**Promote Strong Listening Skills in Your Children**

Being the kind of parent you need to be requires knowledge, consistency, and a sense of confidence. One important skill to cultivate in your children is listening. **Good communication skills will benefit your children in all aspects of their lives - at home, school, work, and in relationships.** If your children know how to listen well, they will live a more fulfilling and successful life.

**Try these strategies to promote strong listening skills in your children:**

1. **Listen to your children.** One of the strongest ways that children learn is through modeling behaviors of their parents.
	* **When you demonstrate good listening skills in your everyday life in the presence of your kids, they will learn those skills, too.** They can see how it's done by watching you.
2. **Make eye contact.** In any type of communication, look in the eyes of the person you're talking to and teach your children to do the same.
* **A subtle and special connection is made when people make eye contact.** You can start modeling this behavior to your children when they're quite young, even before the age of 2 years.
1. **Ask your child to sit down and focus.** This suggestion sends the message, "Get ready to listen because I'm going to talk."
2. **Spot-check their listening skills.** From time to time, ask your child what you just said. You're trying to determine what your child heard by asking him to paraphrase what you said. When he repeats it properly, praise his efforts.
* If they don't get it quite right, you have an opportunity to repeat what you said for clarification and to enhance their listening skills.
1. **Reinforce a child's effort to listen, no matter how small.** **When your child shows they’re attempting to listen, it's smart to reinforce those efforts right away.**
* After a conversation, simple responses, such as smiling while you say, "Great job on listening," also let your kids know they exhibited the important behavior you were seeking.

**Promoting your child's listening abilities is best done in small ways every single day.** As a parent, you're the best role model for teaching your children communication skills. Reward their efforts with smiles and positive comments, and you're on your way to building their listening skills for a successful future.