



Compass aims to anticipate the needs of Catholic parents, accompany them through the trials and joys of family life, and point them to faithful answers to life's difficult questions.

TIPS FOR OPEN COMMUNICATION

1. COMFORTABLE TIME & LOCATION

- » Know where your child may be most comfortable (e.g., car, on a walk, etc.).

2. NOT IN TROUBLE

- » Don't start with "you're not in trouble," but reassure your child of this if they become defensive or upset.
- » Be sure your body language and tone of voice send this message.

3. STRESS THAT THEY ARE GOOD

- » Always stress that your child is good. Be hopeful. Remain calm.

4. LISTEN!

- » Ask questions and give your child time to think and respond.
- » Practice active listening.

5. PRESS PAUSE

- » It is okay to say "*I don't know; let me get back with you,*" or "*Let's talk about this more tomorrow.*" This gives you time to cool down your own emotions or allows you to look up answers to questions your child may have.
- » Also, remember the talk doesn't need to be long. Your child does not need to tell you everything all at once. Regularly revisit the topic and address questions as they arise.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

1. ASK

- » What do you think about [*insert topic*]?
- » What do you know about [*insert topic*]?
- » Have you heard about [*insert topic*]? What are your thoughts?
- » Remember that show we watched recently? What did you think about when...

2. LISTEN

3. AFFIRM WHAT THEY SAID

(you don't have to agree - if this is difficult for you just repeat what they said back to them)

- » So what you think is...
- » Correct me if I am wrong but you believe that...

4. THANK THEM FOR SHARING

5. SHARE WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW

6. ASK THEM THEIR THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS

7. END ON A POSITIVE NOTE.

- » Thank them for having the conversation and affirm them that you will get the answers requested. Setting a date and time might be helpful.



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