

Life, Work & Family

Monthly work/life newsletter for UAW represented DaimlerChrysler workers

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[GET TOGETHER FOR DINNER: STAY IN TOUCH](#)

Forget the barrage of sports and model images in the media. Children and teens still watch their parents for critical aspects of role modeling. And dinner hour is a great time to check in. Want to have a powerful impact on your child? Get him to the dinner table several times a week.

Important work can be done at the table, both physical and emotional. A survey of 1,500 U.S. parents named childhood obesity as their second greatest concern (80%). (NFO WorldGroup Inc.) They are right on the mark: **thirty percent of American households have children or teenagers who are overweight.** For maximum positive impact, eat at home, plan a healthy meal, and prepare the meal together.



"Use dinnertime for happy conversation and positive, reconnecting interactions," says Work Life Benefits Director Sandy Egan. "Make sure it's a time that everyone looks forward to." Aleta Koman, M.Ed., author of *Who's the Boss?* points out that this is a great time to encourage family members to listen to each other's points of view and practice civility.

A recent online survey revealed that nearly half of the young women respondents looked to their mothers as their role model. In another survey, 42 percent of 750 teens named a relative as their role model. In a third, 46 percent of teens said their positive role models are more likely to do well in school and have higher self-esteem. And, what is critically important: they also are less likely to abuse substances.



According to Koman, you must always practice what you preach—teens especially are watching for hypocrisy and inconsistencies between what you say and what you do. "It's true that many teenagers, (perhaps most) will dismiss their parents as hopelessly "uncool" [but they] have deep concerns about loyalty, justice and the meaning of life."

The department of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration offers the following guidelines for being a great role model for your child:

- Share your values with your child
- Demonstrate self-respect and self-esteem with healthy actions
- Be independent instead of following fads
- Use medications carefully
- If you drink alcohol, do so responsibly

- Deal with stress in a healthy way
- Share your success and failures with your child
- Demonstrate your love for each family member
- Discuss the media's portrayal of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
- Become interested and involved in your child's school and activities



Would you like more information about positive messages? Visit their website: <http://family.samhsa.gov>. According to SAMHSA, "Your values, opinions, and example carry more weight with your child than you might have thought. You can do battle against the negative messages your child sees and hears." Why not make dinner the time and place to start talking?

BECOMING AN ACTIVE LISTENER

Listening is a skill you need in every aspect of your life. Being a better, more active listener ensures that you receive the right message from the person who is speaking—making you both feel more positive about the experience. The better you listen and understand, the more successful you will be:

1. **Listen to the total message.** Sometimes what is not said is just as important, or more important, than what is said. Note non-verbal clues: hesitancy, inflection, stressed points, facial expressions and body language. Up to 65 percent of a message is sent without words.
2. **Avoid letting your own emotions affect what you hear.** Be aware that opposing viewpoints, personality clashes and differing expectations can keep you from really hearing what's being said.
3. **Prepare physically for the conversation.** Face the speaker, make sure you can hear what he or she is saying and maintain eye contact. This shows that you're interested in what's being said.
4. **Focus on the message.** Don't decide from a speaker's appearance and delivery if the message is worthwhile. Be more interested in what the person is saying than what he or she looks like.
5. **Try to avoid having the last word.** If you can listen closely, you may be convinced that the speaker is right after all.
6. **The mind can process 500 words per minute.** The average person speaks 125 words per minute. You can therefore think about four times faster than the average person can speak. Use this time to mentally summarize what was said. Try to sort out and remember what you can use.
7. **Evaluate what you hear.** Always make an effort to evaluate the logic and credibility of what you hear. Don't accept everything at face value.
8. **Practice the following three skills for active listening:** Paraphrasing, clarifying, feedback.



Active listening helps you understand others and wins their respect.

—adapted from *Workcare* by Judith Webster and George Pfeiffer

WHAT'S NEW

The holiday season is upon us and it's a time for family togetherness and a spirit of giving, not only of material items, but also of our time, generosity, and love. That's why the Circle of Life Committee would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the variety of programs that are available to all UAW-represented employees -- the Family Resource and Referral Program, the National Child Care Network, the Elder Care Geriatric Assessment Program, and the Dependant Care Assistance Plan. These programs are instrumental in providing valuable assistance with a variety of issues that will help balance work and family life during this busy time of year.

For more information on any of these programs, visit our UAW-DaimlerChrysler National Training Center web site at www.uawdcx.com, and click on Circle of Life.

From the entire staff at the UAW-DaimlerChrysler National Training Center and from the Circle of Life Committee, we wish everyone a safe and happy Holiday!