

Creating Connection	Losing Connection
Eye contact: <i>Getting down to (or below) my child's level and looking into their eyes while I talk to them helps them feel safe and that I'm not a threatening presence.</i>	Eye contact: <i>Standing over them while I look down on them make me look huge and imposing. Whatever I say from this position communicates a threat, and they automatically want to defend themselves.</i>
Facial expression: (soft eyes, relaxed face)	Facial expression: (frown, pursed lips, aggressive look)
Tone of voice: (soft, comforting, calm)	Tone of voice: (tense, loud, angry)
Posture: (relaxed shoulders, open hands, possibly kneeling)	Posture: (arms crossed, hands on hips, leaning forward)
Gestures: (gentle touches, offering hugs)	Gestures: (wagging finger, throwing arms in the air)
Timing of response: (letting child finish before speaking, asking questions before answering)	Timing of response: (interrupting, long intimidating pauses)
Intensity of response: (staying calm, being patient)	Intensity of response: (yelling, crying)
Bodily movement: (coming closer, relaxed, bending down)	Bodily movement: (walking away quickly, stomping)

Scenario	Typical parent response	What child may experience/do	What connect and redirect would look like	What child may experience/do
Child excited about sleepover, then doesn't want to go at last minute	"What? You're dying to go!" Or "You'll be fine! You'll have a great time."	Feeling dismissed and that parent is denying and minimizing feelings. Shut down and refuse to go.	Pull child close, take deep breath, say, "Sounds like you're having second thoughts." Validate feelings, then problem solve.	Feeling understood and supported. Able to calm down and talk through worries about being afraid.

Empathetic Listening

Feeling + Best Guess at Facts

1. Example: "My shoes are not right! I hate them!"

Feelings: frustrated, angry

Best Guess of Facts: the shoes are really hard to tie

Listening Response: **"Those shoes are the worst, it so frustrating to tie them"**

2. Your child calls another child a poopy head.

Feelings: _____

Best Guess of Thoughts: _____

Listening Response: _____

3. Your child lies about eating candy.

Feelings: _____

Best Guess of Thoughts : _____

Listening Response: _____

4. Your child hits you in the face and laughs.

Feelings: _____

Best Guess of Thoughts: _____

Listening Response: _____