



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.

Communication: The Road to Cooperation

How we teach cooperation to our children is a matter of how and what we communicate. It involves both attitude and skill. Active parents develop an attitude that says to the child, "You have the right to decide how to solve this problem. I can help, but you are the key to solving this and other problems you will encounter throughout your life. I believe you have what it takes to solve problems. You have good sense and a perspective that is truly your own. You will make some mistakes along the way, maybe some big ones. But you will recover from those mistakes, learn from them, and grow stronger in the process. Now, let's solve the problem."

Developing the communication skills to help others solve problems effectively will do more for your children than solving problems for them. These same communication skills will continue to help them throughout their lives, making them better students, friends, workers, colleagues, and spouses. Why? Because communication skills help build cooperation skills.

When you communicate with your child, try asking questions that foster discussion. Instead of asking how their day was, ask questions that will make them feel comfortable sharing their feelings. Some examples are:

- How did it go at school today? Did anything special happen?
- Did you meet any new friends today?
- Did anything happen to make you sad or upset?
- Did anything happen that made you feel good about yourself?

When it comes to communicating basic information like driving directions or a shopping list, your words carry most of the message. However, with an emotionally charged message like a problem, research has shown that more of the message is carried by body language, followed by tone of voice, and lastly, the words themselves. In other words, how you say something is often even more important than what you say. When all three channels of communication carry the same message, the communication is very clear and powerful. However, when we say one thing with our words and something else with our tone and/or body language, we send a *mixed message*. This not only dilutes the strength of the message, but often sabotages the spirit of cooperation you are trying to build. This is why developing a positive attitude is so important. If your attitude is negative, you may be able to hide it with the words you choose, but your tone of voice and body language will almost always give you away. The next time you have a discussion with your child try to focus on not just what you say, but also your posture, how you hold your hands and the tone of your voice.

To learn more about effective parenting skills, visit the Active Parenting Online Video Library. These helpful videos are offered free of charge by the ACFC in partnership with Active Parenting. Guidance and help are available for parents of children of all ages. To access the Online Video Library, go to the [ACFC website](https://www.acfc.org), click on the Active Parenting tab, and follow the instructions on how to view the videos.