

How to Get Your Child to Talk

I remember when I was a kid and my mom would ask "How was your day?" I would answer "fine." Or she would ask me "What did you learn today?" And I would mumble "Oh nothing." Invariably she would tease back saying, "Well what am I sending you to school for if you aren't learning anything!" Does this sound familiar in your family? Sometimes it can be frustrating to have conversations with children when they act like they don't want to talk. Don't give up! These ideas that I took from *The Parent Institute* can help:

- **Ask specific questions.**
 - "What was the best part of your day?"
 - "What homework do you have?"
 - "What are you studying in science?"
- **Make statements.**
 - "Tell me about your day."
 - "You seem down today."
- **Ask your child's advice.**
 - "You have a great sense of fashion. Do you think I should buy this outfit?"
- **Mention parts of your day that would interest your child.**
 - Maybe you heard a funny story or started a new project.
- **Ask open-ended questions.** This stops kids from giving "yes" or "no" answers.
 - "Who was at the birthday party?"
 - "What was the movie about?"
- **Encourage your child to imagine.**
 - "I remember when microwaves hadn't been invented. What do you think we'll cook with in 50 years?"
- **Keep it simple.**
 - "What do you want to talk about?"

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