

# Talking to our Kids about Mental Health

Talking about our feelings is an important part of our mental health. The same is true for our kids! Allowing them to share and helping them process emotions makes them feel safe, supported, and cared for.



## Tips for Parents

- Check-in when you see changes in your child's mood or behavior. Sometimes children will act out when they are having trouble understanding their thoughts and emotions.
- Kids learn about communication from us! Make sharing your emotions a regular part of your day to help them learn that positive and negative feelings are totally normal.
- Praise them for sharing their emotions and concerns with you. Say something like **"Thank you so much for sharing that with me"** or **"I like that we can have these kinds of talks. I am proud of you."** This helps them learn that sharing is a good thing.
- Listen openly and allow them to finish their thoughts. Validate their emotions and explain that it is okay to feel what they are feeling. Gently offer solutions on how to work through stressful or scary situations.

## Conversation Starters

- "You seem to have a lot on your mind. I understand how that feels. Let's talk."
- "I've been thinking a lot about my feelings lately, and I thought it might be nice for us to share how we're feeling with each other."
- "Sometimes, it helps to say out loud how you are feeling. I'm here to listen."
- "Let's share some roses and thorns. A rose is a good thing that happened today, and a thorn is something not so great that happened today."
- "I sure do love hearing about your life. It's so interesting! What's new with you?"



We believe that when it comes to health, our minds deserve the same attention as our bodies.

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For mental health information and to find low-cost services in Orange County: [PromiseToTalk.org](#)

*Promise to Talk is a local activation of California's Mental Health Movement: Each Mind Matters.*