

TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT

TECHNOLOGY



BE



INFORMED
INVOLVED
INTENTIONAL

TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT

TECHNOLOGY

Technology is a significant part of our world; smart phones, computers, social media and gaming. There are a number of benefits of technology but there are also some challenges. It is our role as parents to help protect and guide our children and to keep a balance of their technology input.

Be a positive role model when it comes to length of time using technology and the choices of content. Avoid sharing things about your child on social media unless you have their permission.

Use filtering software in your home and establish guidelines agreed on as a family e.g. no internet in your bedroom.

Encourage other activities e.g. for every hour of tech, an hour outside. Avoid habitual use of technology as a “babysitter”.

Adhere to the rating scale for content and age appropriateness for games and movies. Do your research and read reviews.

Discuss the dangers of technology, the importance of not sharing information, too much time can cause health and social problems and the age appropriateness of material.

Discuss the benefits of using technology; learning opportunities, easy access to helpful resources and the chance to have some fun.

Encourage your child that they should tell you right away if they are exposed to any online bullying or inappropriate material.

Although children know more about technology than most adults, it is good to keep yourself up to date with devices and protection.

Encourage your child to have a good reputation when it comes to technology. This includes what they share, not talking negatively about others and keeping themselves safe.

Continually talk with your child about their viewing habits, activity and friends.

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TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS



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ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Kids should be able to talk to you about anything and everything. The tone of your voice and your response will set you up for great conversations to help you steer your children away from the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs. Aim for them to come to their own conclusions and owning their decisions.

Look for everyday teachable moments e.g. TV, movies, adverts, events

Ask questions. e.g. Have you ever been offered...? How did you respond? It's helpful for kids to have a narrative when confronted.

Use language they will understand. Don't tell only the 'horror' stories but don't hide the negative effects of alcohol and drugs.

Avoid reacting if they disagree with you. You want to keep the lines of conversation open and value their opinions. Keeping the relationship is more important than being "right".

Acknowledge that you don't know everything but you will do some research and get back to them. Providing accurate information gives you credibility.

Set clear boundaries, expectations and the consequences if they choose not to follow them.

Have regular time with them e.g. meals together, visits to the park, be involved in their sport and other interests.

A stable, caring home life helps build resilience and self-esteem. Encourage your children to challenge the cultural messages and attitudes about alcohol and drugs.

Be a positive role model. Your views and interaction with alcohol, smoking and drugs will have a significant influence.

Make sure your children know they can call you any time they feel unsafe or in trouble.

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TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT

GRIEF AND TRAUMA



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GRIEF AND TRAUMA

Death, cancer, divorce and other tragic events are all part of our world. It is also impossible to protect our children from grief and tragedy and it is not helpful to try. It is vital for you to be fully present in your child's world when tragedy occurs, especially as this is a time of uncertainty and confusion.

Be honest and straightforward when talking to your children. They need to know that they can trust you.

Keep routines and ensure they are receiving good sleep and nutrition.

Don't delay in sharing information as children are often quite astute to hearing, feeling and seeing things going on around them.

Don't hide your own grief but also don't overburden them with it. Be a positive role model as you process your grief.

Allow them to ask questions and use accurate terminology e.g. use the word 'died' rather than 'gone to sleep' or 'has passed'.

Regularly ask them how they are feeling and allow them time and space to express themselves.

If there has been a tragic world event, don't overload them with watching and listening to the media.

If someone has died, explore ways to celebrate and honour their life. Give them opportunity to attend the funeral but don't force it upon them. Have someone available to care for them in case they are unable to cope or if it goes too long.

Be aware and sensitive to milestones and special occasions. Consider making new traditions that allows for new positive memories without that person around.

Grief has multiple presentations, there are no time limits, and can be affected by the closeness of the relationship, their maturity and the support you offer. Be there for them and affirm your love and availability.

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TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT

IDENTITY AND LGBTI



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IDENTITY AND LGBTI

LGBTI is becoming increasingly visible and is a divisive issue in our community. It has moved from simply accept it, to now being normalised, celebrated and promoted. This can be very confusing for children. Often, anyone who has a differing view can be given an unkind label.

Talk about the joys of sexuality that coincide with your value system.

Talk to your children about sexuality from an early age at an age appropriate level.

