

Effective Communication With Your Child: The DESC Technique for Parents

Introduction

Using the DESC technique can help you communicate more effectively with your adolescent, fostering understanding and cooperation. This exercise is designed to guide you through implementing this method in your parenting approach.



Step 1: Describe

Describe the behavior or situation as completely and objectively as possible. Focus on the facts without adding any judgment or interpretation.

Example: "I noticed that you came home after curfew last night."

Activity:

Think of a recent situation where you need to communicate with your adolescent. Write down a factual and objective description of the behavior or situation.

Your Turn:

Situation:

Step 2: Express

Express your feelings or thoughts about the behavior or situation. Use "I" statements to convey your emotions without putting your adolescent on the defensive. This helps them understand how their actions impact you.

Example: "I felt worried and anxious because I didn't know where you were."

Activity:

Reflect on your feelings regarding the situation you described. Write down your emotions using "I" statements.

Your Turn:

Express Your Feelings

Step 3: Specify

Specify the behavior or outcome you would prefer to happen. Clearly state what you need from your adolescent in a positive and constructive way.

Example: "I would like you to come home by your curfew time or let me know if you're going to be late."

Activity:

Think about what you would like to see happen instead. Write down your preferred behavior or outcome.

Your Turn:

Preferred Behavior/Outcome:

Step 4: Positive Consequences

Explain the positive consequences of changing the behavior. Highlight the benefits of adopting the preferred behavior to encourage your adolescent to make the desired change.

Example: "If you follow your curfew, I will trust you more and we can discuss extending it in the future."

Activity:

Identify the positive consequences of the desired behavior. Write down the benefits to encourage your adolescent.

Your Turn:

Positive Consequences:

Conclusion

By using this technique, you can communicate your needs more effectively, helping your adolescent understand the impact of their actions and motivating them to adopt positive behaviors.

