



Monthly Parenting Tip from the ACFC

April 2020

Parenting in Difficult Times



FREE LIFE-CHANGING ONLINE PARENTING COURSES

In these video-based, interactive classes—available 24/7—you'll learn a consistent, encouraging style of parenting that will benefit you and your children for a lifetime. With this self-study course, you have the option of when to participate based on your own schedule and at your convenience. Gain additional insight from your online group leaders as they provide support and feedback.

Choose from four available courses:

- **Active Parenting: First Five Years:**
For parents of children from birth to age 5
- **Active Parenting 4th ED:**
For parents of children ages 5 to 12
- **Active Parenting of Teens:**
For parents of preteens and teens
- **Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce:**
For divorced and divorcing parents

Continue your experience as an “active” parent by reviewing what you learn in the class in your accompanying parent guide. Each guide contains additional information, activities, and worksheets to help you practice what you learn.

Visit [ACFCcares.com](https://www.acfccares.com) for more information and to start your Active Parenting journey today.

It seems like we are faced every day with a new traumatic event. Children recognize that they are susceptible to violence and are even taking a stand to make our leaders address these issues. What can you do as a parent to help your children deal with a tense situation where they see or hear something that concerns them? It's important that your children know they can come to you with their concerns and not be judged or dismissed.

Active Communication is a five-step process that will help you win your children's cooperation and trust. **Active Communication** works best when you want to work with them to help them solve a problem. These are the five steps to **Active Communication**.

1. Listen actively.

When you are listening actively, you do more than just receive information; you actively participate in the communication process. You listen with your eyes as well as your ears, so keep them focused on your child. You listen with your intuition as well as your intellect, using all available brainpower to address the situation at hand. The goal of active listening is to encourage them to express what they are thinking and feeling.

2. Listen for feelings.

Your children need to acknowledge and accept their feelings rather than keep them bottled up. Teach them to describe how they feel and then to reflect on these feelings before they decide what action to take. You can help them by not just listening to the content of their stories, but also how they feel. Pay attention to tone of voice, posture, and body language to help determine their state of mind. When you have an idea of what your child is feeling, reflect these feelings back to him or her. Your job is to keep listening, empathizing, and reflecting back those feelings.

3. Look for alternatives and consequences.

Children don't usually spend as much time as adults evaluating solutions to a problem as mature adults do. A parent's role is to slow them down by helping them look at various options and predict the consequences of their actions. When you help them come up with alternatives, be sure to keep your palms up, to communicate to them that you are listening and open to their ideas.

4. Offer encouragement.

Once your children have a potential solution to the dilemma, a word of encouragement can help them find the courage to put the plan into action. Let them know that you support them and “have their backs.”

5. Follow up later.

You and your child can gain a tremendous amount of insight by talking about how his/her situation turned out. First, ask them how they handled the problem, then ask about the results.

To learn more about how you can become an “active” parent, go to vimeopro.com/activeparenting/acfc and enter Access Code: ACFC150630 (case-sensitive) when prompted. You'll find a library of informative videos for parents of children of all ages. These helpful videos are offered free of charge by the ACFC in partnership with Active Parenting.