



Active Listening

ACTION PLAN



PREPARATION:

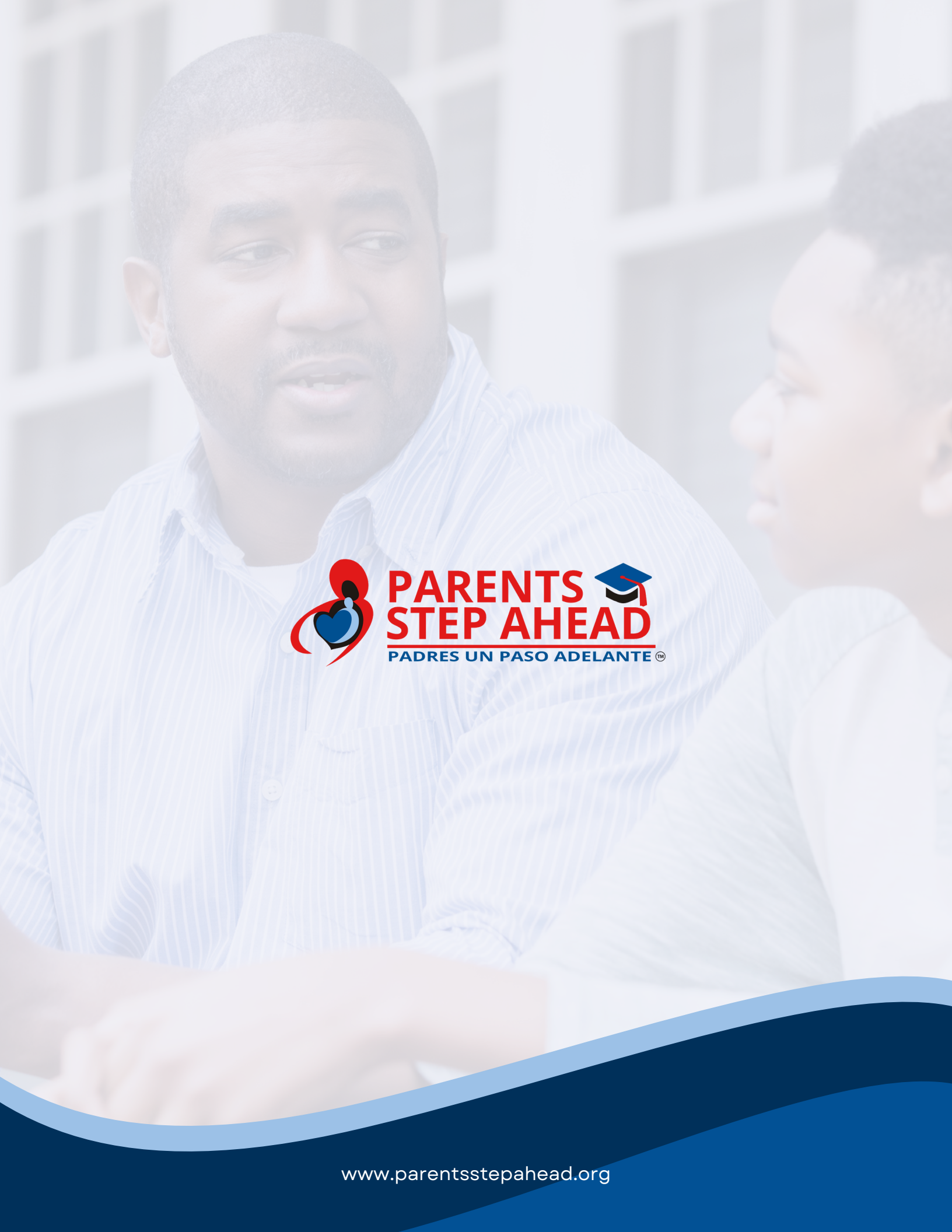
1. Schedule a time when both of you are **free of distractions**, alert and fully attentive.
2. Prepare for the discussion by making a note with **bullet points you want to address**.
3. Enter the conversation with the attitude that you are looking for a **win-win solution**.
4. Agree that you will both use 'I' messages and active listening – make a cheat sheet, if needed.
5. At the scheduled time, if either of you is distracted or otherwise not up to the conversation, agree to take a time out and reschedule for a later time within 24 hours. The person who is not up for the discussion should initiate rescheduling the time.
6. **Agree on ground rules**, if one person begins to escalate, she or he will call a time out and return 30 minutes to 24 hours later to resume the discussion.



PRACTICE:

1. Decide who will speak first and who will be the listener.
2. Agree that the **listener will not interrupt or respond to comments** – only paraphrase what she or he hears (for now). The listener may ask for clarification, if needed. (Did you say...?)
3. The speaker will say 2-3 sentences, then stop and allow the listener to paraphrase.
4. If the listener misunderstands or further clarification is necessary, the speaker will provide that.
5. After the speaker talks for five minutes (or until she or he has finished his or her part of the discussion), switch roles.
6. **Repeat the same steps and continue to switch roles every five minutes until you both feel you have been heard and understood.**

When you both feel understood, you are ready to address the issue at hand.
Active listening is the first step in the problem solving process.



**PARENTS
STEP AHEAD**

PADRES UN PASO ADELANTE™