

# 10 phrases to start a meaningful conversation with your CASA kids

Here are three tips to get you started:

## 1. First, remember they're beginners

Kids, for all their talking, are still [beginners in the art of conversation](#). Depending on their age, they have varying levels of conversational skills, and even as teens they're still refining and practicing them. One-word answers, run-on answers and other awkward conversation moments are opportunities to help our kids practice communicating. Remembering this makes it easier to hang in there when listening gets tough.

## 2. Be curious

When you ask a question, and your child responds with a one-word answer, be ready to probe a bit—not as an interrogation, but in a way that expresses your [curiosity](#) about your child.

If they describe the movie they saw with a one-word answer, expand on that. What made it 'cool,' 'great,' or 'boring?' Ask about details, and you are more likely to get a detailed answer. "What do you think the hero was thinking when she was trapped by her enemy?" "What was the most exciting scene?"

As adults, we have a large bank of vocabulary and experiences to draw from—this makes it easier for us to describe events and feelings. Our kids are still building that reservoir. Help them paint a more vivid picture with their description through your specific questions. Think about asking for specifics that will allow your child to share their experiences. Get them filling in those details!

## 3. Start with the familiar...the very familiar

It's tempting to shy away from kids' favorite conversation topics because you've already heard about them over and over, but those same topics are great starting points. Your kids are eager to tell you in great detail everything they know about the topic, be it their favorite video game, the book series they love, or their latest interest in [dinosaurs](#).

**Now try these 10 phrases:**

The following 10 conversation starters are from [Bounceback Parenting, A Field Guide to Connection, Not Perfection](#). These conversation starters are great because they're entertaining and let you get to know one another while you're on a drive, waiting in line, or eating a meal together.

1. What's something that our family is really good at?
2. What are you looking forward to about \_\_\_\_\_?
3. What was the [funniest, grossest, weirdest, happiest, saddest] thing you noticed today?
4. What would be the worst superpower to have? What would be the best superpower to have?
5. If you could be any character in a book, who would you choose? Why?
6. When during the day do you feel the best? What season of the year do you like best?
7. Tell a memory of one of your favorite birthdays (or other holidays).
8. If you could solve one problem in the world, what would it be?
9. If you could, what part of today would you repeat? What part of today would you change?
10. What do you think your [grandpa, grandma, or other faraway relative] is doing right now?

Keep on [listening](#) and talking about the things your kids care about now, and they'll know they can come to you later as those topics get a bit more complex.