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GARNET VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Penn Medicine
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October 2025

Life, Health and You

Improving Family Communication

Communication is essential for strengthening family bonds. Here are some key strategies to enhance family communication:

- 1. Become a Better Listener**
Listening is just as important as speaking. When you listen attentively, you create a space for others to share what's important to them. To listen effectively: Let the person speak without interrupting. Avoid jumping to conclusions before hearing them out.
- 2. Improve Your Speaking Skills**
Negative communication can shut down conversations. Instead of blaming or accusing, focus on expressing yourself calmly and clearly. Avoid using "you" in a way that sounds like an attack. Share your feelings honestly with words like "sad," "happy," "frustrated," or "worried" to help others understand your emotions.
- 3. Create a Regular Communication Routine**
Setting aside a specific time for family conversations—whether during meals, before bed, or on family outings—helps ensure that everyone stays connected. This is especially important in families with teenagers, where open dialogue is key.
- 4. Foster a Supportive Environment**
Encourage each family member to share their concerns and wishes openly. Be honest about your own feelings and listen to theirs. Support each other through mistakes and challenges by helping each other problem-solve together.
- 5. Be Aware of Non-Verbal Cues**
Your family picks up on more than just your words. Body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice play a huge role in communication. Be mindful of these non-verbal signals, as they can impact how your message is received. By consistently practicing these strategies, you'll build stronger, more meaningful connections with your family, creating a space where everyone feels heard and valued.

Strengthening Family Relationships
Building strong family relationships takes time and effort, but it's essential for lasting bonds. Here are some tips to help strengthen your family connections:

Establish Traditions & Goals:
Keep existing traditions alive, create new ones, and discuss family values and goals together.

Try New Things Together:
Play games, explore new hobbies, or try different foods.

Connect with Distant Family:
Regularly reach out to extended family through calls or video chats to stay connected.

Stay Active:
Plan family exercise sessions or playful challenges.

Laugh Together:
Share fun moments or tell jokes to lighten the mood and strengthen your bond.

Call Your EAP at 888.321.4433