

## Reflection Statements

**Reflections are statements** and are a part of *active listening*, where you try to repeat back what you think someone has just said. They communicate to your child that you are trying to understand what they mean and that you are listening. It does not mean you have to agree with what was said. These statements simply reflect that you have heard them.

Communication problems can arise if the speaker, in this case, your child, doesn't say what they meant to say or, if you, the listener, don't hear correctly or have an incorrect understanding of what your child said. Reflections are a form of active listening that can help you avoid these pitfalls.

There are three different kinds of reflections:

1. Repeating what was said, sticking closely to the words that were used
2. Paraphrasing using a restatement in which your child's intent is inferred
3. Providing a reflection of feeling where you underscore the emotional aspects of what your child said

Responding back to your child by restating what they may be saying and feeling allows them to let you know if you're on track - and what you may have missed.

Here are examples of a statement, followed by a non-reflection and a reflection:

**Statement:** "I don't want to stop drinking."

**Reflection:** "You don't want to stop drinking" or, "You still get something out of drinking" or, "Drinking is still really important to you."

**Non-reflection:** "I can't believe you still think that after hearing about all of the risks of drinking!"

**Tip:** Some people find it easier to begin reflections with standard phrases such as, "So you feel...", "It sounds like you...", "You're wondering if..."

In the case below the non-reflection is cheering the speaker on, which is great, but again, may not lead to more insight about the speaker's thought processes.

**Statement:** "I think I can do this."

**Reflection:** "You're pretty confident about this."

**Non-reflection:** "Of course you can. There's no reason to be nervous."