

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is:

- Focusing on what is being said by the young person; turning towards them to indicate with your body language that you are listening and engaged.
- Asking questions to make sure you understood what the young person said.
- Providing brief responses so the young person knows you are listening (for example, “yes”, nodding head, etc.).

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVE LISTENING:

“I heard you say you are upset by how your teacher treats you, is that correct?”

“Tell me more about the way your teacher treats you.”

ACTIVE QUESTIONING

Active questioning is:

- Asking questions in order to better understand the young person or what they are saying.
- Asking questions that encourage a detailed response from the young person rather than a “yes” or “no” answer.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVE QUESTIONING:

“Tell me more about your idea to go back to school.”

“I would like to hear more about what you think about this situation.”

“What do you think your options are?”

ACTIVE UNDERSTANDING

Active understanding is:

- Trying to put yourself in the young person’s position to fully understand his/her feelings and emotions.
- Encouraging the young person to talk without being interrupted or criticized.
- Acknowledging that the young person’s problems are real.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVE UNDERSTANDING STATEMENTS:

“I can tell this is really upsetting you.”

“I understand what you are saying and I would like to help you with this problem.”

Adapted from

Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (2020). *Go families! Building adults’ skills to communicate with young people: A training manual*. (p.34) The Compass for SBC. <https://thecompassforsbc.org/project-examples/go-families-building-adults-skills-communicate-young-people-training-manual>