

Effective Communication for Guardians



Strategies



Adjust Communication Style

- Consider if the person needs information in plain language and short sentences. Break down complex information into smaller sections.
- Use a gentle, relaxed tone. Face the person when speaking.
- Be patient. After the person speaks, pause before speaking again.
- Repeat what the person said to show them you are listening and understand what they are saying.



Use Communication Aids & Services



- If the person is feeling anxious during the conversation, a fidget toy or art may help make them feel relaxed.
- Ensure the person has communication aids and services if needed. This may include hearing aids, a communication board, or access to services such as an interpreter or American Sign Language (ASL) services.



Consider Timing

- Respect the person's privacy. Find a private location or time to speak.
- Minimize background noise by choosing a quiet location or a calm time of the day.
- Know the person's schedule. Time your conversation when they are most alert and able to participate in a conversation.
- Avoid important conversations when the person is not at their best.



Communicating Through Difficult Decisions

- Explain the issue to the person using a communication style fit for the person's needs.
- Encourage the person to share their point of view and offer alternatives or compromises. Be nonjudgmental about their preferences.
- Accept that the person may have negative emotions about the decision, such as anger or disappointment.