

# Let's Talk:

## 5 Family Conversation Starters to Promote Online and Offline Safety

### Why These Conversations Matter

Kids and teens face new situations every day, both online and in person. Regular, open conversations help them build confidence, make safe choices, and know they can always come to you for help.

**Tip:** The best time for these talks is when things feel calm, like during car rides, meals, or walks. Keep it casual and listen more than you lecture.



### 1. Who are the safe adults you can talk to if something feels uncomfortable or confusing?

Help your child name trusted adults before a problem happens and discuss what makes an adult trustworthy (some ideas: someone who cares about them, respects boundaries, and doesn't ask them to keep secrets).

**Try this:** Make a short list together and keep it somewhere visible.

### 2. What values are most important to you—and how do those values guide your choices online and in person?

Talk about what your family stands for (some ideas: kindness, honesty, respect, helping others, courage).

**Try this:** Ask how it feels when actions match or don't match those values. Share your own examples of moments when you had to make a tough but values-based choice.

### 3. What should you do if someone online asks you for pictures or personal information?

Help your child recognize unsafe requests and know they can always come to you for help.

**Try this:** Remind them that it's never their fault if something uncomfortable happens online, and you'll always listen and help them stay safe.

### 4. How do you know when a situation feels safe or unsafe?

Teach your child to notice body signals—like a tight stomach, fast heartbeat, or wanting to leave.

**Try this:** Talk about how those feelings are our body's way of keeping us safe and what to do if that happens.

### 5. What can we do as a family to help everyone feel safe and respected?

Create family habits that promote safety and respect (some ideas: device-free dinners, checking in before changing plans, reviewing privacy settings together, regular family check-ins, weekly game or family fun night).

**Try this:** Talk together about what helps each person feel safe and respected. Work as a team to create family agreements that make sense for everyone—rules that protect, not punish, and that everyone helps shape



### Keep the Conversation Going

Safety grows from connection. Small, honest talks over time build trust and make it easier for kids to ask for help when something doesn't feel right.

### Helpful Family Resources:

- *NetSmartz* – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children: [missingkids.org/NetSmartz](https://missingkids.org/NetSmartz)
- *Common Sense Media* – Family Tech Agreements: [commonsensemedia.org/family-tools](https://commonsensemedia.org/family-tools)
- *Second Step*® – Safety & Social-Emotional Learning: [secondstep.org](https://secondstep.org)

