

## Conversation starters

### Talking to your teen about healthy relationships

Getting teens to open up and have a conversation can be difficult, but keep in mind that conversations that you have with your teen do make a difference to them. There are a few things you can do to help your conversations have an effect on your teen, which include:

- Find a moment that is natural. Starting a conversation with, “We need to talk.” can add anxiety and stress, which can lead to a less useful conversation.
- Talking about something on TV or a video that you watch together can help by showing examples.
- Not all conversations need to take place all at once. You can keep the conversation going in bits and pieces over time.
- Talk with your teen instead of giving them a lecture. Allow them to talk and ask questions
- Be sure to ask open-ended questions yourself to keep the conversation flowing.
- A car ride can be a good place to have a casual conversation. The setting is private and there is time to talk with less distraction.
- Teens often communicate by text, so having a conversation in a way they are comfortable with can be easier for them. Try sending your teen a text that could lead to an in person conversation later.
- Teens have relationships that are changing all of the time, so it’s important that they know what a healthy relationship can look like.



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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](https://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

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