to get away from the environment for a short time, or to take a few deep breaths to reduce the physical tension. If we realize that we've reacted in a way we didn't intend, explaining this to the child and apologizing can have a restorative effect on communication. This is valuable both in terms of being a role model and in showing that mistakes can be made in human relationships.

Question:

I can't talk to my adolescent child; he/she misunderstands everything we say.
How should we approach him/her?

Answer:

Adolescence is a stage of development in which individualization and the search for identity are intense, and emotional fluctuations are frequent. In this period, the parents' attitude becomes more important than their words. Adolescents often want to be given space and tend to be sensitive to the language of advice. Therefore, instead of offering a direct solution, it is more effective to use language that connects with emotion. For example, instead of saying "Why do you always act like this?", saying, "There are times when I have a hard time understanding you, but I'm curious to know how you really feel" may reduce defensiveness. Respecting the adolescent's right to make his/her own decisions and using communication with him/her as a way of bonding rather than as a means of control will increase trust in the long term.





Question:

How should we manage communication between siblings? Should we intervene in their conflicts?

Answer:

Sibling conflicts are actually a natural learning area in terms of social skills development. However, when conflict escalates or one party is repeatedly harmed, the adult's regulatory role must come into play. It is better to "guide" rather than intervene. Listening to both children without taking sides, helping them identify their feelings, and encouraging them to find solutions are more effective approaches. For example, instead of saying, "Why did you do that?" you could say, "I want to understand how you both feel. Now, can you tell me in turn?" With these kinds of sentences, you can both reduce conflict and support the development of problem-solving skills. It should be remembered that interactions between siblings serve as a natural laboratory for children to learn how to behave in social relationships.

PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITY CALENDAR

01

Write a thank you note to a friend.

02

Design a robot and draw a picture of it.

03

Research Saturn's features.

04

Learn a song in Turkish.

9

Gather information about Bryce Canyon National Park.

10

Draw a new cover for your favorite book.

11

Examine the life of ants.

12

Share a chapter of your favorite book with your family.

17

Research "Hattusa", included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

18

Research the ancient city Zeugma in Türkiye.

19

Do stretching exercises.

20

Discover the art of origami.

25

Make your own bookmark.

26

Research the works of Mimar Sinan.

27

Draw a picture of an elephant.

28

Watch an animal documentary.

05

Learn an Uzbek dish.

06

Play chess.

07

Research how a caterpillar turns into a butterfly.

08

Analyze Pablo Picasso's painting Bread and Fruit Dish on a Table.

13

Write in your diary the emotions you feel today.

14

Listen to "The Carnival of the Animals" by Camille Saint-Saëns.

15

Draw a picture of a baobab tree.

16

Research how waves are formed.

21

Make a poster of an emotion .

22

Examine your family tree.

23

Develop a social responsibility idea.

24

Solve crossword puzzles.

29

Listen to "Peter and the Wolf" by Sergei Prokofiev.

30

Write a story.

31

Write a poem expressing your feelings.

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