



IHSS

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
TRAINING ACADEMY

A PROJECT OF SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Communicating With Your Provider

How you communicate with your provider can affect the quality of care you receive.

Having good communication is the first step to a positive working relationship.

In order to communicate well, always state your needs clearly. Listen to how your provider responds and ask questions about anything you do not understand.

Take time to learn about your provider.

- Ask your provider what name he/she would like to be called and use that name.
- Ask about any habits your provider may have that could affect you such as smoking, and talk about habits you have that your provider should be aware of.

Make sure what you are saying is being understood by your provider.

- Don't talk too fast or too slow.
- If you are talking to your provider and he/she looks confused, ask them if they understand what you are saying. By asking your provider, you will know for sure if he/she understood you or if you need to provide more details.

Helpful Hints for good communication.

- Keep the lines of communication open to avoid misunderstandings.
- It may help to use humor and patience when dealing with difficult situations. The tone of your voice can also improve the outcome.
- Take responsibility for your own feelings and respect your provider's concerns by using "I" statements.

Example:

***“I see/hear/feel (state the issue).
It makes me feel (state your feelings).
I need (state a possible solution).”***

This might sound like:

“I understand this task is hard to learn, but it makes me feel uncomfortable when you grumble under your breath. I would like you to ask me for more direction and let me know what you are feeling so we can work out the problem.”

“This is the third time this week you have been 20 minutes late. I’m feeling frustrated because my schedule is off when you are late. I need you here on time.”

Keep the lines of communication open and focused on your care.

- Be friendly, but keep your relationship as professional as possible. Remember he/she is there to provide IHSS services for you.
- Your provider may not want to share details about his/her personal life. Respect their privacy.
- Cultural differences may sometimes affect how you get along and may create misunderstandings. Talk about these things immediately and work on a solution that will satisfy both of you.

For more information, contact your local county IHSS office.