

Use Effective Communication Skills

When listening:

- ▶ Avoid interrupting.
- ▶ Encourage the person to express both feelings and ideas.
- ▶ Paraphrase what the other person said.
- ▶ Paraphrase again if you didn't get it right the first time.
- ▶ Try to think about a situation from the other person's point of view.
- ▶ Respect the person's ideas, feelings, and concerns.
- ▶ Take a time-out when you are too upset to listen well.
- ▶ Use open-ended questions: Who? What? When? Where? How?



When expressing yourself:

- ▶ Be careful about when, where, and how you speak up.
- ▶ Express your feelings as issues occur, rather than storing them up.
- ▶ Use "I" statements, not "You" statements.
- ▶ Ask the listener to paraphrase what you said.
- ▶ Avoid criticism and put-downs.
- ▶ Express your positive feelings and opinions—not just your negative ones.
- ▶ Focus on solving the problem, not placing blame.
- ▶ Give clear and consistent verbal and nonverbal messages.

Setting Effective Limits

When setting limits:

- ▶ Give orders one at a time. When possible, give options.
- ▶ Keep in mind that limits make children feel safe and rules make limits firm.
- ▶ Make a rule when a limit has not been respected.
- ▶ Set consequences in advance. Every rule must have a consequence you can enforce.
- ▶ Follow through consistently.
- ▶ Remember that children test to make sure their parents mean what they say.



Get Support from Others

Before you ask for support:

- ▶ Figure out what you need and who can give it.
- ▶ Plan a good time to ask for support, not when someone is busy doing other things.
- ▶ Practice asking for support first with someone you trust.

When you ask for support:

- ▶ Start by asking family and friends who are easiest to approach and most likely to help.
- ▶ Remind them what they have done that has been helpful in the past, and explain how they could help now.
- ▶ Try to be clear, specific, and honest about the kind of support you would like.
- ▶ Thank them.



Put Body Image in Perspective

- ▶ Focus on having a healthy body instead of trying to look a certain way.
- ▶ Remember that abilities, talents, interests, and positive character traits are much more important than looks.
- ▶ Model behaviors that show you feel positive about how you look: Avoid excessive weighing, looking in the mirror, and making negative comments about your looks.
- ▶ Encourage weight goals that are achievable one step at a time.



Avoid Overeating – Good Habits Keep You Healthy

- ▶ Plan ahead and shop for what you need.
- ▶ Prepare just enough food for the meal. No extra food means no extra eating.
- ▶ Eat **YELLOW** and **GREEN** foods. Avoid **RED** foods when you can.
- ▶ Don't leave extra food on the table, counter, or anywhere in sight during a meal.
- ▶ Plan healthy snacks with fruits and vegetables.
- ▶ Be careful not to eat while watching TV.
- ▶ Eat slowly, and stop when you have satisfied your real hunger, not when you are "full."



Deal with Feelings

When you are anxious, angry, lonely, sad, or simply stressed:

- ▶ Turn to people, not to food.
- ▶ Talk about your feelings with a friend or family member.
- ▶ Challenge your belief that food will make you feel better in the long run.
- ▶ Take time to name your feelings. This is the first step in dealing with them.
- ▶ Try to solve the problem that is causing the upsetting feelings.
- ▶ Use physical activity to release tension and improve your mood.
- ▶ Distract yourself by doing things you like.
- ▶ Stick to familiar routines. Regular meal times and sleep schedules make life less stressful.

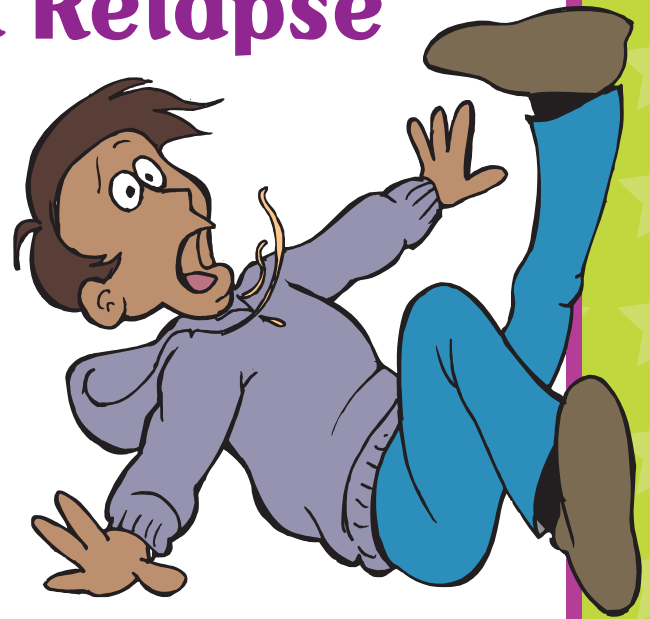
When things go well and you feel happy, joyful, or simply content:

- ▶ Praise yourself or praise your child for a job well done.
- ▶ Reward yourself with activities you enjoy.
- ▶ Do not use food as a reward.



Prevent Slip-ups from Turning into a Relapse

- ▶ **Keep mistakes in perspective.** It's normal to have setbacks when making changes.
- ▶ **Don't criticize yourself for a mistake.**
- ▶ **View a slip-up as a unique, one-time response to a specific, difficult situation.** It's a short-term setback, not proof that you have failed.
- ▶ **See problems as specific, temporary, and solvable.**
- ▶ **Re-evaluate your calories, RED foods, and level of physical activity as soon as you notice you are starting to slip.**
- ▶ **Avoid all-or-nothing thinking like: "I'll never change. Losing weight is impossible."**
- ▶ **Practice positive thinking.** For example: "I had a slip-up today, but tomorrow I can do better."



It's Healthy— And Helpful— To Praise Yourself

- ▶ Look back and see all the progress you, your child, and your family have made.
- ▶ Praise yourself for helping your child, yourself, and your family.
- ▶ Praise yourself for trying so hard and doing so well—especially when you feel discouraged.
- ▶ Remember, no one reaches a goal all at once—that's why it's a goal. It's something to strive for.



Staying on Track

- ▶ **Maintain control of your environment. Reduce RED foods and increase GREEN and YELLOW foods in your home.**
- ▶ **Participate in GREEN physical activities regularly.**
- ▶ **Expect obstacles to healthy eating and make plans to overcome these difficulties.**
- ▶ **Identify family and friends who will support your healthy behaviors.**
- ▶ **Use food for nutrition and health. Do not use food for comfort, entertainment, or as a reward.**
- ▶ **Focus on being healthier and feeling better as your reward.**
- ▶ **Use praise regularly, for meeting and for going beyond your goals.**



Plan to Maintain Your Lifestyle Changes

- ▶ When you find yourself wanting to “take a break” from healthy behaviors, remind yourself that making healthy choices is something you need to do all your life. So does your child.
- ▶ Being bored should never be used as an excuse to quit. Spice things up. Add some variety if your eating or physical activity behaviors become boring.
- ▶ Keep yourself motivated by reminding yourself of the important reasons you—and your child—have for making lifestyle changes.



Challenge Your Negative Thinking

To challenge your negative thinking, ask yourself:

- ▶ Are things really as hopeless as they seem?
- ▶ What can I do to turn things around?
- ▶ How could I approach the problem in a positive way?
- ▶ Who can I turn to for help?
- ▶ What would my PAL suggest?

Remember that positive thinking helps you keep working until you find a solution.

Try to see problems as solvable.
They usually are.

