

ASKABLE ADULT CAMPAIGN



Be Someone They Can Talk To

As we enter into the 9th week of this campaign, the world looks dramatically different than it did when we started. We believe that being askable adults for the youth in our lives is now more important than ever before. Thank you for showing up in this space and for the youth in your life!

This week, we'll hear Connor and Hannah's story, learn tips to be askable for younger children, and explore ideas for navigating tricky conversations with youth. Please share this blog with your adult community and commit to building your askable adult skills by checking out the [askable adult webpage](#).

Askable Adult Skill #4: Be a Curious Co-pilot and Resource

[Listen here](#) to Connor and Hannah tell the story of a crucial moment in their relationship in which Hannah played the role of curious co-pilot.

Connor appreciated that Hannah listened, didn't talk too much, took him seriously, validated how he felt and then came back with serious solutions to his concerns. Connor also reminds us that getting through difficult conversations together can help us learn and build stronger bonds.

Youth don't expect adults to know everything. They appreciate authentic questions, honest responses, and helpful information. Your willingness to be yourself, seek to really understand their perspective, think out of the box, and collaborate to find information will make you a more askable adult.

How to be Askable for Younger Kids

What's the best way to be "askable" for young children who may not have well-developed language skills? Start early by connecting through play! [This short video](#) talks about the power of playing and connecting by letting young children take the lead. Validating the feelings of young children will also let them know early on that you are askable and supportive. This is not the same thing as being "permissive." When adults set limits while also validating and empathizing with love, kids develop trust and learn to understand their feelings better. A fun tool to use to validate big feelings with children is empathy book making. Learn how to make empathy books [here](#).

"Kids talk when we give them our full, curious attention. In order to truly hear them and discern the right-sized response in the moment, we need to tune into their channel. Like on an old-fashioned radio dial, we have to hone in on just the right spot to tune out the static of our fears, worries, and distractions so we can get the message—are they just venting? Or asking for help developing a plan?"

- Julia Chafets, LICSW, Montpelier

Navigating Tricky Conversations

It might be tricky to talk with youth about topics that are embarrassing, upsetting, or controversial for either of you. Relationships, sex, gender and sexuality, alcohol and drugs, mental health, abuse, divorce, academic work and money are all topics that adults and youth, especially within families, can find difficult to talk about. It's normal to feel uncomfortable discussing these things. But being prepared can help you feel more confident and comfortable to lean in and be available.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Take a deep breath and try to stay calm
- Slow down
- Say something like: "I'm so happy that you trust me to help you with this"
- Listen
- Manage your worries
- Try not to "fix"
- Avoid being critical or judgmental, or getting too emotional

- Thank the young person for coming to you

Want more? Check out these resources below:

- Become a more knowledgeable resource for youth by [clicking on "Toolkit"](#) and checking out our Co-pilot tool.
- Check out [SafeSecureKids.org](#) for great tools to help talk with children about respecting bodies and boundaries.
- For ideas on how to talk with young people about drugs and alcohol, explore [parentupvt.org](#).
- What about sexuality and sex ed? Try [lets-talk.how](#) and [advocatesforyouth.org](#).

We only have 3 more weeks of the campaign left! If you are interested in following along as we wrap up, join our email list and learn more about the campaign [here](#). And, give us a follow on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to join the conversation happening there!

Thank you for being an askable adult for the children and youth in your life,



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