Giving Constructive Feedback   *(Choices Additional Materials Section 2)*

Communication for Growth

This involves honesty, empathy and genuine communication with your child. We all know what it feels like to be corrected in an encouraging way and we know the warm and fuzzy feeling we get when this happens. Similarly we also know what it feels like when someone corrects us in an uncaring way and we talk about people being warm to us or cold to us.

As parents sometimes when our views are seriously threatened by our child it is very hard to respond in a constructive way which upholds our values.

This sheet aims to outline some of the principles in giving constructive feedback with a family situation. You will have an opportunity to practise these in the game of life.

Principles

Choose your timing - if you are really angry it may be better to delay the response

In some situations where emotions are running really high it is better to correct the immediate situation and say that this will be discussed later. The pause button is really good!

I remember my own parents using this strategy and it saved them and me from regrets.

Similarly choosing the right moment to say something makes it special and considered.

Be objective

Describe the behaviour, what your child is doing rather than placing a value on that behaviour or linking it them as a person.

Describe your feelings –model apology and forgiveness

It is important that your child knows how things make you feel and they gain a wide vocabulary for discussing their feelings. It is also important that they know you love them unconditionally.

Be specific rather than general

Describe the incident, say what you did not like and direct it towards something your child can do something about or change.

Negotiate with your child

Changes usually occur because people agree to change. It is important in working with your child's bid for independence that their views are sought and where appropriate they agree with you the correct reaction/response to the conflict situation.