

Family Communication

There is often so much going on in daily family life that your interactions as a family can become focused around necessary daily activities with little time to focus on *how* you are communicating as a family, especially when you are experiencing key life transitions and/or dilemmas as a family.

When a family is faced with changes or challenges, no matter how small, paying attention to communication can be really helpful in navigating these and developing their resources as a family.

Tips for family communication

- Try to make the time for frequent opportunities for everyone to talk about and share what matters for each of you. This could be something you would like your family to know about or that you would like to ask for their support with.
- Plan to do something together as a family on a regular basis. This could be spending an evening together at home where you play or talk together with no distractions from electronic devices such as the TV, internet, X-box etc, or it could be an activity out of the home that you can all enjoy doing together.
- Get into the habit of giving each other positive, supportive and encouraging feedback.
- Try to describe your thoughts, feelings and wishes simply, clearly and calmly without blaming or shaming your family member.
- Look at the person you are talking to.
- Ask questions to learn more about each other's thoughts, feelings and wishes around a particular issue.
- Observe what the other person might be feeling as well as what they are saying.
- Try to let each other know if you are finding a conversation difficult or upsetting.
- When there is a family issue that needs addressing try to find an appropriate time to discuss it together and let everyone have a turn in describing their thoughts, feelings and wishes.