# Conversation Starters



## How to use it

Pick one question, ask it, and give the answer room. One question in the car or at dinner is enough. Ask, then listen: no fixing, no lecturing. Anyone can pass, and the brave questions are always opt in. Tick the box when you've used one. If something serious comes up, stay calm, thank them for telling you, and get support.

## PARENT ASKS

### EVERYDAY

- ☐ What part of today would you replay? What part would you skip?
- ☐ If today had a weather forecast, what would it be?
- ☐ What's one thing you're looking forward to this week?
- ☐ On a scale of 1 to 10, how's your energy right now? What would move it one number up?
- ☐ What's taking up space in your brain today?

### FEELINGS

- ☐ What's been on your mind a lot lately?
- ☐ When did you feel like yourself this week?
- ☐ What's something that's been harder than you expected?
- ☐ Is there something you're pretending not to care about?
- ☐ What's a feeling you've had recently that surprised you?

### FRIENDS

- ☐ Who's been making you laugh lately?
- ☐ Is there someone you're trying to figure out how to be around?
- ☐ What's something kind a friend did for you lately?
- ☐ Do you feel like you can be yourself around your friends? All of them?
- ☐ Has a friend let you down lately? What happened?
- ☐ What do you think your friends would say you're good at?

### SCHOOL & FUTURE

- ☐ Which class feels worth your time right now? Which one doesn't?
- ☐ If you could design one class, what would it be?
- ☐ What's something you're learning outside of school?
- ☐ What do you hope is different this time next year?
- ☐ What's a skill you wish school actually taught?
- ☐ What's something interesting you learned recently, about anything?

### JUST FOR FUN

- ☐ If we could teleport to dinner anywhere tonight, where are we going?
- ☐ What song have you had on repeat?
- ☐ If you had a totally free Saturday, no obligations, what would you do?
- ☐ What show or creator are you into that might surprise me?
- ☐ If you won $1,000 right now, what's the first thing you'd do?

### THE REAL STUFF

- ☐ What's something you wish adults understood about being your age?
- ☐ When do you feel trusted? When don't you?
- ☐ What's a rule in this house you'd change if you could?
- ☐ Is there something you've wanted to tell me but haven't found the right moment?
- ☐ What's a hard conversation you've had with a friend lately?
- ☐ What are some things you like about me as a parent?

### IF YOU'RE BRAVE (OPT IN)

- ☐ Is there something you've been nervous to tell me?
- ☐ What makes it hard to be honest with me sometimes?
- ☐ What's something you're afraid I'd judge you for?
- ☐ What's something true about our family that we don't talk about?
- ☐ Have you ever felt unsafe, with anyone, anywhere?
- ☐ What's something you need from me that you haven't asked for?
- ☐ Is there a part of yourself you're afraid to show people?

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## TEEN ASKS

Hand the list over. These are for teens to ask the adults.

### THEN & NOW

- ☐ What were you like at my age?
- ☐ What was a hard year of school for you, and why?
- ☐ What did your teenage bedroom look like?
- ☐ Who were you close with growing up? Are you still in touch?
- ☐ What did you want to be when you were my age?
- ☐ What's different about being a teen now versus then?
- ☐ What did a normal Friday night look like when you were my age?
- ☐ What's something from your teen years you think I'd actually like?
- ☐ How did you and your friends make plans before phones?
- ☐ What music were you and your friends listening to at my age?

### YOUR STORY

- ☐ What was your first job?
- ☐ What's a time you got in real trouble? What happened?
- ☐ What's something brave that you have done?
- ☐ What's something you're proud of that I don't know about?
- ☐ What's a mistake you made that taught you something?
- ☐ What were your parents like when you were growing up?
- ☐ How did you decide what to do after high school?
- ☐ What's a time you changed your mind about something important?
- ☐ Who helped you through a tough stretch, and what did they do?
- ☐ What's something you're working on getting better at right now?

### REAL TALK

- ☐ What were you afraid to tell your parents?
- ☐ What's something you wish your parents did differently?
- ☐ What's something you believed as a teen that turned out to be wrong?
- ☐ What do you wish you'd known at my age?
- ☐ What's something you're still figuring out, even now?
- ☐ What scares you about me growing up?
- ☐ What's something about being a parent that surprised you?
- ☐ How do you handle it when you're stressed and don't want us to notice?
- ☐ What helps you calm down when you're upset?
- ☐ What do you need from me on a rough day?

### JUST CURIOUS

- ☐ If you could relive one day of your life, which one?
- ☐ What's a gift that meant a lot to you?
- ☐ What would you do with a free weekend, just for you?
- ☐ What's a small thing that makes your day better?
- ☐ If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?
- ☐ What's something people don't know about you?
- ☐ What's something you'd like to learn if you had the time?
- ☐ If you could switch jobs with someone for a week, whose would it be?
- ☐ What's on your mind this week that isn't about me?
- ☐ Where would you go if you could take a trip with no plans?

### IF YOU'RE BRAVE (OPT IN)

- ☐ What's a mistake that you have made as a parent?
- ☐ What's something you did as a teen that your parents still don't know?
- ☐ What's a relationship mistake you made that I should avoid?
- ☐ What do the adults in this house argue about?
- ☐ What's something you're scared I'll repeat from your life?
- ☐ Has there been a time you thought about giving up on something?
- ☐ What's hard about being my parent right now?
- ☐ What's something you wish you could say to your own parents now?
- ☐ What's something you apologized for that was hard to say?
- ☐ What's a worry about our family you carry that I might not know about?
- ☐ How did your parents handle hard feelings, and what did you take from that?
- ☐ What's something you're still learning to forgive yourself for?

## A tip from us

If an answer starts turning into advice, pause and ask: "Do you want me to listen, help you think it through, or help you figure out what to do?" They may not know yet. That's okay. Start with: "Tell me what happened."