

Active Listening is a great strategy to use to:

- 1) Increase your child's communication
- 2) Improve your communication with your child

Give them your
FULL attention

"Retell" them what you think
you heard

Get down on
their level

Make eye
contact with them

Recognize and appreciate their emotions



Here are some quick and easy ways you can do this:

- Give your full attention to your child. This is different from making sure they are safe and watching them. When we give them our full attention, we listen and respond to the words and gestures they use.
- Make eye contact with them if this is comfortable for you and them. Stop other things you are doing and "hear" the words, gestures or sounds they are using. If eye contact is uncomfortable for you or them, move close to them or position yourself at a comfortable distance to "tell" them you are there and listening.
- Get down on their level by sitting or kneeling close to them. If this is uncomfortable for you, consider sitting them on the couch or at the table so you can be on "their level," but feasible and safe.
- Repeat what you think you heard or use simple words (1-2) if your child is not speaking. Try to use the simplest and clear words you can.
- Identify and appreciate the emotions they are experiencing.
- Write this down in your journal (if able) to return to (if necessary), and an excellent opportunity to write new words, sounds and gestures they're using.