



# Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior

*The Manual the Hospital Forgot to Give You*



## I. Introduction: Project Slide 2. See page 220.

### A. Introduce session's topic: Project Slide 3.



#### B. Building Positive Self Concepts

1. Begins with active listening
2. We will list the components of active listening,
3. and discuss the barriers to active listening. What keeps us from understanding what our children say?



## **Unit 12:**

# **Building Positive Self Concepts**

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### SESSION OBJECTIVES:

Parents will be able to:

- ✓ List the five components of active listening
- ✓ Discuss potential barriers to active listening
- ✓ Participate in a structured support group

 **C. Activity: Before We Begin Unit 12, Project Slide 4. (Allow 1 minute)**

1. Complete activity
2. Ensure that every member has been assigned a group role.



**Unit 12:**

**Before We Begin** 

Take a minute to elect every support group member to one of the group roles.



Session Roles:

Group Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Time Keeper: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Reporter: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Nurturers/Cheerleader(s): \_\_\_\_\_



#### **D. Warm Up Activity. See page 222. (Allow 5 minutes)**

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity
3. Debrief activity (Show of hands)
  - a. How many parents found it necessary to use a time out?
  - b. Who needed it, you or your child?
  - c. How many parents were able to find an opportunity to negotiate a compromise with their child?
  - d. How did taking time out or compromise help to reduce the conflict?



#### **II. Self Concepts, Project Slide 5**



- A. There are two primary sources of self-concept.
  1. How we see ourselves and our sense of effectiveness and accomplishment.
  2. The messages children receive from others also help to develop a sense of who they are. A term used in psychology for the valuations parents and others (teachers, extended family, etc.) provide to their children are “reflected appraisals.”
  3. Parents and other caregivers play the most significant role in developing their children’s sense of self-worth.



## Warm Up

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In your support group, take a few minutes to share your stories from last week's S.O.S.

- ▶ Were you able to find an opportunity to negotiate a compromise with your child?
- ▶ Did you find it necessary to take a time out?
- ▶ Did either strategy serve to reduce conflict in the home?

*(Please remember that support groups are not a place for judgment, criticism or confrontation, but instead, should be a safe, comfortable and positive place to share your feelings and stories. Every member should be celebrated, encouraged and given positive strokes.)*

## Self Concepts

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Positive self-concepts come from two primary sources; how we see ourselves and our sense of effectiveness in achieving goals and accomplishing things. Children develop an idea of who they are and their value to others by the messages they receive from others. Because

parents and other caregivers typically spend the greatest amount of time with children, parents play the most significant role in how children see themselves. The messages we send to our children can be verbal or nonverbal, positive or negative.



**B. Group Activity 12.1. See page 223. (Allow 3-4 minutes)**

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity
3. Debrief activity



**a. Project Slide 6. Chart responses**

- b. Review responses

4. Summarize concept



- a. Whenever parents fail to stop and listen to their children, it sends a negative message to the child.
- b. Think about it. What kind of message have we been sending to our children?



# Group Activity 12.1: *Negative Messages*

Picture yourself working inside the home when your son or daughter walks into the room and begins talking about something exciting that happened that day. You are very busy at the time and do not stop what you are doing. You briefly answer your child but do not look up from your work.

Working with your support group, take a few minutes to develop a list of possible feelings or thoughts your child may have as a result of your conversation. What kind of message did we send to our child?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

So how can we respond to our children in a manner that builds them up, and conveys that we value them?





**D. Project Slide 7. The Five Steps to active listening. See page 224.**

1. Stop what you are doing:
  - a. Parents must take the necessary time to listen to their children.
2. Look directly at your child:
  - a. Make eye contact.
  - b. Be aware of your non-verbal body language: (Folded arms, legs, etc.)
  - c. Be aware of your facial expressions.
  - d. Focus your entire attention on your child.
3. Listen to your child:
  - a. Just listen! Do not:
    1. interrupt
    2. argue
    3. or give advice
4. Rephrase or repeat what your child says:
  - a. Encourages parents to be a good listener
  - b. Models good listening for children
  - c. Helps parents to understand the child's meaning and feelings
  - d. Helps children clarify their feelings
5. Be empathic:
  - a. put yourself in your child's position
  - b. do your best to understand your child's emotions
  - c. save your advice for later

# The Five Steps

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**A**ctive listening involves more than just lending an ear to our children. It requires a parent's complete concentration. There are five steps to active listening.

