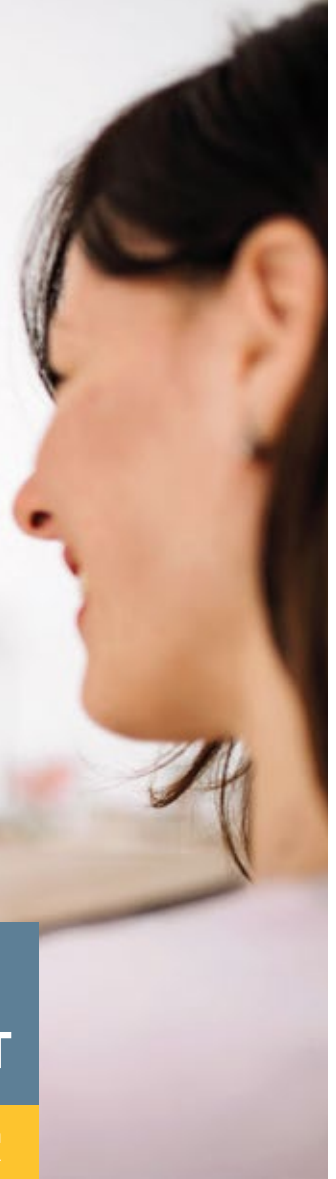




MUMMY
BRAIN
BUILDERS



**INTERACTIVE
ENGAGEMENT**

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HOW SHOULD I INTERACT WITH MY CHILD? WHAT IS COMMUNICATION? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Communication is the most important social tool between people. All the words we use, our body language and facial expressions are elements of communication.

Understanding each other and being able to express ourselves is possible through effective communication.

Interactive engagement is a very important aspect in terms of personal relationships but it is much more important when children are concerned. Because the way in which children interact with others affects the way they perceive themselves. As a result, this defines their interaction with other people.

There are some basic principles which you must consider when communicating with your children.



MAKE AN EYE CONTACT

Put aside whatever you are doing for a while. Make sure you are at the same eye level with your child when you are speaking and establish eye contact. Listen to your child and make sure he/she knows you are listening.



WAIT FOR YOUR TURN

Communication is mutual. That is why it's important that not only one person leads the conversation or play.

Everyone should contribute in turns.

Be patient. Give your child enough time to complete whatever he/ she wants to say. Then use your turn to say whatever you want to say. Be sure not to use your turn so much since your child may get bored or impatient.



ASK QUESTIONS

Make sure to keep your interest and curiosity level high during conversation. Ask your child questions such as: 'What do you think', 'What could have happened afterwards', 'Why do you think he did this...', 'How did you feel?' These types of questions will enable your child to think in different ways, create new solutions to problems and to become more creative and aware.



FOLLOW and OBSERVE

Observe your child in order to be in an effective communication. At the same time try to notice the noises he/she makes, the words he/she uses and the movements. It is important that you understand what your child does and wants during play and what attracts his/her attention so that you can respond accordingly.



PUT ON A CONVERSATION

Have a conversation with your child regardless of his/her age and enjoy it. The language you use should be age appropriate. Let your child start the conversation. Have an enjoyable conversation about whatever your child wants to talk about. You need to show an interest in the topics related to your child's interest areas so that you can have fun conversations. Watch cartoons he/she watches, play with his/her toys and get to know his/her friends. Most importantly, listen to your child with full awareness.

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN YOU ARE TOGETHER?

Having a good time together doesn't only mean being in the same place but it also means being involved in your child's inner world and sharing his/her feelings and thoughts. The most important factor is to know him/her, to be aware of that age group's developmental needs and to accept the fact that each child is unique.

Some mothers, especially working moms, worry about not being able to spend a lot of time with their children.

The quality of time spent together is more important than the amount of time with your children. What you share during this time strengthens your communication.

**If you make your child a part of your life, you
will be able to spend more time together.
During this time;**

Listen to your child, really listen. You may not be listening although you may be standing together and spending time in the same room. The main aspect of communication is listening. Whenever your child says something, listen with will, interest and patience. Make sure your child knows you are listening. A warm and interested facial expression will make the communication stronger.

Accept your child; do not forget that they have their own characteristic traits and they don't need to be like you or their siblings. Your child may be slower or faster or more active than you. Your child may have different interests, fears, wants and thrills. If he/she wants to stop to examine a tree on the way and you say 'It's only a tree. You are just making excuses to stop', this will make your child feel that you don't understand, listen to or respect him/her. And, who knows, maybe a promising botanist of the future may have lost his/her motivation about a future dream!

