

Things Parents Can Do To Help Their Child Connect with Others

Steps to teaching your child to connect with others

1. Have your child memorize three open ended questions per week. Use the samples below to help your child select 3 good open ended questions. (Have your children use my examples to make up their own original questions.)
2. Whatever question you ask someone, they will ask you back the same question 95% of the time. Therefore, have your child also memorize all three of their answers once the questions are selected and memorized. These are ice-breaker questions.
3. Help your child answer the three questions with what they were thinking and/or feeling while something was happening. Don't let them only focus on what happened to them. People are bored by what happened, they are interested in what you were thinking or feeling while something was happening. Help your child memorize answers including thoughts and feelings. Help them create interesting answers by following up with two questions: "What were you thinking while that was happening?" Or, "What did it feel like while that was happening?" Teach them to paint a picture of thoughts and emotions rather than just boring point by point descriptions of what happened to them.
4. Your child will learn to follow up with the same two questions you used to help them build their answers when they are talking to others. Other kids will suddenly find them much easier to talk to.
5. In six months (3 questions and 3 interesting answers per week) your child will have 72 open ended questions along with 72 interesting answers (answers that include thoughts and feelings, not just what happened to them) in his or her back pocket. They will be able to alter and adjust these to any social situation. They will become much more confident and comfortable in social situation. This skill is as important as academics to a child's success and happiness.

SAMPLE CONNECTION TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS: Pick three questions that interest you and practice using them with your family before you use them with kids at school. Refer to this list whenever you need new ideas, or make up your own questions. Write them down and practice them with your family.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS:

- What is the most embarrassing thing that has happened to you?
- If you could do anything you wanted today, what would you do and why?
- What is the scariest thing you've ever done?
- What was your favorite toy when you were little and why?
- What is the first thing you can remember as a little kid?
- What is the scariest dream you can remember? What happened in the dream?
- Have you ever been in a fight before? What happened?
- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go and what would you do?
- Where do you like to go when you want to be alone? What do you do when you go there?
- If you could be anything you wanted when you grow up, what would you be and why?
- What is your favorite time of year and why?
- Have you ever been to the ocean? What was it like?
- Have you ever gotten sunburned? What did it feel like?
- Have you ever gotten hurt? What happened?
- Have you ever had to go to the hospital? What happened?
- Has anyone ever been mean to you for no reason? What did that feel like? What did you do?
- Have you ever won anything? What happened?

- Have you ever almost been in a car accident? What happened? What did it feel like when it happened?
- Has anyone you knew or loved died? What happened? What did it feel like? Do you still think about that person a lot?
- What adult can you talk to the easiest? What is it about that person that makes them easy to talk to?
- What is the most stupid thing you've ever done? What happened?
- Have you ever had a crush on someone? Did they know about your crush? What happened?
- What do you do to earn extra spending money?
- Has anyone ever stolen something from you? What happened? What did you do?
- Have you ever taken something that wasn't yours? What happened? Did you give it back?
- Have you ever lost something you really liked? What happened? Did you ever find it?
- What do you think would be a fun job to do when you grow up and why?
- What is the hardest thing you've ever had to do?
- What have you done that you are the most proud of?
- Are you afraid of heights, snakes, spiders, etc.? What happens when you encountered one of these? How do you feel? What do you do? Why do you think you're afraid if these things?
- Have you ever gone on an adventure as a kid? Where did you go and what happened?
- If you could change anything about yourself, what would it be, and why would you want to change it?

FRIENDS:

- Who do you hang out with when you're at school? What is it about that person that makes them cool?
- What do you think makes someone a good friend? What kinds of things does a good friend do?
- Who do you hang out with when your not at school and what do you do?
- Who do you not get along with and why?
- What do you think is the most important quality a friend should have and why?
- Has someone ever told you a secret that was hard not to tell anyone else? Did you tell someone else? What did it feel like to share the secret or keep the secret?
- Have you ever said something mean to someone else and felt bad about it later? What did you say and what did you do about it later?
- Have you ever made fun of other kids? Why? Did you feel bad about it later?
- Who do you think is the coolest person at school and why?
- Do you like to hang out with a group of friends or do you like to hang out with one friend at a time? Why?
- Who is the nicest person you know and what do they do that makes them so awesome?
- If you found out someone had a crush on you, but you didn't like them the same way, what would you do?

FAMILY:

- Do you have any brothers or sisters? Do you get along with them? What do you like and/or dislike most about them?
- What is the worst fight you've ever been in with your brother or sister?
- Do you have a favorite grandparent? What is it about him or her that makes them special?
- Has your mom or dad ever embarrassed you? What happened?
- Have you ever lied to your parents? What did you lie about?
- What chores do you have to do at home? Which one do you hate the most?
- Do you have a favorite aunt, uncle or cousin? What is it about that person that makes him or her so special?
- Where does your family go on vacation and what do you do?
- When you get in trouble how do your parents punish you? Do you keep doing the same thing after

you get punished or do you stop?

- Have you ever lived somewhere else? What was it like? Did you like it better there or here? Why?
- What are some things your mom does that make you love her?
- What are some things your dad does that make you love him?
- What are things your brother(s) or sister(s) do that make you love them?

ANIMALS:

- Do you have any pets? What do you like to do with your pet(s)?
- What's the funniest thing your pet has ever done?
- What is your favorite animal and why?
- What animal are you most afraid of and why?

HOBBIES:

- Do you collect anything? What made you start collecting those?
- What are some of your hobbies? What is your favorite hobby?
- Do you have a bike? Where do you like to ride?
- What is your favorite thing to do outside and why?
- What is your favorite thing to do inside and why?

MUSIC:

- What is your favorite band or singer and why?
- What's your favorite CD? Why?
- What's your favorite song and why?
- Do you play any instruments?
- If you could be really good at playing anything, what instrument would it be?
- Do you like to sing along to the radio? What do you think about when you are singing?
- Have you ever taken any singing or instrument lessons? What kind of lessons? What was it like?
- If you could be any singer, who would you want to be?
- Have you ever been to a rock concert? Who did you see? What was it like?

MOVIES:

- What is your favorite movie and why?
- Who is your favorite actor and why?
- Who is your favorite actress and why?
- Have you ever cried during a movie? What happened that made you sad?
- Who do you think is the coolest celebrity and why?
- What is the funniest movie you have ever seen and why?

TELEVISION:

- What are your favorite TV shows and why do you like them?
- Did you see (name of show) this week? What did you think about it?

SPORTS:

- Do you play any sports? What is your favorite sport to play and why?
- Are you on any teams? What is the funniest thing that happened to your team?
- Who is your favorite athlete and why?
- What is your favorite sport to watch on TV and why?
- Have you ever been to a professional game, or a high school game? What was it like?

SCHOOL:

- Have you ever gotten in trouble at school? What happened?
- Who is your favorite teacher and why?

- What is your favorite subject in school and why?
- Do you get nervous when the teacher calls on you? What does it feel like?
- Do you like to read? Tell me about a book you've read.

FOOD:

- What is your favorite food and why?
- What is your least favorite food and why?
- What is your favorite restaurant and why?
- What is the grossest thing you've ever eaten? Why did you eat it? What did it feel like when you were trying to swallow it?
- Have you ever cooked for your family before? What did you make? How did it taste?

CLOTHES:

- Those are really cool (shoes, pants, earrings, etc.), where did you get them?
- What is your favorite store to shop at and why?

CURRENT EVENTS:

- What did you do this weekend?
- Did you hear about (something or someone in the news)?

GAMES:

- What is your favorite board game to play and why?
- What is your favorite card game to play and why?
- What is your favorite video game to play and why?