

Tools for the Journey



**National Center
for Fathering**
Engaging fathers. Enriching lives.™

9 Ways to Navigate Communication with Your Son

1. Be available- at any time, make sure he knows that he can come to you about anything.

2. Talk "sideways". Work on a project together or do something fun and initiate a deeper conversation while you're standing side by side.

3. Watch for cues that he is ready to talk.

4. Affirm your son verbally. Positive words will give him a sense of belonging, making him more comfortable to open up.

5. Provide an example of open communication. By expressing your emotions and thoughts, you're showing your son what healthy communication looks like.

6. Be intentional about the questions you ask. Stay away from the "yes or no" questions and ask open ended conversation starters.

7. If your son is still young, build a close relationship with him now that is based on open communication.

8. Find a shared interest with your son and start there. If you have common ground to bond over, conversations about other similarities will come on their own.

9. Use body language to show that you are interested in what they are saying. Stop what you are doing, make eye contact, listen intently, let them finish their sentences and repeat key points.

