

How to Get Your Child to Share What Happened During the Day

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If you've ever asked your child what they did at school and received a blank stare and a flat 'nothing,' you know the pain of trying to gain a little insight into their life away from home. So how do you get your child to actually talk to you about their day and how they're feeling? There are ways to build trust and make them feel comfortable sharing everything with you.

Make space for children to talk

Obviously, like adults, children need time to think and pauses are necessary. The pauses between conversations allow children to calm down, think about what they want to say, and feel heard. Eventually, they stop being shy and become normal and comfortable.

Ask children what happened today

In journalism classes, they teach you how to interview people by asking questions that require more than one word answers. 'Did you have a good day?' is easy to answer with a simple 'yes' or 'no.' That doesn't give you

much information about their actual day. So instead, ask your child, 'Did anything weird happen today?'

Some days are weirder than others, but kids often have answers that provide some information about their day.



Accept to work far away

If you're driving your child to school, you'll want to get there as quickly as possible. After all, parents are busy and have a lot to do during the day. But the longer you spend in the car with your child, the more opportunities you have for them to open up about things.

So if you can, take a long drive when you have time. Kids will open up about what's going on in their lives—from crushes to anxieties. There's something about car rides that really encourages deep conversations.

Really listen

Like adults, children share more when they think the person they are talking to is really listening. Follow-up questions are a great way to show you are listening, so try to do this with your child, just a few simple questions to clarify details or add to what they have said.

If they're talking about something really emotional, like a conflict with a friend or a teacher they're not sure they like, active listening can also help. You can express their feelings or say something like, "*That must have been scary.*" This also helps them put their feelings into words in the future.



Open your heart

You know how your relationship with a friend deepens when you both share something a little vulnerable? You can do the same with your kids by telling them how you really feel. Of course, telling your kids everything that keeps you up at night isn't a good plan, but sharing a little about what's worrying or upsetting you can help them feel like they understand you. It teaches them that talking is about sharing feelings.

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