



How to Have a Great Conversation With Your Child



Life is busy! Sometimes, it's easy to be overloaded with the “every-day” routine of life.

It is crucial to your relationship with your child to give your complete attention when conversing. Just simply asking, “How are you?” is a good start, but do you give your full attention to the conversation? Begin with a question that encourages an answer other than yes or no. Then, just listen! Your child may begin to open up about what is happening in his world.

When your child asks hard questions, don't give a shallow answer; answer honestly. If you know the answer, great! If you don't know, tell them you will try to find an answer or research it together.

Show interest in the things your child finds interesting. If he is excited about the bugs he sees, check out a book from the library about bugs and identify them together. If she loves dancing around like a princess, dress up with her and dance around.

Listen to your child's frustrations, anger, and disappointment about things that happen in their lives—WITHOUT trying to fix it. Sometimes your child just needs someone to listen. You may be able to share a story about a time that relates to what they are talking about. But most importantly, listen!

Your child may want to talk with you about something you did that upset him or her. Listen! Acknowledge your mistake and apologize. Talk about ways you both can improve.

One of the most crucial points about conversation—**be careful how you talk about others.** Children hear everything, even when you think they aren't listening. If you are critical and judgmental of others, your child may be reluctant to talk with you for fear that you will be critical and judgmental of him or her.

If you haven't recognized, the overarching message to conversing with your child is to **LISTEN.**