Explain that sometimes a person is born male or female, but the way they feel inside their heart and mind doesn't match. However, just because that occurs doesn't make it automatic or true and feelings like this can change.

Sexuality can be confusing and it is not uncommon for young people to feel different from others around them. Welcome any questions and become informed.

Emphasise the importance to show kindness and compassion to everyone, even those that think differently. Everyone is unique and worthy of respect.

Acknowledge that bullying, which can include ridicule, or isolating someone, is wrong for any reason. Stress the importance to not do it and to stick up for those who are being bullied.

It isn't helpful to set an identity, such as LGBTI, to someone who is growing up. This can force set thinking. It's better to listen and acknowledge that sexuality can take time to be "set".

Everyone is entitled to free speech and the right to be heard even when it is different to your way of thinking.

Keep the conversation going as there will always be questions. They need to know that they can come to you at anytime and you will always love them.

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PORNOGRAPHY



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PORNOGRAPHY

It is not a matter of *if* but rather *when* your children will be exposed to pornography. That is why it is so important to be proactive rather than reactive. Kids have easy access to a wide variety of media with a click of a mouse and therefore it is imperative for your children to be protected from the harmful and destructive effects of pornography. Pornography may not be a comfortable topic but we need to pretend that it is & answer their questions.

Talk to your children about sex from an early age at an age appropriate level.

Talk about the joys of sexuality that coincide with your values. The body is nothing to be ashamed of but it's also to be private.

Explain that there are images they may be exposed to that can make them feel uncomfortable and they should tell you when it does.

If you discover your child has been accessing porn, don't overreact. Ask them what they have seen and if they have any questions. Answer at an age appropriate level.

Point out the differences of what is normal and what is virtual or fantasy. Explain how habitual viewing of pornography is problematic in a developing brain in the short and long term.

Help your children understand the harmful effects of images that degrade others. Encourage them to question and challenge the status quo of popular culture and what it means to be attractive.

Apologise that they have been exposed to these images and that you will do something to prevent it from reoccurring. Also explain they will also have to protect themselves and provide a narrative and action plan should they be exposed or offered to view again.

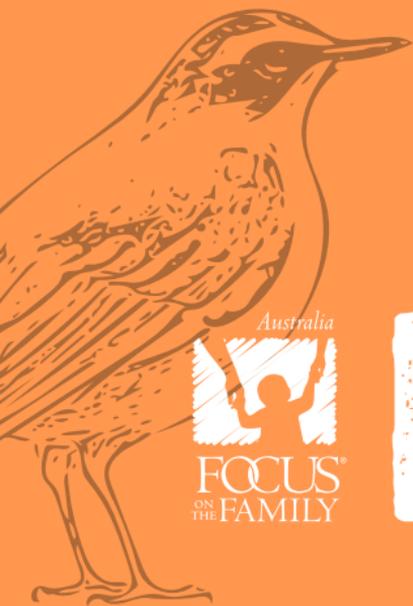
Establish internet boundaries & filters and enforce them.

Shame and guilt should never be part of any conversation.

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TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT

SEX



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SEX

It is far healthier for your children to come to you about sexual issues rather than learning from their peers, popular culture or from the internet. Therefore your openness and your response will help your children feel more comfortable and have a healthier sexuality.

Don't wait until your child asks questions. Introduce the topic little by little. Look for everyday teachable moments e.g. TV, movies, magazines.

Be positive. Talk about it as a wonderful and beautiful gift. Often we can focus on the negative consequences but we should also talk about the joys of sexuality that align with your value system.

Be honest. Even say that you are not an expert and a little uncomfortable but you will endeavour to do your best.

Encourage them to ask questions. Thank them for the opportunity that they feel comfortable to talk to you about sexuality issues. Provide information on a need to know basis to clarify their questions.

Use terms and language they will understand. Use real words not made up ones.

Talk about your family values and views. Facts and figures are helpful but they also need to know why you have such values.

Educate them from both a male and female point of view. Ideally it should be both parents that provide healthy information.

Be a positive role model. Your children will be influenced by the example you set on healthy relationships. Kids feel secure knowing that mum and dad are in love.

If you are doing this solo, surround yourself with other healthy couples who your children can observe.

Make sure your children understand they can talk to you about anything and everything.

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