Listening with the Four Talk to Me’s

Active listening can benefit parents and caregivers in many ways. It can:
» Help children feel more connected to you
» Help children feel safe and secure
» Build children’s respect for you as their parent or caregiver
» Increase children’s sharing their experience with you
» Help reduce conflict over misunderstandings in families

What are the Four Talk to Me’s?

1. Big Ears

» Say to yourself, “I want to hear what’s going on. I need to get ready to listen”

2. Inviting Body Language

» Put everything else aside
» Face your child
» Get on their level

» Make eye contact
» Lean in

3. Conversation Starters

» These are open-ended questions
» They encourage children to answer with more than one word. For instance:
  › What did you do at school today?
  › How do you feel about your new teacher?

4. Say Mores

» These are ways you show you want to hear more, such as nodding
» You can also say that you want to hear more through responses such as:
  › Tell me more
  › Go on...
  › What else happened?
  › What else did you do?

Remember to avoid the quick fix!
A quick fix cuts children off and stops them from telling you what is going on. It keeps you from understanding your children’s feeling and problems. And, it doesn’t give your children a chance to figure out how to solve their own problems.