- ▶ **Step 1** Stop what you are doing: Parents must take the necessary time out to really listen to their child.
- ▶ **Step 2** Look at your child: Making eye contact tells your child you are ready to listen. A parent's body language (posture) and facial expression also indicate an interest in listening. Parents should make sure these nonverbal signals we send to our children reflect a willingness to listen. Focus on your child. Try to push everything else from your mind.
- ▶ **Step 3** Listen, without commenting, interrupting, arguing, correcting, or giving advice.
- ▶ **Step 4** Rephrase, repeat or summarize what your child has told you, without adding to their message. Rephrasing helps children to recognize and clarify their emotions.
- ▶ **Step 5** Be empathic. Seek to understand how they might feel as a result of the situation or experience they have related. Put yourself in your child's place to imagine what their reactions might be. Save your advice for later.



“ Children, like adults, need to be listened to and understood. ”



E. Ask for 2 volunteers to read example of active listening on page 225, aloud. (Ask one volunteer to play the father and one volunteer to play the son.)



1. This parent:
  - a. did not argue.
  - b. tried to understand his child's feelings.
  - c. helped his son to recognize what he was feeling.
  - d. tried to put himself in his son's position.
  - e. showed empathy to his son's feelings/situation.
  - f. knows there will be plenty of time for advice after his son vents some of his frustrations.
  - g. Most importantly, this father modeled to his son what effective listening looks like.

**F. When we actively listen to our children we:**

1. promote understanding between parent and child.
2. improve our relationship with our children.
3. help to build their self-esteem.
4. show that we value, accept and respect them.

Here is one example of a parent actively listening to his child:

**Robert:** *I hate looking for a job! Nobody is hiring.*

**Dad:** *Sounds like you are really tired of being told 'no.'*

**Robert:** *Yeah! Nobody wants to hire kids my age.*

**Dad:** *Your right, it's really hard to find a job when you're sixteen.*

**Robert:** *There aren't enough jobs, and I'm not working fast food!*

**Dad:** *Fast food is certainly not one of the more exciting jobs.*

**Robert:** *Yeah, having your friends see you in some stupid uniform, and wearing some goofy hat. I can't see myself saying "would you like fries with that" all day long.*

**Dad:** (Says nothing but gives his child a sympathetic look and nods his head.)

**Robert:** *I'd die if Heather saw me dressed up like that.*

**Dad:** *I can understand how you must feel. Looking for work can be very discouraging, especially when the only jobs available seem to be in fast food. The only job I could find*

*when I was your age was to have a newspaper route. Let me know if you want to brainstorm some other options.*

This wise dad realizes Robert is not ready to hear that even fast-food jobs pay money. Suggesting that at this point would only start an argument and leave Robert feeling that his father didn't understand how strongly he felt. After a few more days or weeks of looking, if Robert still hasn't found a job, perhaps dad could offer some ideas:

Has he identified another kind of work available to sixteen-year-olds?

Do any of his friends work in fast food? If so, how do they handle the job?

Is there a fast-food company that pays more than the others?

Is there a company with a uniform that is any less offensive to Robert?

All of these questions should come later when Robert appears receptive. Children, like adults, need to be listened to and understood. Active listening promotes effective communication, improves the parent/child relationship, and helps children feel better about themselves. When we listen to our children, we show that we value, accept, and respect them. In turn, children value themselves and their parents more. Active listening contributes significantly to our children's self-esteem.





### **G. Verbal Messages, Project Slide 8**



1. We would do well to remember the saying, Children often forget what we say, but they never forget how we make them feel.
2. Ask for a volunteer to read the negative messages in the first column on page 226, aloud. (“You’re a spoiled brat . . .”)
3. When children hear these negative messages enough, they develop deep feelings of guilt, remorse, anger, and inadequacy.
4. Strong-willed children may become even more rebellious, stubborn, and hostile toward their parents.
5. Ask for a volunteer to read the second to the last paragraph on page 226, aloud. (“A parent in one of our groups . . .”)



