

**Quick Tip:**  
Listen more than  
you talk.

## 5 Keys to Communication

**“W**hen we communicate, we are telling others who we are and we are asking others who they are,” says Dr. Daniel G. Bagby, family counselor. He says there are five characteristics of in-depth communication:

1. **Reveal yourself**—Honestly tell others your thoughts, ideas, goals, and feelings.
2. **Jump in**—Actively start conversations. Don't wait for others to talk first.
3. **Be responsible**—Take control of your thoughts, feelings, and actions.
4. **Don't blame**—Take responsibility for your behavior without blaming or shaming others.
5. **Be human**—Share your weaknesses in addition to your strengths to develop trust and closeness.

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### Talk and Do

Listen to your child's favorite music with her or him. Ask what's interesting and enjoyable about it. Name what you like about it. Share your favorite music. Explain why you like it.

### More Stuff You Can Use

**Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.** This book may seem to be a “management” book, but it is filled with parenting examples. Habit 5 gives practical ways on how to communicate more effectively with your child. (Available from Fireside Books, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020; 1-800-223-2348.)

### talk together

Questions to discuss with your child:

- Whom do you enjoy talking with? Why?
- What opens the door for communication in our family? What closes the door?
- Which topics are easy to talk about in our family? Which are hard? Why?

## Final Word

**“Communicating effectively with a child often requires that a parent combine the deductive skills of Sherlock Holmes with the boundless tact and patience of an ambassador.”**

—Lawrence Kutner, Ph.D., psychologist and author of *Parent & Child*

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