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HOW TO START TALKING WITH YOUR KIDS

Knowing how to listen is only part of forming a conversational connection with your kids. You can also approach them in ways that encourage them to talk. For example, the standard question parents ask—“What did you do at school today?”—is very likely to be answered with “Nothing.” But obviously, your child did something at school. If you ask the question differently—“Tell me about one thing you did at school today”—you have a far better chance of starting a conversation. The idea is to start asking open-ended questions that encourage your child to respond with more than one-word answers.

These examples can help you see how to reword questions in a way that will encourage your child to talk.

What would you like for dinner?

If you could plan your favorite dinner, what would it be?

Do you like your teacher?

Tell me about the best thing your teacher ever did.

Who is your best friend?


What do you like most about your best friend?

Do you want to get married someday?

What do you think is a good age to get married? Why?

What do you think is the best job to have?

What job do you see yourself doing when you're an adult?

 Think of five topics you and your kids could talk about, and write an open-ended question for each.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____