

FAMILY ACTIVITY

AGES 9-11

"Reflective Listening"

When children come to us with physical hurts, it is easy to reach for the Band-Aids. With emotional hurts, however, it is not quite so simple. Unintentionally, we often react by ignoring, denying, or minimizing children's feelings. This reaction leaves children with the feeling that they are not being heard or understood. By responding with reflective statements, we let children know that we do care and that we are here if they need to talk. Reflective responses open the doors to good communication. Ignoring, denying, or minimizing feelings closes the doors to communication.

Materials needed:

- Marker (optional)

Directions:

1. For each of the following statements, parent and child write or discuss one closed-door statement and one open-door statement.

- A. *"Kelly and I were having a great time, and then Sandy came over and they just ignored me."*
- B. *"I got a 68 on my social studies test."*
- C. *"Bobby said I was the worst one on our soccer team."*
- D. *"I hate doing homework every night."*
- E. *"You just don't understand!"*
- F. *"It's not fair! You never make Andy help with the dishes!"*

2. Which did you find to be the easiest responses and why?