



## Developing Your Child's Communication Skills

### Kimochis™ Key #3

Use a talking face and relaxed body language  
instead of a fighting face and tense body language

Dear Parents,

This week we introduced Key to Communication #3. Remember the percentages about nonverbal communication from Key to Communication #2 (tone of voice=30%, body language=60%, words=10%). These numbers tell us that body language (both face and body) is extremely important to a communication message.

Our class is learning how to look for the feelings behind a verbal message by reading body language. This is important because the number one reason for miscommunication is that people do not read body language accurately. You can support your child's learning by:

- Talking about your own body language. *"I have a habit of squinting my eyes when I feel serious. I think people assume I am mad when I am not."*
- Noticing others body language. *"I can see by looking at that man's face he is feeling impatient." "What a friendly facial expression you have for your teacher each day!"*
- Saying what you see, *"You look mad."* And then, check it out, *"Are you mad?"*

We are also learning how to stay aware of our facial expression when feeling upset emotions. Your child is learning that when they use a fighting face it makes it much harder for people to want to listen, resolve upset feelings and solve problems. Using talking eyes and a talking face can help your child maintain a positive connection with others even when they are feeling upset.

The following suggestions will provide your family with talking points and communication skills that will help every family member become more aware of their facial expressions and body language. Just like it takes years to become a fluent reader, it takes years to learn how to be aware of your nonverbal communication so that positive connections can be maintained even in the heat of the moment!

Thanks for your cooperation.





## Tips and Strategies to Try at Home

### Kimochis™ Key #3

Use a talking face and relaxed body language instead of a fighting face and tense body language

**Connect** with your family at dinner (or anytime you feel your family is ready to connect) to highlight the importance of facial expression and body language. Consider and discuss the talking points below:

- Ask your child to share the difference between a talking and fighting face and body.
- Take turns showing a fighting face. Why is it challenging to stop using this face?
- Invite each family member to share:
  - Who do they admire that can use a positive facial expression and body language even when they are upset?
- What makes it challenging to use a talking face and body instead of a fighting face and body? (certain people, situations or feelings)
- Create a family secret signal (a look or a sign) to let each other know in a shame-free way to re-do a moment using a talking face and body.

**Communicate** with family members to:

- Name what you admire about the way one another uses positive body language under pressure. For example, *"I really admire how you can keep your cool and not give mean looks when you are mad."*
- Take a challenge. Think of a particular person that you tend to use your fighting face and body with and try to make a change.

**Create** practice sessions away from the emotion so your child can rehearse using Key #3 when feeling upset. Model the strategies first and then reverse roles.

- Choose a situation where it can be challenging to use a talking face.
- Have a family member make a fighting face. Model not returning the same unkind look. Rather, use a talking face and voice. Sincerely ask, *"Are you mad at me?"*
- Use a fighting face and re-do the moment. Say, *"I'm sorry I just looked at you with a mean face. I am mad, but don't have to make such a mean face. I'm sorry."*

**Commit** as a family to practice using a talking face and body even when really, really mad.

- Celebrate when family members make efforts to use a talking face and body.
- Notice nonverbal communication around you that is positive. Say to your child, *"I think that grocery clerk handled that grumpy customer with such respect. Everything about her face and body language was positive in a tough situation."*

