

10 ROAD BLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

| Road Block | Definition | Example(s) | Situation | Adult Response |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| 1. Judging | Making a judgment | 1) You should ... and 2) You ought to ... | Mom, I'm not sure what to do about my class schedule this year. It's really tough with all the extras I've got to do. | You should take every math and science course offered. You ought to see how important that is. |
| 2. Rejecting | Giving no support | It's your problem, not mine. | Dad, that boy just took my truck. | It's your problem. You solve it. |
| 3. Blaming, Criticizing | Placing fault on the other person | It's your fault. | Mom, the jar of glue just fell over on the floor. | Look what you did! The carpet is ruined! It's all your fault! |
| 4. Labeling | Calling negative names or words that are negative | Only a dummy would do it that way. | Your 8-year-old got dressed for school—orange and blue shirt, green and yellow striped pants, red socks, sandals, and a baseball hat. | Only a clown would dress like that for school! |
| 5. Transferring | Not listening and jumping in with one's own problems | Let me tell what happened to me. | Dad, it's not my fault my math teacher hates me. | Let me tell you about my boss. You think you've got trouble! |
| 6. Ordering | Giving solutions with no choices | You must do this now. | I think I'll go to the movies tonight Mom. | You will not. You're going to stay home and study. You're going to bring your grades up. |
| 7. Threatening, Bribing | Using threats or bribes to try to make someone do something | 1) If you don't do what I want ... and 2) If you do what I want, I do this for you. | But Dad, it's the last night for "Star Wars," and I haven't seen it. | If you don't study, there will be no car this weekend. |
| 8. Waffling | Not being clear and consistent in setting limits | 1) Well, maybe ..., 2) We'll see ..., and 3) I'll think about it ... | Mom, I really need to know if I can go to the concert on Saturday night. | We'll see—I'll think about it. |
| 9. Nagging | Persistently repeating orders or requests | 1) I've told you a thousand times ... and 2) How many times do I have to ask you to ... | I'll pick up the puzzle later Dad. | I'm not going to tell you again. I've told you ten times to pick it up. Now! |
| 10. Acting | Using body language that sends negative messages or that rebuffs; being physically abusive | 1) Crossing arms, 2) Not looking at speaker, 3) Walking away, 4) Tapping feet, 5) Shaking finger in face, 6) Hitting, and 7) Kicking. | Your child comes home from school, slams the door shut, drops his/her clothes on the floor, kicks the cabinet, and turns on the TV. | You frown, cross your arms, tap your foot, and stand in front of your child. |

10 BUILDING BLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

| Building Block | Definition | Example(s) | Situation | Adult Response |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| 1. Listening | Focusing on the present; not bringing up <i>past</i> problems or mistakes; creating <i>safety</i> to express anything | I feel that right now you need me to just listen to you. | Dad, it's been a terrible day. Absolutely horrible—I really messed up! | Would you like to tell me about it? I'll just listen. |
| 2. Praising | Giving earned rewards frequently; recognizing <i>efforts</i> rather than products or end results | You worked so long and so hard on the project. | Look at what I made with my blocks and trucks and sticks! | You worked a long time to build your city and look at how you used every block. |
| 3. Feeling | Sharing feelings such as anger, joy, and frustration; using "I" statements | 1) I feel ..., 2) I'm so angry when you ..., and 3) I love you. | I hate you! | I love you and feel very sad when you say that. |
| 4. Respecting | Letting others make decisions; avoiding judging and advising; trying to help him/her make his/her own decisions | 1) It's your choice. and 2) What can I do to help you? | Mom, I don't know what to do. He says he will break up with me if I don't go all the way. | What can I do to help you with this tough decision? |
| 5. Listening | Identifying the feeling as well as the content and asking the person to confirm it | It sounds like you were very <i>frustrated</i> by the class change. Is that right? | I can't believe that my teacher is giving me a "C" on my paper. I worked really hard and did everything he told me to do. | You sound very frustrated and disappointed? Is that right? Would you like to talk about it? |
| 6. Trusting | Being consistent; asking for input and understanding that children need to learn in their own way even if they make mistakes | I know you will be thoughtful and responsible. | She is a good driver. She is careful and makes everyone wear a seatbelt. Can I ride to the lake with her? | I know I can trust you and you have good judgment. |
| 7. Affirming | Finding the <i>positive</i> to express | 1) You are so competent. and 2) You make me happy when you ... | Dad, look at me, look at me! I swam to the other side of the pool. | You are such a good swimmer and know how to be safe in the water. |
| 8. Reflective Listening | Reflecting what another says; paraphrasing a person's words so he/she know he/she has been heard | You sound angry about your friend's response. Is that so? | You won't believe what she said and did to me. I'll never be her friend again! | You sound very angry with her. Is that right? Would you like to talk about it? |
| 9. Clarifying | Asking for more information when unsure | Could you tell me more about ...? | I hate him. I don't care if I ever play with him again. | Can you tell me more about what happened with him? |
| 10. Acting | Finding physical ways to show care, concern, and attention | 1) Making eye contact, 2) Touching when appropriate, 3) Hugging, 4) Staying near the person. | Your son comes home from school, slams the door shut, kicks the cabinet, and turns on the TV. | You sit next to him, hold his hand, look him in the eye, and <i>then</i> tell him that you would like to know why he's angry. |