



Suggestions

We hope you have fun talking, sharing and doing the activities with your child. The suggestions were designed for children from 3 to 11 years old. TAKE TIME TO TALK can be used across this age span, while driving, walking, bath time, bedtime chat or any time that singing a song, asking a question or sharing is appropriate. The conversation, sharing and activity when your child is 3 years old will be completely different when your child is 8-9 and 10 years old. So use this guide as a window into your child's mind and heart, and listen as your child grows up. Have fun!

1. Song: *I've Got a Friend in Y-O-U*

1. (For young children) Review the spelling of "You" and "Me".
2. Ask your child to name his/her friends (school friends, neighborhood friends, brothers and/or sisters, cousins, stuffed animals, home or neighborhood pets, parents, etc.)
3. Talk about friends in books, TV shows and movies that your child might know. A trip to the library to find a story about a friend (real or imagined) might be an activity.
4. Talk about how friends are important and how nice it is to be friend to someone else.
5. Pretend Activity: Have a puppet show with stuffed animals, dolls or action figures about being a friend. (Puppet shows can be used for all the themes.)
6. One of the characters in this song talks about "sharing". What does sharing mean? Can you think of times when you shared with a friend? Can you think of a time when a friend shared with you? How about a family member? An acquaintance? (Explain acquaintance)
7. Adult share: Talk about a friend of yours: a childhood friend and/or a current friend . You might tell a story about a friend that you have now and/or share a picture or a story of a friend when you were a child.

2. Song: *Dig Down Deep Inside*

1. Reminder of what "opposite" means. Pick a word and ask your child to give you the opposite.
2. Remember times when the child was feeling a little sad, and what the child did to feel better (thought of other things, played with a friend, smiled and laughed, hugged her/his loved ones or stuffed animals)
3. Pretend activity: Use faces and body language to express to each other opposite emotions: happy, sad, surprised, excited, afraid, etc.
3. Adult sharing: Share a time when you were unhappy or sad and what helped you to feel better. Maybe you could share about different things that can make you, personally, sad and what makes you happy. Ask your child what makes her/him sad and happy. You

can extend this conversation to include all kinds of emotions. Tell your child what makes you excited, afraid, grateful, etc.

4. Puppet show: Set up a story using one of the feelings you talked about. For example, a character (puppet/stuffed animal/doll/ action figure) is walking down the street and falls in a deep hole (surprise, fear). Another character comes and climbs down the hole to save character #1 (fear, bravery). Character #2 helps character #1 (compassion, optimism) Character #1 and character # 2 struggle out of the hole. Character #1 thanks character #2 (gratitude, jubilation, pride, embarrassment, humility)

3. Song: *Proper Creatures*

1. The good behavior these characters sing about is opposite to the good behavior we expect from children. What does the word "opposite" mean?
2. How is the song showing the "opposite" of how children should behave?
3. What are some other goofy and funny ways that someone could "behave" that are the "opposite" for children.
4. How should children behave at: the store, a restaurant, the dinner table, a swimming pool, etc. A puppet show could show how you think a child should behave in different situations. Your child could have a puppet show showing the opposite behavior. Be clear about which behavior is acceptable.

4. Song: *Let Some Time Pass*

1. Talk about the last time that the child was VERY angry about something and discuss how they knew they were angry. If the child has never experienced anger, you could talk about things that might occur in the child's life that might make her/him angry. Ask what that anger might feel like; what people do when angry: acceptable behavior and unacceptable behavior; Talk about the consequences of that anger.
2. Talk about how, when you feel that angry feeling in the future, to "step back, take some nice deep breaths, and let time pass" (as it says in the song, before you say or do something that you might really regret later.) (Puppet show)
3. Talk about times when the child saw others angry or saw anger in a movie or video and how they felt around that anger.
4. Talk about how it feels a whole lot better to be happy with yourself and others than to be angry.
5. Adult share: Maybe you could tell the child about a time you were angry and some of the ways you deal with anger or conflict.

