



Opening Up Communication

Communication with kids is about talking and really listening. Keeping an open line of communication with your kids means they will be more likely to come to you when there is a problem.

Talking side-by-side

Good conversation with our kids often occurs when we are side-by-side, such as, driving to school or sport, walking together, in the kitchen cooking or doing the dishes. Side by side chats are usually casual and non-threatening and provide the perfect opportunity to really talk.

Top Tips

- Communicate with your children doing everyday things together - dinner time, on the lounge, at bedtime, walking or driving together.
- Make it clear that your children can talk with you no matter what the topic.
- Show you are interested in hearing about their interests and issues. Ask questions about their interests (friends, hobbies, favourite websites). Show your child you enjoy talking with them.
- Keep up to date with what is happening in their lives on a day-to-day basis.
- Be open and ready for that moment when they want to talk about something that is difficult for them.

Side-by-side chats are particularly helpful if we have a difficult topic to address. Children will be far more likely to open up to us about something they are worried about if we are casually going for a walk side-by-side or driving in the car together, than if we are sitting looking straight at them eye to eye. This is especially true for older children or teenagers.

