

# Factsheet 6: How can I encourage conversations to be ongoing and communicate hope for the future?

Conversation tip	Example
Give positive feedback for having the conversation. Supportive statements can let the child or young person know that you appreciate their trust, honesty, and courage. This can be a positive way to end a conversation.	<p><i>Thank you for trusting me with this information and being so honest. I think it's brave that you're speaking with me about it.</i></p> <p><i>I'm proud you are talking to me about these things, especially as it might feel a bit awkward/uncomfortable. I can tell you really want to be able to make better choices in the future.</i></p>
Let the child or young person know you are open to any questions and that they can always come to you for reliable and honest information. This applies not only to information about appropriate sexual behaviour, but also related topics like healthy relationships, sex, sexuality, and bodies. <sup>1</sup>	<p><i>Some kids/teenagers might feel embarrassed to ask questions about [insert topic]. But it's normal to have these kinds of questions</i></p> <p><b>and then:</b></p> <p><i>Do you have any questions that I might be able to help with?</i>  <b>or</b> <i>You can always come to me if you have any questions.</i></p>
	<p>For young children, you might say something like:</p> <p><i>It's ok for you to want to know about your private body parts/penis/vagina—and when it's ok to touch them/it. I am here to help. Let's talk together.</i></p>
It's ok to 'pause' the conversation if you need to (such as if you need time to find information or get help from professionals). Pausing should always be done in a way that lets the child or young person know they aren't being disregarded or dismissed. It is important to support feelings of safety and trust.	<p><i>Thank you for coming to me. These kinds of questions are important and it's brave of you to ask them. Would it be ok if I take some time to make sure I have the right answer? And then we can talk about this some more? What do you think?</i></p> <p><i>It must have taken a lot of courage to tell me about [name incident/issue]. I'm so glad you spoke to me and thank you for trusting me with this. How would you feel if I took some time to think about what we might do next and then we can come up with a plan together?</i></p>
Encourage hope for the future. Be clear that change is possible and that you are there to help them make better choices. <sup>2</sup>	<p><i>Some kids/teenagers might be worried that because they [name behaviour] that this means they will be like this forever. But this isn't true because most kids/teenagers won't keep doing these behaviours if they get the help they need to make better decisions. We can work together to help you learn to make good/responsible decisions—and we can get you some support from others too.<sup>3</sup></i></p>

1 Raising Children Network (2021a)

2 ANROWS (2020); NSW Government, Family & Community Services (2016)

3 ANROWS (2020); Hackett (2019) NSW Government (unpublished)

