

Connolly Counselling Centre

Effectively Communicate with your Parent

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As you grow and develop you will start to assert your own independence and may pull away from your parents slightly. That is perfectly normal and a healthy part of the growing process, however a healthy parent-child relationship is more important than ever throughout this time period. Adolescence is a tough and confusing time and many problems and issues may need to be faced but your parents will always be there for you.

Know what you want from a conversation

During a conversation with your parents you may be looking for something out of it, or for them to do something. This may involve simply listening and understanding what you are going through, offer advice or assistance with a problem or give permission to go somewhere or do something. Figuring out what this is before the conversation can allow you to say why you want to talk in a way that conveys what you need.

- "Mom, I need to talk to you about a problem I'm having, but I need you to just listen, OK? Don't give me any advice, I just want you to know what's bothering me."
- "Dad, I need your permission to go on a class trip next week. Can I tell you about it?"

Identify your feelings

It is completely normal to be nervous when having to approach your parents with a difficult topic. Recognize how you are feeling and instead of letting that stop you from talking, put it into words during the conversation. Bottling up your emotions can have an overall negative impact on the relationships in your life.

- "Mom, I need to talk to you, but I'm afraid I'll disappoint you."
- "Dad, I need to talk to you about something, but it's kind of embarrassing"

Don't just talk about the difficult things

Your parents are still your parents and love to hear about your life. Talk to them about your day, how you got on in school or about fun stuff you did or saw earlier. Your conversations shouldn't always be about the issues you are facing, they can also be funny, light-hearted, and spontaneous.

Have meaningful conversations with your parents

Often times teenagers will discuss meaningful things with their friends (or others) via text, phone call, or over social media. However face-to-face conversations are still an important aspect of life, especially with your parents. Do take the time to sit down with your parents and chat with them. Even a small conversation a day can foster a healthy growing relationship.