

Dear Parents,

Over the last several weeks, your adolescent has participated in a unit on effective communication. As a culminating learning experience, they will participate in a communication project with you for the next four weeks. The purpose of this culminating learning experience, the Parent Communication Project (PCP), is to provide students the opportunity to use communication skills (passive & active listening, genuine inquiry questions, and I Statements) in real-life situations (with you). Like most skills (e.g., playing a musical instrument, shooting a basketball, etc.), social-emotional skills are complex and not easily learned. To develop proficiency, students must be given multiple opportunities to practice the skills in class and in real life. They need to process their use of the skills and, whenever possible, be given feedback on what they did well and what they need to do to improve, and then modify their response. Using skills in real-life situations, processing the results, and modifying their response is necessary and must be continuous and ongoing.

During the four weeks they will be participating in the project (and hopefully beyond), they are to give their best effort to communicate with you using the following skills:

1. Passively Listen: Pay Attention and Show Interest
2. Actively Listen: Paraphrase/Summarize the Content of What You Say
3. Actively Listen: Paraphrase/Summarize Your Spoken and Unspoken Feelings
4. Ask Genuine Inquiry Questions to Help Them Understand What You Are Saying & Feeling
5. Avoid “You” Statements (criticism, put-downs, preaching, threats, being demanding)
6. Use “I” Statements: Share What They Are Feeling & Why They Are Feeling That Way

They may use the Listening, Inquiry, & I Statements Skill Card for the first two weeks to help them learn the skills. This is similar to an actor using a cue card.

I ask that you chart their progress daily using the PCP Self-Monitoring Chart and complete the PCP Parent Weekly Feedback sheet every seven days. Please sit with them each week and provide them with feedback. Your adolescent will bring home copies of the Self-Monitoring Chart, directions for its use, and the PCP Parent Weekly Feedback sheet. Suggestions for providing feedback are outlined below.

At the end of the project, you will be asked to complete a PCP Parent Assessment At the End of the Project Likert Scale, a PCP Parent Assessment of Effort Likert Scale, a PCP End of the Project Summary Questions For Parents, and an End of the Project Parent Grade Summary. After completing these, I ask that you sit with your adolescent and provide feedback. This may seem like a lot, but the whole process should not take more than one hour at the end of the project. Your adolescent will return all completed work to me at a designated time.

A parent, or parents (if two parents will be involved in the project) are asked to please sign the Parent Participation form indicating that you have read the information about the project and agree to participate.

Please detach the Parent Participation form and have your adolescent return it the next time they have class. Thank you in advance for participating in this project and helping your adolescent communicate more proficiently.

The following documents are available on my webpage. Students also have copies of these documents and have been using them to help them develop proficiency in these skills.

1. Healthy Relationships Reading
2. Listening & Inquiring Reading
3. I Statements Reading
4. Listening, Inquiry, & I Statements Skill Card
5. Giving Feedback Skill Card

Sincerely,

PCP Parent Feedback

Giving Feedback:

After every seven days, please give your adolescent feedback from your PCP Parent Self-Monitoring Chart and your PCP Parent Weekly Feedback sheet. It would be helpful for them to have their Self-Monitoring Cart and Weekly Assessment sheets so that you may compare results. Please sit down and review both of your assessments as soon as possible. Sit next to each other at a table to see each other's assessments. You will use the same process at the end of the project. For additional information on how to give feedback, see the Giving Feedback Skill Card.

Suggestions For Giving Feedback:

1. For feedback to be helpful, it must be specific and detailed.
2. Review your responses to each question one at a time to see the extent to which you agree. For example, they first share their answer to question # 1, and then you share your answer to question #1, they share their answer to question # 2, and you share your answer, etc.
3. Phrase feedback so it reviews the skill's definition to help them better conceptualize how the skill is to be performed. See the examples below and on the Giving Feedback Skill Card.
4. Whenever possible, give examples of when they used a skill or didn't and the impact it had on you and the conversation. Use I Statements to share the impact their behavior had on you. Share how their responses made you feel and how they impacted the conversation. For example: "*When you...I felt...because...*"
5. If there are significant differences between your scores, ask them to share their perspective and to give specific examples. For example: "*So you think you did ask genuine inquiry questions, is that right?*" If they say "yes," ask them for specific examples of genuine inquiry questions. If you still disagree, don't argue about it. You won't convince them. They may walk away, think about it later, and conclude that you were right. It is easy to feel defensive when given feedback, and some people need more time to process it. If you still disagree, you can say something like "*okay*" and leave it at that.
6. When giving feedback on the question, "Which specific skills did they use best?" start by saying, "*The skills I think you used most effectively are...*" Examples include...
7. When giving feedback on the question, "Which specific skills do they need to work on the most?" Start by saying, "*The skills I think you need to work on the most are...*"

Student's Name: _____

PCP Parent Participation Form

I, _____ agree to participate in the **Parent Communication Project**. I have read the information outlined above and will complete the Parent Monitoring Chart daily, complete the Weekly Parent Assessments, and give my adolescent weekly feedback.

We will keep the chart in the following location: _____

We will start the project on the following date _____ and will continue it for 28 days.

(Parent's Signature/Signatures)