



ABC's OF HEALTHY KIDS | T: Tough Conversations

Conversation Cheat Sheet

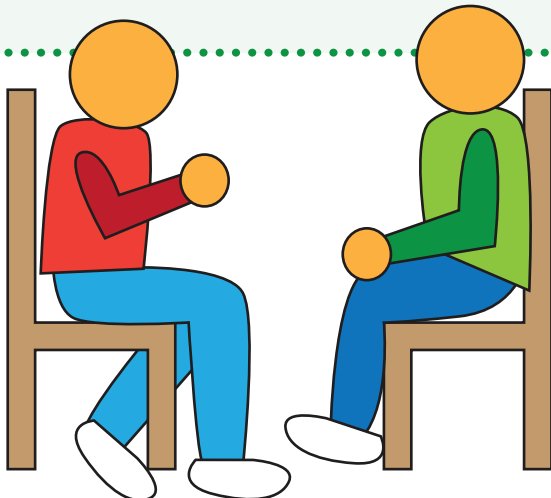
Parents: Here are some tips and tricks to help with conversations as your child grows.

Infants and toddlers

- Talk to them often
- Use real words
- Respond to noises and babble
- Read aloud on many topics

Upper elementary and middle school

- Make time every day to check in
- Don't just answer questions – ask and listen
- Talk through big feelings and life experiences like loss and grief
- Have open conversations about puberty, substance use, or other new challenges they may encounter



Preschool and early elementary

- Help children talk about emotions
- Answer questions –serious or silly – with honesty
- Teach correct names for body parts so kids can clearly communicate about personal health and safety
- Talk about possible hazards at home or elsewhere (earthquakes, fire, water safety, etc.)

High school and young adult

- Don't shy from uncomfortable conversations
- Ask deeper questions. Instead of "how was your day?", ask about specific activities, friendships or interests
- Encourage other trusted adults in their life
- "I don't know" is a fair response. Work with them to find the answers.

