

## No 4: Listening to your child

Parents are very important in helping their children stay emotionally healthy.

Some tips that might help when your child is not talking to you:

1. There is no rush. Don't push your child to talk until they are ready. "I'm ready to listen when you are feeling ready to talk. Let me know when if/when you would like to talk".
2. Use ordinary situations at home as opportunities to have a non-direct conversation to start with, like walking the dog or washing up, cooking dinner.
3. Ask general questions: "How are things going? What was your day like?"
4. Use resources which might help your child express – Young minds, Health for Teens/Health for Children and encourage your child to use 'Shelf Help' books from your local library.

## When your child wants to talk

**Listen** – It is important to listen carefully and give your child your full attention. This may be when you are in the middle of doing something else, but it is important to acknowledge they want to talk. It might be better to arrange a time to sit down together later once you feel you will be able to do this.

We all get frustrated at times, try not to express frustration or impatience or rush in with solutions or judgments as this may stop your child sharing feelings.

## Useful websites:

[youngminds.org.uk](http://youngminds.org.uk)

[healthforteens.co.uk](http://healthforteens.co.uk)



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