

# STRESS

## Effective Communication Strategies

### **Make a praise sandwich.**

When you need to give someone feedback on his/her behavior, start with an observation of what he/she is doing well. Describe the changes you would like the person to make as "next steps" rather than as a critique. Finally, end with a compliment about something he/she has done well.

**Praise:** "Nice job speaking right at eye level with Jacey."

**Next steps:** "Next time you might think about using a softer voice."

**Praise:** "I really liked how you gave her a high five at the end."

### **Practice active listening skills:**

Listen to the message, reflect feelings, notice nonverbal communication cues.

### **Repeat back to the listener what you think you have just heard, to make sure you are correct.**

**Speak about yourself rather than the other person.** "I felt sad," versus, "You let me down."

### **Describe the facts rather than placing blame.**

"Drop-off is at 9 a.m.; it is now 11:30," rather than: "You are more than two hours late!"

