Children's Mental Health: Hearing Your Child's Voice



In the hustle and bustle of daily life, it's essential for parents to actively engage with their children and create an environment where their voices are not only heard but valued. Effective communication with your child is crucial for their emotional development and building a strong parent-child relationship. It helps children develop a sense of self-worth, confidence and independence.

Here are some top tips, key phrases and conversation starters to help you connect with your child and encourage them to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences. They will help create a supportive and communicative environment that encourages your child to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences with you.

Top Tips

Create a Safe Space

Foster an atmosphere where your child feels comfortable expressing themselves without fear of judgement. Ensure that your interactions are positive and non-critical.

Empathise and Validate

Acknowledge your child's feelings by saying phrases like, 'I understand,' or, 'That must have been tough for you'. Validating their emotions helps them feel understood.

Active Listening

Demonstrate active listening by making eye contact, nodding and providing verbal cues, such as, 'I see,' or, 'Go on'. Show genuine interest in what your child is saying.

Ask Open-Ended Questions

Encourage meaningful conversations by asking questions that require more than a simple 'yes' or 'no' response. For example, 'What was the best part of your day?' or, 'Tell me about something that made you happy today'.

Avoid Interrupting

Allow your child to finish their thoughts before responding. This communicates that their words are important and that you value what they have to say.

Express Your Own Feelings

Share your own emotions and experiences to create an open dialogue. This will help your child to feel comfortable reciprocating and sharing their feelings.

Reflective Statements

Repeat back what your child says to demonstrate understanding. For instance, if your child says, 'I had a tough day at school,' respond with, 'It sounds like your day at school was challenging. Can you tell me more about it?'



Be Patient

Children may take time to articulate their thoughts. Be patient and avoid rushing them. This communicates that you value their contributions, no matter how small.

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Key Phrases

How did that make you feel?

Tell me more about that.

I'm here for you.

I appreciate your perspective.

I understand.



What do you think about...?

I love hearing about your day.

It's okay to feel that way.





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Conversation Starters

What was the best part of your day?

Is there something on your mind that you'd like to talk about?

What made you laugh or smile today?

If you could change one thing about today, what would it be?



How can I support you right now?

Can you tell me about a challenge you faced today and how you handled it?

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. As far as possible, the contents of this resource are reflective of current professional research. However, please be aware that every child is different and information can quickly become out of date. The information given here is intended for general guidance purposes only and may not apply to your specific situation.



Is there anything you'd like to do together this weekend?

What's something you learned that was interesting?

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