5. Song: *I'm Not Scared*

1. Ask your child if they have ever been scared. Has he/she ever seen anything on TV or the movies or heard something in a story that scared them. If so, ask them what it was.
2. In this song, two characters are pretending that they're not scared. Do you believe them?
3. Talk with your child about common things that seem scary but really are not cause for concern. (Spiders and bats generally will not harm people. Noises in the house during the night are generally

safe. Maybe there is a specific thing that you know frightens your child.)

4. Talk with your child about appropriate action if they truly are scared. (Seek the aid of a teacher, a parent, a trusted neighbor and explain the reason for the fear.)

5. Adult sharing: Tell your child if there was something that frightened you when you were a child. Why were you afraid of it? How did it make you feel? (You can relate your feelings to your child's feelings.) How did you **deal with or** conquer that fear? Are you afraid of anything now that would be appropriate to talk to a child about?

6. Song: *F-R-I-E-N-D*

(The subject of friendship is so important to a child's life, we have included 2 songs about it. Some of these discussion points and activities are the same as song #1, "I've Got a Friend in Y-O-U".)

1. Review from the song how to spell "F-R-I-E-N-D."

2. Talk about the friends the child has (brothers and/or sisters, parents, pre-school or school friends, neighborhood friends, cousins, dolls, action figures, stuffed animals, home or neighborhood pets, etc.)

3. Talk about friends in stories and TV shows and movies.

4. Talk about how friends are important and how nice it is to be friend to someone else.

5. Adult share: Tell your child the kinds of things you did with your friends when you were young. If there are different kinds of things than your child does, perhaps you could show/teach your child about your games/pretends, etc. Ask the child about the kinds of things he/she does with her/his friends. Perhaps the child could show you how some of his/her games/pretends etc. are done.

5. Talk about a friend of yours. You might tell a story about that friend or share a picture of when you were younger with an old friend.

6. Are there ways that you and this child are friends? What other relationship do you and this child share? How does this relationship differ from the relationship with a friend of their own age or a non-parental or non-guardian friend?

7. Song: *Same Big Sky*

1. Talk about how birds are different colors and they all share the sky when they fly. Here is a web site that has lots of bird pictures. You can see how diverse birds are:

http://www.wildnatureimages.com/bird_photos.htm

2. Talk about how children are different sizes and colors and shapes and they all share the earth, and air and water to live together. Name some differences and similarities between the child and close friends or family. Name some similarities and differences between people in other countries or of other races or cultures.

3. Talk about some things that all people share. Ask how are you and the child are the same? How are you different? Is there a person of a different ethnicity, race, age (much older or younger), or with disabilities that your child knows? Ask how your child and this person are the same and how they are different.

8. Song: *Astounding Man*

1. Ask your child if they know the names of super heroes from stories, TV or movies (Superman, Spiderman, Iron Man etc.)

2. Ask them how they would feel if they could fly or jump super high or swim really fast or deep. Ask what super power she/he would like to have and why; share what super power you would like to have and why.

3. Ask them if they think that super heroes are real. Can anyone REALLY do these kinds of things?

4. Talk with them about how everyone has different abilities. Some can run faster or jump higher or

yell louder than others; some can sing or climb trees better than others. Each person is special and unique in their own way. Each can develop their own special talents and abilities and share these with others.

5. Adult share: what are talents or attributes that you have that you feel good about sharing with others. Talk about superhero names for each of you. Ex. Giggle Girl who makes people feel good because she laughs a lot; Cookie Mom who makes the best cookies, Dedicated Dad who works hard around the house cutting the lawn and washing the dog or Spelling Boy who got a good grade on his spelling test. (Puppet show)

9. Song: *Symphony of Life*

1. Talk about how instruments blend their sounds together to make wonderful music when the people playing them all cooperate and work together in harmony.

2. Talk about how the members of a sports team (especially whatever sport the child might be playing) need to listen to and speak to the coach and each other to play well.

3. Talk about the value of practicing with others to accomplish the successful playing of a game or a group school project or even jumping rope with others.

4. Activity: Make your own music! Ask the child to pick a rhythm by clapping hands or stomping his/her feet, and you pick a different rhythm to combine with your child's. You can add more people and make a symphony. You can use household objects as instruments.