Try to understand your child's feelings and thoughts;
Your child needs to know that you understand his feelings and needs. When your child fights and struggles with a friend first ask him, how he feels about this and then show him you understand him by saying "You're right, it's a difficult situation".

Don't ask him 'Why are you fighting' or 'Who started it'. Keep in my mind, your child will act in the same way how you act, when you encounter a disagreement.

NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION

Nonviolent communication is a wonderful tool for a peaceful parent-child relationship and conflict management within the family. Let's imagine a 4-year-old who makes noise while playing and wakes up his/her baby sibling.

4 Steps of Nonviolent Communication

1. Objective Observation

Example: 'Your baby brother/sister woke up to the noise'

2. Defining Feelings

'I get worried when your baby brother/sister wakes up early, honey'

3. Expressing Needs (behind the aforementioned feeling)

'Because your brother/sister needs to sleep.'

4. Concrete Action Request

Example: 'Next time will you play with me when your brother/sister is sleeping? We can also play together when I am done with my work, what do you think?'

DON'T BUILD A BARRIER BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR CHILD, BUILD A BRIDGE!

When communicating, sometimes on purpose and most of the time unconsciously we make mistakes. These can affect our communication with our child. If we want to have effective, bonding interaction with our children, we must be careful with choosing our word and how we behave. If we do have communication barriers, let's consider how we can transform them.

COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

Giving orders

'Cut down the noise immediately', 'You have to do it'...

Threatening

'You'll regret it if you don't do what I say', 'Stop the crying or you will really see what crying is'...

Giving continuous moral lessons

'You should have done it this way',
'Don't interrupt while adults are speaking'...

Giving continuous advice

'I think...', 'If I were you...'

Judging, criticizing, accusing

'You are clumsy..', 'You've become a bad boy/girl'.

Agreeing under every circumstance although it is not the reality

'You're very clever', 'You're right' (even if it is not true)

Making fun

'Cry baby', 'Big baby'...

Continuous questioning

'Who hit first?', 'Who did you here this from?'...

Stalling, not keeping promises, changing the subject

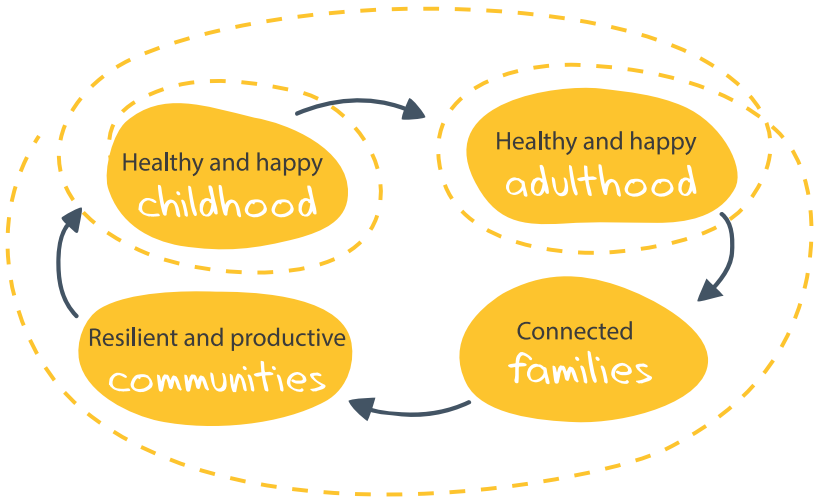
'Forget about it, let's close this topic', 'Let's talk about other things'...



PROJEMİZHAYAT

As 'Projemiz Hayat' team, our aim is to raise large-scale social awareness and our first of many projects is 'Mummy the Brain Builders' in which the objective is to raise awareness and create solutions to 'childhood emotional neglect'.

We are always here to support with our book, seminars, training programs, web site, volunteers and activities.



For detailed information: “Geleceğe Dokunan Anneler: Çocuklukta Duygusal İhmali Fark Etme, Tanıma, Önleme” ([Mothers Who Impact The Future: Identifying, Noticing and Preventing Emotional Neglect During Childhood] (Epsilon Publication, 2020)

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To support our project, you may visit: phocagoods.com