

# **Today's Parent USA**

## **Learn how to change the way you communicate and create a more fruitful, connected relationship with your children in five easy steps**

### **1) Understand the NLP communication model**

NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) shows how the information we receive externally through our nervous system and five senses, affects us internally.

We receive information at about 2 million bits per second from the senses in the form of pictures, sounds, sensations, tastes, and smells that is then deleted, generalized and distorted through the various filters.

The mind then chooses, whether consciously or not, what mood to be in, what energy level to adopt and how to behave based on our values, beliefs, memories and decisions.

### **2) Establish and maintain rapport with your children**

Consciously model open, positive, warm and caring facial expressions and postures. Smile and give eye contact. Match and mirror their gestures. Use this goodwill to allow you to lead them onto exciting adventures, learn new skills or to help you with the chores.

Call them by name and never attach negative labels to them. Remember a person's name is the sweetest thing to a person's ears.

Learn to read subtle body language. As the child moves into rapport with you, notice these changes:

- The pupils in their eyes will become more focused and dilated
- Their lower lip will puff up and the hands and feet will darken slightly
- Their breathing will deepen, slow down and become more relaxed
- The skin will be shinier.

Use a positive tone of voice to indicate your belief in your child. To encourage your child to smoothly follow your instructions, lower your voice at the end of a sentence to command respect and authority.

Introduce new words in context, using illustrations for those who like to learn visually. Tell stories, use metaphors to explain ideas and enjoy the rhythm of song and poetry.

Use meal times to enjoy the company of your child by sitting down together away from the TV.

### **3) Use effective language**

Encourage your child to see life positively as challenges to be overcome and lessons to be learnt, so that they can become a better human being. You might say to your child, "*Let's find a solution to this issue!*" The mind will then go and search for an answer.

Use language that focuses on what you want, rather than what you don't want. When out with your child say, "Walk on the road with care," not, "Don't run on the road." The mind does not process negatives and will only form a picture of running on the road.

Your language needs to also promote mutual courtesy, respect and consideration in all your relationships, including with your child.

Give constructive feedback to your child when teaching them a new skill. Comment on their successes and then suggest ONE area that changes could be made for a better outcome.

If your child is stressed about something, reframe the situation. Ask a question, "How would you feel if you were high in the sky looking down on earth. Would this still seem like a problem?"

Encourage your child be aware of the little voice in their head and to say nice things to themselves. Motivate them to visualize the planned events for the day as being resonant, pleasant and successful.

### **4) Frame behavior**

People, including children behave differently in different contexts. A child's behavior does not represent the whole person, only the part you are seeing at the time.

Children behave in a certain way to satisfy their own needs not to upset the parent. Ask them questions that give them the opportunity to explore more positive ways of thinking.

If your child says to you, "*I can't do this.*" You might say, "*What prevents you?*" or "*What would happen if you could?*" This will completely change the mood of the child from one of impossibility to one of possibility.

### **5) Practice self-control and recognize emotional states.**

Learn to remain calm even in challenging situations. Take a deep breath to enable you to think clearly. Spend some time alone with your thoughts.

Recognize what state you are in and if you need to improve your mood, do something positive to move you to a slightly better, feeling state.

Your child will notice what you are doing and will also soon begin to adopt healthy ways of managing stress, such as reframing thoughts, exercising, gardening, hobbies, socializing etc.

Gaye O'Brien is an NLP Trainer, Coach, Educational Consultant, Author and Speaker. Her books include: *NLP Essentials for Teachers: The Art of Encouraging Excellence in Your Students*, and contributions to the best selling series, *Adventures in Manifesting: Healing Within* and *Entrepreneur Success Stories: How Common People Achieve Uncommon Results*.  
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