

Gentle Stepping

Feb. 2017

Gentle Steps Foundation

Strengthening Families

Communication: Parent and Child

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Communication can happen both verbally and non-verbally. For example when we talk to someone we are verbally communicating. When we express how we are feeling by the look on our face we are communicating non-verbally. As we communicate with others it can be positive or negative and effective or unsuccessful.

As a parent it is important to be able to communicate in an open and effective way. This skill, when applied, will strengthen and benefit the entire family.

Your child learns first from watching how you communicate with them and those around you. If you can communicate well with others by being clear, effective and open, chances are so will your child. Helping your child to develop and use good communication skills will benefit them for their entire life.

As your child begins to form their own ideas, thoughts, emotions, feelings, imagination and dreams about themselves and the world around them it is based mainly on how you and others communicate with them. You are the most important and first teacher your child will have.

When you communicate openly and effectively with your child you are showing them respect and also teaching them how to respect you. You are helping to develop within your child a sense of self-confidence and belonging.

Your child will gain many skills from the way you communicate with them. Most of all they will learn that they have the means of speaking up for what they need, expressing empathy and compassion and developing trusting relationships.

Ways to Communicate

Setting the stage for open, effective communication can be done by being present when your child just wants to talk or if they have questions. Being present means you are willing and able to listen attentively.

Setting the stage...

Providing love, understanding and acceptance creates the perfect climate for a child to feel free to share how they feel, what they think and what their concerns, worries and joys are. Find creative ways to show your child that you love and accept them and that you desire to hear what they think and feel. You can do this verbally and nonverbally.

Send positive messages to your child. Simply put: Catch your child doing the right things! Be consistent with what you say. Make sure that your words are true and that you will do what you are saying.

Be aware of your body language as well as your facial expressions and tone of voice.

Little Treasured Moments

Little Treasured Moments is a play group that is offered for parents and their children ages 4 to 7 year olds. We present the group with a story time and activities that are related to the story.

In March we are happy to announce that we will be offering this program using the book: **Dragons Love Tacos** [Adam Rubin, Daniel Salmieri].

The agenda for this day will include an interactive art project; activity/game time; follow the recipe snack time AND a music, movement and/or dance activity that all connect back to the theme of the story.

This group is limited to 12 families. Please register as soon as possible. For more information please call the office at: (309) 264-5184

Cost: \$10.00



Project: Peaceful Solutions

Peaceful Solutions is geared for children ages 8-13. The project looks at issues surrounding bully prevention; building on communication and problem solving techniques and skills; community enhancement; and equality, justice and safety.

The program will offer a number of different opportunities for your child to express their thoughts and ideas clearly, respectfully and effectively.

Our goal is to begin this program by the end of March and it will run for 8 weeks for 2 hours each Saturday. The group is limited to 10 children Please register your child as soon as possible.

For more information please call the office at: (309) 264-5184

Cost \$2500



EMBRACE

Equality;

Motivating

Behaviors;

Responding through

Action;

Cooperation and

Empathy

This program is for teens 14 -18 who would like to work on projects that will promote community; diversity; civil rights and strengthen social skills and family and personal relationships.

Embrace will run for 8 weeks for 2 hours one day a week. The group is limited to 12 teens. Please register your teen as soon as possible.

For more information please call the office at: (309) 264-5184 Cost \$2500

**“Learn from yesterday,
live for today, hope for
tomorrow. The important
thing is to not stop
questioning.” ~ Albert
Einstein**

Parenting Education Classes

Parenting Education and Support Classes will be offered starting in March 2017. Each group meets for a total of 12 weeks, two hours each week and participants are required to participate in class, do homework assignments and write and complete action plans.

Each week participants will address both formal and informal parenting issues; work on relaxation skills; learn new techniques on how to problem solve, brainstorm new ideas and other important skills that will strengthen their families.

Groups offered will include:

Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Classes

Adult Parenting Classes

Court Ordered Parenting Classes

Please register as soon as possible. For more information please call the office at: (309) 264-5184

Cost \$10.00 (each session) OR \$100 for all 12 sessions if paid in full at intake.

Private Sessions are available for \$35.00 a session with Julia Mitchell-Hoffman, Behaviorist and Pastoral Counselor

Gentle Steps Foundation

400 NE Jefferson
Suite 307
Peoria, IL 61603

Phone:
(309) 264-5184

E-mail:
programs@gentlestepsfoundation.org
<http://www.gentlestepsfoundation.org>



Gently Planting One Seed of Kindness at a Time

Gently Stepping Forward

Gentle Steps Foundation supports families with quality educational and motivational programs that are organized around the following five protective factors:

- Parental Resilience;*
- Social Connections;*
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development;*
- Concrete Support in Times of Need; and Social and Emotional Competence of Children.*