Communication Self-Check

Before you start focusing on increasing positive communications with your family, consider doing a communication self-check. Sometimes the quickest way to improve our relationships with others is to look to ourselves.

Check your communication style

Talking with your children and spouse is different than talking with your buddies or military members. Home-front communication, such as being patient, willing to listen, and finding appropriate compromises, will lead to many positive interactions with your family. You'll know you are on the right track when you have conversations with your children rather than only giving orders!

Check your stress level

If you're feeling overwhelmed and stressed out for any reason, staying positive with your children can be a challenge. Are you distressed about a deployment or worried about finances? Assess your stress level, and then find positive ways to manage your stress. As you take positive actions to deal with difficulties in your life, patience with your children will likely be easier to find.

Check your expectations for your children

If you expect your 5 year-old to agree that cookies before dinner are generally not a good idea, you will likely not have a positive conversation with her. The better you understand how your 5 year-old daughter or 15 year-old son thinks and communicates, the better your interactions will go. If you have been gone, or just a bit out of touch, check to be sure your expectations are realistic for your age child.