



Conversation starters talking to your kids about feelings

Here are some tips for talking to your child about feelings:

- Allow your child the time to be heard. Sometimes just sharing what's going on can be helpful for kids.
- Ask open-ended questions to help keep your child talking and sharing.
- Use tools to talk about feelings that can make kids feel comfortable. Here are some ideas to try out:
 - When reading, talk about the characters in the book and how they may be feeling. “What can Joanna do to help herself feel better?” “Why do you think the boy in the story was upset?”
 - Use images of feelings to help your child understand different emotions.
- Model this behavior for kids by talking about and sharing your own feelings.
- Let your kids know that what they're feeling is normal, and be sure to praise them for sharing with you.
- Notice any changes in how your child is behaving, and check in if something is different than how they usually behave.
- As kids grow, they will experience new feelings. Helping them to put a name to a feeling is the first step towards coping and managing feelings.

Children's Wisconsin believes that caring for a child's mental and behavioral health is just as important as caring for their physical health. Visit childrenswi.org/shinethrough to learn more about what Children's is doing to detect needs sooner, reduce stigma and improve access to care.

If you or a loved one are considering harming themselves, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255

Checking in often with your kids can help them express their feelings and can lead to open and honest conversations about what is going on in their lives. The more your child talks about their feelings, the easier and more natural it will become.

Watch the Conversation Starters: talking to your kids about feelings video on Children's Wisconsin's YouTube channel.

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