To promote open communication in your family:

1. Make mealtime more than a refuelling pit stop. Sharing a meal provides an opportunity for parents and children to talk, exchange views, swap news and have a laugh or two.

2. Talk with children on their turf. Places such as bedrooms and cars can be safe havens for open communication. Identify where your children talk the most and make the most of those places.

3. Talk about the stuff that children and young people want to talk about. Find out what interests your children and use that as an entry point to conversations.

4. Write it down. Sometimes conversational clams respond best to notes or letters. So if you have something important to say or an issue you want to discuss put pen to paper (or start up the computer) and get it down in writing.

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**How well does your family communicate?**

The busyness of life can inhibit open family communication. Traditionally, strong families enjoyed spending time together and communication occurred in natural, unforced ways. Today families need to work hard at communicating and don’t leave it to chance.

Strong families find a way of carving out time to be with each other. They recognise those opportunities that afford effective communication and they guard these assiduously. Strong families also use technology to aid communication rather than interfere with it. Mobile phones are used to stay in touch, television offers opportunities for discussion and emails help keep conversations going when people are separated by distance.

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**TRY THIS...**

**PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

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**ACTION PLAN**

First Step . . .

Next Step . . .

For more ideas about promoting resilience in children visit www.parentingideas.com.au

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**QUOTE**

“Communication is a skill that you can learn. It’s like riding a bicycle or typing. If you’re willing to work at it, you can rapidly improve the quality of every part of your life.”

BRIAN TRACY