5. Adult share: Tell the child about an experience you might have had playing an instrument in a group, playing on a sports team or involved in some other group effort.

6. Here are two web sites that you and your child can access to hear the instruments that make up a symphony. <http://www.dsokids.com/2001/dso.asp?PageID=152> and <http://datadragon.com/education/instruments/> .

10. Song: *Ooh! Aah!*

1. Besides your house, where do you like to go to have fun?

2. What things do you enjoy doing?

3. Is there somewhere you have heard about that you would like to visit?

4. Have you ever vacationed away from home? What kinds of things did you do there? How was your day different on vacation than it is at home? Did you bring anything back from vacation? How does it make you feel when you look at that object?

5. If you have not vacationed away from home what kinds of things would you like to do? Are there pictures of places you would like to go? You could get pictures on the internet or in a magazine and talk about what it would be like to be at that place and how similar or different things would be there. How about the park or the zoo? Are those places different than home? How? Why?

6. Adult share: Is there a place that you have visited that you would like to tell the child about? If you have photographs you could share them.

11. Song: *Believe in Your Dream*

1. Talk about how a bird builds a nest piece by piece until it becomes a home. (Activity: If you have Pick-up-Sticks or straws, you and your child could build a nest. This activity could be a puppet show or not.)

2. Talk about how seeds start out small and become flowers or plants. What does a seed need to grow into a flower or a tree? (Activity: Plant a seed or a seedling and care for it together.)

3. Talk about the things a child needs to grow strong and tall.

3. Talk about how dreams and goals develop piece by piece, through patience, until they grow into

accomplished tasks and completed jobs (like cleaning your room or building with a Lego toy or learning how to swim or ride a bike).

4. Ask what dreams or goals the child might have.

5. Adult sharing: Did you have a dream or goal when you were child that you would like to share with the child? Explain what happened to your goal.

12. Song: *Toy Trio*

1. What are your favorite toys? Why?

2. Do toys change? Do they grow up the same way that children do? What happens if a toy gets a bump or bruise? What happens if you get a bump or bruise?

3. What is the difference between a toy and a child? (Talk about how the child is bigger and stronger and more agile than they were the year before.)

4. Talk about imagination and pretending and how they are the wonderful things that make toys so special. (Puppet show about any topic.)

5. Activity: Have the child gather a few of her/his favorite toys, and you and the child can pretend for a few minutes with the toys.

6. Adult share: Tell the child about some of your favorite toys as a child.

13. Song: *Macaroni Rigatoni Peanut Butter and Baloney*

1. Ask your child which are their favorite foods. Ask them if it is the taste, texture, color, temperature and/or shape of the foods that they enjoy the most.

2. Ask them if they know where their favorite foods are grown or how they're made.

3. What does food do for you? Which foods make you grow strong and healthy? (treats vs veggies & protein etc)

4. Consider visiting or finding books about where some of their favorite foods are grown. Perhaps there is a pick-your-own farm in your area.

5. Ask them if they'd like to help you prepare their favorite meal.

6. Adult share: Tell your child which foods were your favorites when you were their age (if you remember) and what you enjoy now.

14. *Birds of a Different Feather*

(The subject of tolerance is so important that we have included 2 songs about it. Some of these discussion points and activities are the same as song #7, "Same Big Sky".)

1. Talk about how birds are different colors, and they all share the sky when they fly. Here is a web site that has lots of bird pictures: http://www.wildnatureimages.com/bird_photos.htm

2. Talk about how children are different sizes and colors and shapes, and they all share the earth, and air and water to live together.

4. Talk about some things that all people share. Ask how are you and the child the same? How are you different? Is there a person of a different race or ethnicity, a much older or younger person, or a person with disabilities that your child knows. Ask how your child and this person are the same and how they are different.

5. Talk about the wide variety of people who live in different cities or distant countries, and how their lives may be similar and different from your own.

6. Talk about people that cheer for different sports teams in your neighborhood or city, and why everywhere is allowed to choose their own likes and dislikes.