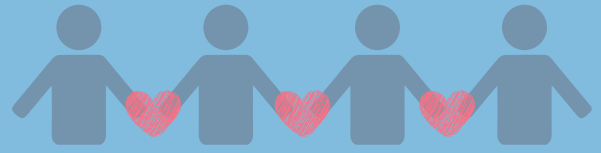




# HOW TO HAVE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR CHILDREN



Make this a comfortable experience by having the conversation at home or a private location. Consider asking other family members to join to create an opportunity for discussion, based on the conversation topic.



Face-to-face conversation is important for all ages. It is how we show empathy and love - how we connect.

## LISTEN

Be present with your child and pay attention to what they are saying. Avoid multi-tasking and leave your phone in another room.

## COME PREPARED

Expect to discuss the details. Talk to your partner about what you both want to cover and what may be off limits. Come prepared. Practice phrases to deflect questions and how to break down answers into age-appropriate responses. Focus on only addressing your child's question and avoiding unnecessary details.



## ASK

Ask what worries your child most. You might be surprised by their answers. No need to bring up other topics if your child does not find them relevant. Brainstorm ideas for coping with these worries with your child.

If old enough, empower your child to research the problem, using trusted sources. Be sure to set limits so they receive accurate and relevant information.

## EXPLORE WHAT THEY KNOW



Ask your child what they know. Children and adolescents often talk to their peers, first. Ask your child what they have heard about the topic you plan to discuss and take the opportunity to clarify or correct any misinformation.

# MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSES

