

# What is validation?

Validation involves letting someone know, verbally or nonverbally, that their feelings, thoughts, and actions make sense given their current situation or past experiences. An important part of validation is being nonjudgmental.

## Levels of validation

Steps	Validating behaviors	Invalidating behaviors
Practice active listening.	Give your child your undivided attention.  Look at them while they talk.	Checking your cell phone or multi-tasking.
Be mindful of verbal and nonverbal reactions.	Make eye contact, nod, mirror their emotions.	Rolling your eyes, walking away, sighing. Saying "You shouldn't feel that way."
Observe how they're feeling. Look for a word or words to describe the feeling.	"I want to make sure I understand. You're feeling anxious and worried because you have a test coming up. Is that right?"	"I'm sure that's not it."  "That's no reason to be upset."  "I don't understand."  "That doesn't make sense."
Reflect the feeling back to them without judgement.		"I get that you're anxious, but you have to get this done."  "If you don't get this under control, [insert consequence]."
Show tolerance.	"I don't blame you for feeling hopeless about school. Things keep piling up and you feel like you're drowning in expectations."	"This is just the way it is."  "If you try harder, you can do this."  "You're too smart to let your emotions get in the way."