

How to Talk so Parents Will Listen?

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Safe Kids Fargo/Moorhead logo

There is no such thing as stating the obvious.

Don't assume.

Repeat. Repeat. Repeat.

Communication goes beyond words.



Media is EVERYWHERE

- Print
- TV
- Internet
- Face-to-Face/Networking



How You Say It!

- 5 key messages (or less)
- 5-8th grade reading level
- Spoken reinforced with written
- Human face to every story



Communication Techniques

Take the question posed to you and answer it with a key message.

BENEFIT: Steers people back to relevant topics and key messages



Communication Techniques

My friend told me that she heard that we have to keep our kids rear-facing to the age of 2. Is that true?

KEY MESSAGES

- Rear-facing as long as possible.
- Realistic to expect kids to sit rear-facing longer



Communication Techniques

Use a word/phrase to signal to your audience that a particular point is critical.

BENEFIT: Reinforces your key message.



Communication Techniques

- The **most important thing** I want you to remember when buckling in your child's seat is.....
- The **ultimate goal** of using a car seat correctly is...
- The **reason it is so important** that the seat belt fits across the top of the thighs is...



Communication Challenges

- “It’s the law”
- Milestones
- “In the event of a crash...”
- Crash dynamics
- Culture Clash
- Judgment



Communication Challenges

It's the Law

- Seat Belts
- Speed Limit
- Driver's License/Permit



Conclusion: If you're following the law, you are doing the right thing.



Communication Challenges

It's the Law

- State law does not take priority over the law of physics.
- Following the law represents a bare minimum when it comes to your child's safety.
- ...I don't know any parent who wants to settle for bare minimum when it comes to their kids' safety



Communication Challenges

Milestones

- Sippy cup
- “Big boy/girl bed”
- No more diapers
- 1st birthday



Communication Challenges

Milestones

- Point out that it is natural to look forward to a child’s milestones.
- Make it clear that car seat “graduations” should not be met with the same eager anticipation.
- “When can I ...” should be “When do I have to....?”



Communication Challenges

“In the event of a crash...”

- No one thinks it will happen to them
- Not thinking about a crash
- Out of parent’s control



Communication Challenges

Crash Dynamics

- Physics
- Numbers
- Math
- Crash forces
- Distribution of energy



Communication Challenges

Culture Clash

- Understanding is key.
- Compromise if possible.
- Language barrier. Use pictures and hands-on.



Communication Challenges

Judgment

- Don't assume parents don't care.
- Don't judge on car seat condition, age, type, position.
- Parents don't know what they don't know.
- They are there because they are trying.



Communication Challenges

Challenge: I can't see/reach him

Answer: I can't think of anything you could safely do for him while driving



Communication Challenges

Challenge: His feet touch the seat.

Answer: If it is a choice between protecting his head and neck or feet/legs, which would you choose?



Communication Challenges

Challenge: He doesn't like being rear facing.

Answer: He doesn't know any different.



Communication Challenges

Challenge: He doesn't like being rear facing.

Answer: When you crash or stop suddenly, having your child rear facing will be safer. The harness will pull him into the middle of the car seat and the back of the car seat will protect his neck and head.



Communication Challenges

Challenge: None of his friends use booster seats.

Answer: He can see out the window.



Communication Challenges

Challenge: "Negative Nelly Syndrome"...Use of add-ons, seat not installed tightly, harnesses loose, wrong position, wrong height/weight, etc, etc, etc.

Answer: Nice start on the installation. I see you used the correct belt path. Once we show you how to do this, you will be able to install it in your other car with no problem.



We have come a long way...



But we have a long way to go.


