

Let's Talk: Family Conversation Starters

Legend:



Adults ask Children/Youth



Children/Youth ask Adults



For Everyone

Let's Talk cards were created in response to requests from teens who wanted a framework to talk to their parents about important topics - not just about relationships and school but about what's going on in the world around them.

Let's Talk cards are designed to be open-ended, without a simple yes or no answer, to create a time of storytelling. Sometimes, parents and grandparents feel they must always have answers for children, but that's not true. A story that includes your feelings will connect you to your children much more than having a concrete answer. For instance, there may be realities about your family's ability to shop and live ecologically. Organic foods are expensive and not every community has access to recycling or composting. Be open in your conversations about what your family is and isn't doing, the reasons why, and how you feel about it.

All of these questions are designed to bring families together. Be prepared for answers that surprise, delight and even startle you. For instance, if your teen says they don't think you ever listen to them, take a breath and ask how they think you could be better at talking and listening to each other. If your youth is playing music with references to violence, don't just make them turn it off. Ask open-ended questions about what they like about that music, how it makes them feel and share why it concerns you, without judgment.

Instructions:

For durability, print the document on cardstock if possible. Cut the cards on the horizontal dotted lines and place them in a jar or basket on a table. There are specific questions for adults to ask children/youth, children/youth to ask adults and questions for everyone to ask and answer. Share the bible verse or psalm for each category to begin the conversation.

Let's Talk Cards can be used over several weeks at mealtime, as a family road trip resource, table talk cards for intergenerational formation sessions or printed and mailed to families in your congregation. There are also blank cards for you to add a conversation starter that is meaningful to your family or community. The possibilities are endless!

We hope you enjoy the conversations!

Defining and Thinking About Climate Change



Adults ask Children/Youth

What have you heard about climate change? What are ways you know our family works to protect God's creation?



Children/Youth ask Adults

Have you noticed climate change in a particular way from when you were our age to now? Have you seen bigger storms, more floods, drought or higher temperatures?



For Everyone

Is there more we could be doing as a family to help protect creation? Are there books and films we'd like to read and watch together to learn more?

*The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He makes me lie down
in green pastures;
he leads me beside
still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.
(Psalm 23:1-3)*



Heat and Drought



Adults ask Children/Youth

What do you notice about creation in the summer? Fall? Winter? Spring? Why do you think these changes are important?



Children/Youth ask Adults

Have you lived in a place where there was a drought (not enough rain and water)? Do we live in a place with lots of rain or not enough rain? How would we need to change our lives in a drought?



For Everyone

How do people survive in places where it is very hot and dry? What can we imagine, and what can we learn?

*For the sun rises with
its scorching heat and
withers the field;
its flower falls, and its
beauty perishes.
(James 1:11)*



Rain and Floods



Adults ask Children/Youth

What is good about rain falling? What happens when not enough rain falls? What happens when too much rain falls?



Children/Youth ask Adults

Has anyone in our family ever experienced a major storm like a hurricane, tornado or flood? What happened?



For Everyone

How do storms affect our community, including people who are unhoused, farmers, and others who have less than we do? How do storms affect people in other parts of the world?

*The flood continued forty
days on the earth, and
the waters increased and
bore up the ark, and it
rose high above the earth.
The waters swelled and
increased greatly on the
earth, and the ark floated
on the face of the waters.
(Genesis 7:17-18)*



Economic and Community Resilience



Adults ask Children/Youth

What are the communities that support you as you grow (family, friends, neighborhood, church, school...see how many your child can name)? Why are these communities important to you?



Children/Youth ask Adults

How have your communities helped you grow, personally, in your work, in our ability to save money and live as a family?



For Everyone

How can communities connect across the world to help those who need it? Let's watch this video together for an idea: [Micro-finance Program: Empowering Women in Guatemala](https://vimeo.com/288276651)

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If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. (Deuteronomy 15:7-8)



Sustainability and Diversity in Agriculture



Adults ask Children/Youth

Where do you think our food is grown and produced? How do you think our food gets from its source to our home?



Children/Youth ask Adults

How do you choose which foods to buy for our family? How can you tell which foods are the healthiest for us?



For Everyone

How does agriculture (farming) impact the environment where we live? What about in places where it is very hot and not much rain falls? How can we learn more together?

*...some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up.
Other seeds fell on rocky ground...and they sprang up quickly... but when the sun rose, they were scorched, and withered away.
Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. (Matthew 13:4-5, 8)*



Protecting Trees, Water, and Soil



Adults ask Children/Youth

Why are plants and trees important for the whole creation? Why do you think God gave us so many different types of plants, trees and animals?



Children/Youth ask Adults

What does sustainability mean to you, and how does our family try to support it? Let's learn together about [Wangari Maathai](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJTC-3DKwFM) and how her tree planting movement helped her homeland of Kenya.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJTC-3DKwFM>



For Everyone

Sometimes humans upset the balance of God's creation with our actions. Let's watch this video about restoring balance together and talk about what we learn: [How Wolves Change Rivers](https://vimeo.com/86466357)

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They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. (Jeremiah 17:8)



What We Can Do



Adults ask Children/Youth

How do you think kids can help adults take better care of God's creation? Is there anything you want us to do as a family to learn more or take action in our community?



Children/Youth ask Adults

Are there ways we can promote sustainable agricultural practices (good farming practices) through what we buy, what we don't buy, where we order things for our home? What might work for our family that we're not already doing?



For Everyone

How does agriculture (growing food) impact the environment? Let's take a look at the [Abundant Life Garden Project](https://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/faith-formation/abundant-life-garden-project/)® Resources. Maybe we want to learn more as a family, or with our church community.

<https://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/faith-formation/abundant-life-garden-project/>

*The earth is the LORD's
and all that is in it,
the world, and those
who live in it,
for he has founded it
on the seas
and established it
on the rivers.
(Psalm 24:1)*



My Family—Conversation Starter



Adults ask Children/Youth



Children/Youth ask Adults



For Everyone



My Family—Conversation Starter



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For Everyone

