



# healthy communication

## The Art of Connecting

This is a supplemental parent-education module that is designed to provide support to parents and caregivers and helps them build their communication strategies, which they can use to establish healthy connections with their child and nurture the parent-child relationship.

Using effective communication is essential in building and maintaining successful relationships, and one of the most meaningful relationships parents and caregivers will likely create is the one they develop with their child. Using communication skills, such as active listening and making eye contact while speaking, can show the person you are talking to that you love and/or respect them. In addition, using considerate and positive communication can help you set boundaries in parent-child relationships. In this module, parents and caregivers will explore the topic of communication, in general and within families, and learn strategies and techniques they can use to support healthy communication between themselves and their children.

Others often interpret our words and actions based on what we say and how we say it. Non-verbal communication can play a significant role in how our messages are received. This module can help parents and caregivers recognize and understand their own communication behaviors and identify when they may want to use alternative approaches with their children depending on different situations. Developing this self-awareness and using healthy communication skills can help parents and caregivers feel confident that their messages are being received as intended, and this can lead to more positive and meaningful interactions with their children.

This supplemental module builds on information and strategies that are discussed in the four universal Thrive parenting programs — *Take Root, Sprout, Grow, or Branch Out* — so it is recommended that you participate in the age-appropriate universal Thrive parenting program prior to using the supplemental module.



**In this module, you will learn how to do the following:**



Understand yourself as a communicator and recognize how you communicate with others.



Examine how you communicate with your child, and consider the possible unintended impact of your messages in everyday situations, like helping with homework or managing tantrums.



Assess the relationship between parenting styles and communication, and learn how to apply authoritative strategies in daily interactions.



Identify the usefulness of, and be able to apply, healthy communication strategies, such as I-statements and active listening.



Explore how using positive non-verbal language—like eye contact, body language, and tone of voice—can strengthen your ability to convey your intended message when communicating with your child and others.



Communicate effectively during a disagreement by using guidelines that can help you remain open and committed to resolving the issue.



Manage complaints and corrections constructively to help ensure your feedback supports your child's confidence and self-worth



Improve your ability to foster effective and open communication with your child through activities like daily check-ins and family meetings.

For more information about this supplemental module, visit:

<https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental>