



Conversations with Your High School Student

High school brings many changes and more freedom, which can make it hard for parents and teens to talk. It's important to keep trying. Keeping conversations open and caring, even when it's tough, can help you connect and support them during this important time.

The following tips might help open a conversation!

TIPS, TRICKS & REMINDERS

- **Ask About Their Friendships:** Friendships are very important to high schoolers. Ask about their friend groups and what they like to talk about or do to understand their world better.
- **Support Their Independence: While Staying Involved:** Teens often want more freedom but still need your help and guidance. Keep talking to them even when it is hard, so they know they can turn to you when they need you.
- **Validate Their Feelings & Perspectives:** High schoolers are figuring out who they are in the world. Be curious and listen to their thoughts, even if you don't fully agree. Being open to hearing how your teen thinks and feels can lead to meaningful conversations and bring you closer.
- **Look for Signs of Struggles:** If your teen seems quiet, avoids certain topics, looks frustrated, or snaps at you, it might mean they are stressed or upset about something. They could be facing issues with friends, school work, or their feelings. Regular chats can help you catch problems early.
- **Find Opportunities to Talk Daily:** You don't need to have big, deep talks all the time. Simple chats during car rides, dinner, or evening walks can be great moments to check-in.
- **Share Your Own High School Stories:** Teens might seem like they don't care, but sharing your own high school experiences can help them feel understood and more willing to talk.
- **Ask About Their Classes:** Try asking specific questions like, "What was your favorite part of English today?"
- **Use Open-Ended Questions:** "What do you think about ___?" or "How do you feel about ___?" to start deeper conversations.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What's one thing you've liked about school this week?
- What are your teachers like this year? Which class do you look forward to? Which class do you dread?
- What do you and your friends talk about?
- Have you thought more about what you want to do after high school?
- What's something good that's happened lately?
- What do you wish was different about your school?
- What have you heard or read that you think I would like?

By focusing on open and supportive conversations, families can create a space where teens feel heard, respected, and understood.