

# NEXT-LEVEL SKILLS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

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## Session 4: Oral Communication

Welcome back! In this session we will be talking about oral communication.

## Professional Development for ECE's

### Session #4 Facilitator Notes

#### Activity:

- What is oral communication? What does it mean to you?
- Give examples of when you use oral communication during your day at work
- What are the advantages? Disadvantages?



This will be done as a large group discussion. You could make a list of examples, advantages, and disadvantages either on a white board or paper.

In their workbooks, participants are also asked these three questions, with space for them to record their answers.

## Oral Communication – Body Language

- Non-verbal signals make up a huge part of our daily communication
- The things we don't say can still convey volumes of information
- Facial expressions
- Eyes
- Mouth
- Gestures
- Arms and legs
- Posture
- Personal space



In their participant workbook, students are reminded that when communicating face-to-face, we communicate with much more than just our words. Our body language tells people just as much, if not more, than our actual words do. They are asked to record some examples of body language in their workbook.

Review their suggestions, and expand on the points on the slide as described below:

Facial expressions – emotions, level of trust, universal

Eyes – gaze, blinking, pupil size

Mouth – pursed lips, lip biting, covering the mouth, turned up or down

Gestures – clenched fist, thumbs up or down, “okay” gesture

Arms and legs – crossed, hands on hips, clasping hands behind back, fidgeting

Posture – open, closed

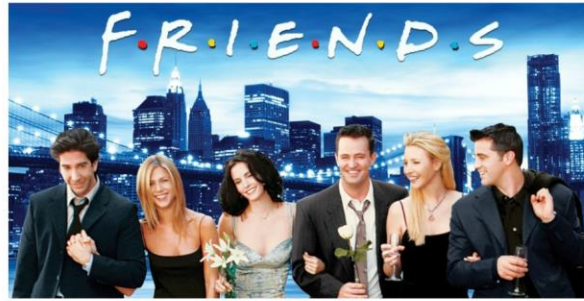
Personal space – distance: intimate, personal, social, public

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## Video Clip – Non-Verbal Cues

What can the TV show "Friends" teach us about the Importance of Non-Verbal Cues?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvEci5Bjgd4>

Show the video to the group. Discuss the different non-verbal cues they saw in the video, and why non-verbal cues are so important in oral communication.

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## Communication Tips

- Be aware of your tone and body language; use eye contact that is appropriate; be aware of personal space
- When you are unclear ask for clarification
- It is ok to disagree but give concrete reasoning and offer suggestions



This series of 3 slides reviews different tips for effective communication and what is important in oral communication.

In their participant workbooks, students are given a series of sentences from these slides with “fill in the blank” sections. Be sure to give students enough time to read and write down the missing part of the communication tips you share.

## Communication Tips

- Listen, stay calm and show interest; be patient with the other person; show empathy
- If you have no time to talk, don't pretend you do. Inform the person now is not a good time and set up a time that you can both agree on
- When you have concern with a certain individual, go directly to them; avoid gossiping – it hurts everyone in the end



Continue reviewing these communication tips.

## Communication Tips

- Stay on track – leave past out of it
- Be as honest as you can and speak for yourself
- Don't take things personally; be able to receive and give constructive criticism



This is the final slide sharing communication tips.

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### Session #4 Facilitator Notes

#### Activity: What Can Derail Communication?

- Think about and discuss the different things that can derail communication or make it difficult



As a large group, discuss different things that can derail communication or make it difficult.

To support this discussion, students are asked to list some examples in their workbooks of things we can do to derail communication, even if we have an important message to share and mean well.

You can write down the group's responses on a white board or paper.

The next slide lists different communication spoilers; the participants will hopefully come up with some or all of these in this discussion and then you can review with the next slide

## Professional Development for ECE's

### Session #4 Facilitator Notes

# Communication Spoilers

- Criticizing
- Name-calling
- Diagnosing
- Ordering
- Threatening
- Moralizing



- Excessive/inappropriate questioning
- Logical argument
- Reassuring
- Advising
- Diverting

This slide will assist with the discussion from the previous slide. You can expand on each point using the additional information below:

- Criticizing: making a negative evaluation of the other person, her actions or attitudes
- Name-calling: “putting down” or stereotyping the other person
- Diagnosing: analyzing why a person is behaving as she is; playing amateur psychiatrist
- Ordering: commanding the other person to do what you want done
- Threatening: trying to control the other’s actions by warning of negative consequences that you will instigate
- Moralizing: telling another person what she should do
- Excessive/inappropriate questioning: closed-ended questions are often barriers in a relationship; these are those that can usually be answered in a few words – often with a simple yes or no
- Logical argument: attempting to convince the other with an appeal to facts or logic, usually without consideration of the emotional factors involved
- Reassuring: trying to stop the other person from feeling the negative emotions she is experiencing
- Advising: giving the other person a solution to her problem
- Diverting: pushing the other’s problem aside through distraction

## Activity: Making Communication Better

- Think about and discuss how you can make communication even better



As a large group, discuss how you can make communication even better.

