

Talking with Kids

Ask yourself these questions before you start a conversation with your child.

Tone	Am I engaged and productive?	Is my child?
Setting	Am I comfortable?	Is my child?
Timing	Do I need a moment?	Does my child?

General approaches

Reserve judgment.

“Oh, I see.”

“What did you think of that?”

Recognize your child’s feelings.

“That sounds like it was a painful experience.”

“Was that hard for you?”

“I understand that you would like _____.”

Let go of your own expectations.

“How would you like this situation to work out?”

“What’s your next step?”

“What do you think would be the best thing to do?”

“I had assumed _____, and I am open to other ideas.”

Focus on the positive.

“I’m so glad that you _____.”

“I hope that you can see _____.”

“What are you most proud of?”

Be direct.

“I’m disappointed in your actions. I didn’t think this would happen.”

“I’m scared for your safety, and I also want you to show me how you can take responsibility.”

Ask open-ended questions.

“How do you feel about that?”

“What’s going on?”

