

Barriers to Communication with Our Children

(e.g. something that gets in the way of parents and children talking with each other)

Ways that may hold back our communication with children:

- Repeating what we say over and over (nagging)
- Interrupting while your child is speaking
- Bringing up the past (focusing on a misbehavior from the past)
- Using threats
- Giving multiple instructions at once

Ways to have better communication:

- Say things one at a time
- Use language your child understands
- Let your child finish what they are saying
- Focus on the current situation

Communication Builders: try using one phrase a day and think about how it went.

1. "I'd like to hear about it."
2. "Tell me more about that."
3. "Would you like to talk about it?"
4. "Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?"
5. "That's interesting."
6. "Wow!"
7. "I'm interested."



Activity #1: Hokey Pokey

"You put your right foot in,
You put your right foot out;
You put your right foot in,
And you shake it all about.

You do the Hokey-Pokey,
And you turn yourself around.
That's what it's all about!"

**Repeat using different body parts and have fun singing with your child!

Activity #2: Mother May I?

**Start with the child on the opposite side of the room (inside) or yard (outside) from you.

The players (child) may ask some of the following of Mother (parent). Mother, may I _____? For example:

- Take (a number of) steps forward
- Take (a number of) GIANT steps forward

If the Parent does not approve of the suggestions, they might

- Offer a different suggestion
- Tell the child to take a number of steps or hops backward