# Verbal Messages

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Much of the manner in which many children see themselves can be directly attributed to the messages they receive from their parents. Remember, Children often forget what we say, but they never forget how we make them feel!

Because parents of strong-willed children are frequently upset or angry at their kids, the messages sent to the children are often negative.

Some of the negative messages we send to our children are:

*You're a spoiled brat.*

*Why don't you be good for a change?*

*You are the most inconsiderate child I know.*

*You are so thoughtless.*

*Are you ever going to grow up?*

*That was stupid.*

*Why don't you ever do what I ask?*

All of these negative messages have a significant

impact on a child's self-esteem. When children hear enough negative messages, they develop deep feelings of guilt, remorse, anger, and inadequacy. These children end up feeling rejected by their parents and believe they are just not good enough. To add to parents' frustration, strong-willed children often respond to these negative messages by rejecting all parental input and becoming even more stubborn and hostile. All too often, our verbal negative expectations are met.

A parent in one of our groups had experienced years of problematic behavior with his son. Whenever the father would catch his son doing something right and try to give him a positive stroke, the boy would walk away. Realizing his son needed to hear positive messages, the father solved the problem by bragging about his son's specific behavior to another adult when he was sure his son could overhear the conversation.

Throughout this program, we have discussed and practiced skills to increase parental influence. These skills were designed, at least in part, to improve our children's sense of capability as well.

“ Children, like adults, need to be listened to and understood. ”



### H. Group Activity 12.2. See page 227. (Allow 4 minutes)

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity
3. Debrief activity



**a. Project Slide 9. Chart responses**

- b. Review responses



4. Summarize concept
  - a. Children need to hear positive messages from their parents.
  - b. Remember to praise children for their effort as well as their accomplishments.



# Group Activity 12.2: *Conveying Positive Messages*

Working with your support group, take a few minutes to develop a list of ways parents can convey each of these positive messages.

*You are loved.*

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*You matter to me.*

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*You are secure.*

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*You are capable; you can do anything you set your mind to.*

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*You are you, individual and special.*

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H. Ask for a volunteer to read the poem on page 228, aloud.

## Please Talk to Me

I can't talk to you,  
Just why is that?  
Which one of us can't hear?  
Is it me, in fact?

Why can't we just say,  
The things on our mind?  
Or will the things that we say,  
Be much less than kind.

Will the pain be too much?  
Is the truth hard to take?  
Will the words we choose,  
Be a strength or mistake?

Whatever the cost,  
Our feelings must be said.  
For if we fail to relate,  
Our future is dead.

It's time that we laid,  
Our cards on the line,  
Then go through the deck,  
And see what we find.

My ears will be open,  
My heart will be too.  
No advice will I offer,  
I'll just listen to you.

Then when you're finished,  
And it's my turn to speak,  
I'll tell you my fears,  
And goals that I seek.

Please talk when you want,  
Be it morning or night;  
We'll reach for the answers,  
That will make our lives right.



### III. Review Activity 10.4. See page 229. (Allow 3 minutes)

1. Complete activity
2. Debrief activity



a. **Project Slide 10. Chart responses**



b. **Project Slide 11. Chart responses**

1. Chart responses to review question #5. What was the most powerful idea you learned from this unit? (Chart one response from each parent.)



## Review Activity 12.3

With your support group, take a few minutes to complete the following statements by filling in the blanks using the words in bold print below. Feel free to use your books.

Then, working by yourself, record the most powerful idea you learned from this unit.

1. When speaking with children, parents should \_\_\_\_\_ what they are doing and signal they are listening by making \_\_\_\_\_ with their child.

2. While children are speaking, parents should not argue, interrupt or give advice to their children. Parents should first just \_\_\_\_\_.

3. To increase understanding, parents can \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ what they heard from their child.

4. Negative messages can \_\_\_\_\_ a child's sense of self \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Working by yourself, what was the most powerful idea you personally learned from this Unit?

