

## LET'S TALK

### Model

Communication is a skill. The more you practice it, the better you will become at it. Good communication will help you build healthy relationships with friends and family members. Read the following dialogue between Malik and Carly, two good friends who communicate well together.

*“Is something wrong, Malik?  
You look upset.”*

**CONVERSATION ENCOURAGER;  
BODY LANGUAGE**

*“Oh, I’m sorry. You must be really  
nervous about him. Does the vet know  
what’s wrong?”*

**MIRROR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS;  
ASK QUESTIONS**

*“I hope so, too. Let me  
know how it goes.”*

**CLEAR, SIMPLE MESSAGE**

*“Yeah, I’m really worried. My  
dog, Buster, got sick this weekend  
and we had to take him to the vet.”*

**“I” MESSAGE; HONEST THOUGHTS  
AND FEELINGS**

*“Not yet. I hope my mom will  
know something when I get home  
from school today.”*

**HONEST THOUGHTS  
AND FEELINGS**



## Practice

Practice your conversation skills with a simple game. Form groups of three. One of you will be the speaker, one will be the listener, and one will keep score. The scorekeeper will write down the speaking and listening skills shown in the Coach's Box. Then the speaker will choose a topic to discuss with the listener. The scorekeeper will give the speaker a point each time he or she uses good speaking skills. The listener will get points for using good listening skills. When you are finished, trade roles: make the speaker the new listener and the listener the new scorekeeper. Play the game once more then rotate the roles again and play a third time.

## Apply/Assess

Now try writing your own conversation. Choose one situation shown here or make up your own. Write a conversation using the speaking and listening skills you learned. Role-play your conversation with a partner. Have your classmates identify the speaking and listening skills you use as you role-play your conversation.

You and a friend are talking about plans for the weekend.

You are discussing a problem with your parent.

You are talking to a brother or sister about a family vacation.



## Communication Skills

### Speaking skills

- "I" messages
- Clear, simple statements
- Honest thoughts and feelings
- Body language

### Listening skills

- Body language
- Conversation encouragers
- Mirror thoughts and feelings
- Ask questions

## Self-Check

- Did our conversation show good speaking skills?
- Did our conversation show good listening skills?