



# Continue The Conversation

<p><b>Notice your body language.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reflect openness and interest.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples</b></p> <p>Nodding, eye contact</p>	<p><b>Versus</b></p> <p>Looking at phone</p>
<p><b>Don't ask a lot of questions.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Asking a lot of questions can cause children to shut down or feel defensive.</i></li> <li>• <i>Let them guide the conversation.</i></li> <li>• <i>When stuck, try statements or questions that keep the conversation going.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples</b></p> <p>"Tell me more about that..."</p> <p>"And then what happened?"</p>	
<p><b>Try reflective listening.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Focus on what they are telling you instead of what you want to say next.</i></li> <li>• <i>Try saying back what you just heard.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples</b></p> <p>"It sounds like you are feeling angry because you can't go out with friends."</p> <p>"I hear you saying school has been stressful recently."</p>	
<p><b>Praise.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Thank them for opening up.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples</b></p> <p>"Thank you. That had to be hard to tell me, but you still did it."</p> <p>"Even though this was hard for me to hear, I'm grateful you shared."</p>	<p><b>Versus</b></p> <p>"Why didn't you tell me sooner?!"</p> <p>"Have you been lying to me?"</p>
<p><b>Validate.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Normalize emotions.</i></li> <li>• <i>Do not judge or dismiss.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples</b></p> <p>"It makes sense you feel that way"</p> <p>"Anyone in your situation would feel that way too.."</p>	<p><b>Versus</b></p> <p>"There's no reason to feel ___"</p> <p>"You're just a kid, that doesn't matter."</p> <p>"If you hadn't done that, you wouldn't ..."</p>

For more resources, visit [OnOurSleeves.org](https://www.onoursleeves.org)

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The Movement for Children's Mental Health