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**listen damage eye contact**  
**stop repeat rephrase worth**



## **IV. The Support Group Format. See page 147.**

### **A. Arrange support group/s in a circle**

1. Ensure there are no empty spaces or empty chairs.

### **B. Make any Announcements for the session at this time.**

### **C. Check-In Process**

1. Facilitator/Leader should review the Check In process and ask for a volunteer to begin the Check-In for the group.
2. Complete the Check-In Process

### **D. Group Process (See Ground Rules for Working in Group, page 203).**

1. Ask for volunteers to provide the definition of each ground rule below.
  - a. Confidentiality
  - b. W.I.S.E. Advice
  - c. Right to Pass
  - d. Time Limits
  - e. Democracy

### **E. Individual Time**

1. Have the reporter divide the remaining time evenly among the group members.
2. Remind the members that any portion of their time may be shared with any other group member.
3. Ask for a volunteer to provide a brief description of the Timekeeper's role. (When the Timekeeper's Individual Time is due, have another group member take over the Timekeeper responsibilities.)
4. Complete Individual Time.

### **F. Wrap Up**

1. Leader to review the Wrap Up process and ask for a volunteer to begin.
  - a) Ensure every member states how they are feeling after the session.
  - b) Encourage parents when they affirm each other (practical help, suggestions and emotional support).

# Support Group Format

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**Announcements:**

Make brief announcements of any information that is of interest to all. (Change in group meeting times or location, etc.)

**Check-In:**

A brief (one or two sentences only), statement is shared by each group member regarding something positive that occurred over the past week.

**Group Process:**

Group process issues are discussed and resolved at this time. Questions regarding confidentiality, group roles or other group business are discussed here.

**Individual Time:**

The amount of time the group has left is evenly divided among all group members and recorded below. Group members take their time now. Individual concerns, problems and issues are discussed here. Willing group members may share any portion of their time with any other group member.

**Name:****Minutes Allotted:**

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

**Wrap Up:**

Each member shares with the group how he/she is feeling at this point in the session. Statements of appreciation are encouraged. Good-byes are completed.

## V. Preview Next Session



### A. Growing Stronger Teens

1. Next week we will take a close look at our children's sleeping and eating habits.
2. The tips we discuss may help change their behavior as well.

### B. Steps of Success: See page 231.



1. Ask for a volunteer to read the S.O.S. instructions aloud.
2. Make sure you bring back your stories to share with your support group.



### C. Project Slide 12.



1. Ask the entire class to read the Slide aloud.

### D. Ask the class to complete their evaluation.

# S.O.S. (Steps of Success)

Every time you have a conversation with your child during the next week, actively listen to him. Try not to argue, offer advice, or interrupt while your child is speaking. Just listen!

If your child asks for advice, help your child develop possible options and identify potential positive and negative outcomes to such options.

Bring back your stories to share with your support group.

I actively listened to my child when:

My child's response was:

<hr/>	<hr/>

“ Critical Family Concept:  
My kids need positive strokes! ”





# Building Positive Self Concepts *(Unit 12: Content Evaluation)*

**Session Objectives:** List the five components of active listening. Discuss potential barriers to active listening. Participate in a structured support group

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home (Message) Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Are both parents/caregivers attending tonight?  Yes  No

Names of other parents/caregivers attending with you tonight? \_\_\_\_\_

What group role did you play?

Group Facilitator  Group Reporter  Group Timekeeper  Group Cheerleader

How well did you do? \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: The following questions were designed to both help your instructor better meet your family's needs, and highlight the key points of tonight's lesson.

## **Session Evaluation:**

The thing I liked best about tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What would have made learning easier or better for me tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_

2. The most powerful thing I learned tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_

3. During the last seven days, I remembered to show/tell my child how much I love him/her:  
 Every day  Almost every day  A few times  I forgot  I was unable to

4. What were your children's reactions to your open displays of love and affection?  
 Positive (Good)  Indifferent (So what)  Negative (Poor)

5. Reflecting on the last seven days, how do you feel about your efforts to do the right thing?  
 Excellent  Good  Fair  Troubled  Unsatisfied

6. The strategy I found most helpful in calming things down at home was:  
 Taking a time out  Lowering my voice

7. I was able to reach a compromise with my child over:  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Parents' comments \_\_\_\_\_

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