To support this discussion, students are asked list some examples of “communication enhancers” in their workbooks.

You can write down the group’s responses on a white board or paper.

The next slide lists different communication enhancers; the participants will hopefully come up with some or all of these in this discussion and then you can review with the next slide.

## Communication Enhancers

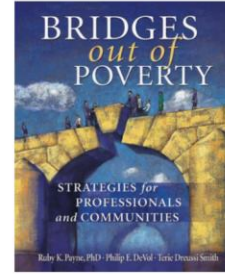
- Watch your body language
- Get rid of unnecessary fillers ("um")
- Have a script prepared for small talk or other occasions
- Ask questions and repeat what the other person said
- Tell a story
- Put away distractions
- Tailor your message for your audience
- Be brief yet specific
- Up your empathy
- Really listen



This slide will assist with the discussion from the previous slide.

## Registers of Language

- Frozen – language that is always the same
- Formal – the standard syntax and word choice of work and school; has complete sentences and specific word choices
- Consultative – formal register when used in conversation; discourse pattern not quite as direct as formal register
- Casual – language between friends and is characterized by a 400 – 800 word vocabulary; word choice general and not specific; conversation dependent upon non-verbal assists; sentence syntax often incomplete
- Intimate – language between lovers or twins; language of sexual harassment



Discuss why the registers of language matter – importance of message, who your audience is.

See the article “Language Register: What it is and why does it matter in education?” for additional information to expand on this topic.

In their participant workbook, students are asked to list each of the 5 registers of language. They are also asked what register they use most often in their daily life, and in their workplace. Finally, they are asked why the register of language matters in early childhood education.

Discuss their responses with the group.

## Accepting and giving constructive criticism

- Be mindful of your body language
- Be prepared
- Remain calm and don't respond with angry excuses
- Rethink the word "criticism" as "feedback"
- Show gratitude
- Talk privately



Part of our communication as educators may be that we need to give or receive constructive criticism – helping to improve or promoting further development of others or ourselves.

Review the different ways to give and receive constructive criticism.

In their participant workbooks, students are given an example of both criticism (someone saying “You are a horrible driver!”) and constructive criticism (reworded to read “When you change lanes without signaling, and drive faster than the speed limit, it puts us and other people at risk.”)

## Accepting and giving constructive criticism



- Insert the negative between two positives
- Highlight the issue, not the person
- Give specific details
- Provide suggestions on how to improve
- Be available
- Follow up with additional feedback

This slide is a continuation from the previous slide.

Students are asked to make a note of some tips to both accepting and giving constructive criticism in their workbooks.

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## Video - Bully a Plant

How does talking to plants affect their growth and development?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yx6UgfQreYY>

Show the video then discuss as a group how talking to the plants affected their growth and development.

Relate this to how important positive and effective oral communication is and how it affects others

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### Session #4 Facilitator Notes

## Characteristics of Professionalism



- Attitude
- Appearance
- Behaviour
- Vocabulary
- Mind-set
- Obstacles

Please see the document: Characteristics of Professionalism for detailed facilitator notes that expand on each of the bullet points on the screen.

Students are asked to record each of the 6 characteristics of professionalism in their participant workbooks.

## Activity – Role Play Scenarios

- Split into groups of 2 or 3 people
- Practice/role play the scenario you are given
- Take turns in each role



Split the group into smaller sub-groups of 2 to 3 people. Give each group a role play scenario that they will practice together.

Please see the document “Role Play Scenarios for Session 4” for each of the scenarios.

Come back together as a large group and discuss how their role play went.

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### Session #4 Facilitator Notes

## Journal Reflection



Think about one or two things that you do well when communicating orally / verbally.

What are you good at?

Think about one or two things that you would like to improve on with oral communication.

What are they?

These questions are outlined in the participant workbook. Remind the participants to complete this reflection in their journals, and bring it with them to the next session.

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### Session #4 Facilitator Notes

This Facilitator Guide was designed in 2019 as part of the series “**Next Level Skills for Early Childhood Educators.**” This curriculum is intended to support Ontario’s Early Childhood Educators in further developing the unique communication skills required in their role.

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