

# Conversation Starters: For When You Are Concerned

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Before you bring up a concern, remember to pick a time that is calm and where emotions aren't high. Remind your child you love them and you are there to support them, no matter what. Validate any emotions or experiences they share with. Sometimes, what seems silly to adults means the world to a child. Share what you have noticed without judgment.



I've noticed \_\_\_ (you seem sad, you don't hang out with your friends anymore, your grades are decreasing, etc.). Is there something bothering you?

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What do you think is important for me to learn about what you're going through?

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Have you been having thoughts of not wanting to be alive or of hurting yourself?

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Have you thought about killing yourself?

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I'm worried about you recently. Is there something going on I can support you with?

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Sometimes it's hard for you to focus. Do you think it's because there's a lot of thoughts in your head? What are you thinking about?

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Sometimes you hit other children. Is something happening right before that causes a big emotion?

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Have you been feeling \_\_\_ (sad, angry, nervous) a lot lately?

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Your mental health is important. How have you been feeling?

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Is there something you would want to change about your life right now?

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Sometimes kids feel so sad or upset that they feel like hurting themselves. Have you been feeling like that?

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What can I do to support you during this difficult time?

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For more tips on how to continue the conversation, give advice and talk to kids about mental health, visit [OnOurSleeves.org/Conversation](https://OnOurSleeves.org/Conversation).

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