

Facilitator's Tool Box – Communication Module

Introduction Exercise

Purpose: To give participants a chance to say something positive about each other, to hear something positive about themselves, and to introduce the idea of restating what they've heard back to the speaker.

Outcome: A positive atmosphere among participants, receptiveness to further practice and mindset conducive to processing information about effective communication techniques. Provides first step of communication skills to build on with subsequent skills.

This is most effective if done early in the session about Communication.

Instructions: Ask each parent/child dyad to think of one thing they like, appreciate or admire about the other and tell that person. The second person is to restate what they heard from the speaker. Then they switch and the second person in the dyad tells what they like, appreciate or admire about the other person, who then says what they heard.

Processing: Inform the participants they have just mastered a basic step in effective communication, that of restating the content of communication. Point out that this is useful in certain situations—receiving instructions or directions; when detailed, factual information is being conveyed, such as terms of a sale.

Notice who rephrases or actually reflects emotion from the speaker. Inform the group these are examples of the next level of effective communication we'll be talking about—paraphrasing and reflecting feeling--that we use with people whom we most want to understand.