



Wellness Today

For Parents & Families

Complimenting Your Children

Compliments are useful because they benefit both the giver and the receiver. When a compliment is given, both parties get a boost of happiness. Compliments help your children in other ways too. [Some research](#) shows that complimenting good behavior and characteristics can provide positive reinforcement for children, which can help them make choices that lead to happiness, resiliency, motivation, and life satisfaction.

Here are a few tips to make the most out of the compliments you give your children:

- Avoid “I wish . . .” compliments. It puts the focus on you instead of on your children.
- Avoid fake, forced, or an overload of compliments; it makes the compliment seem insincere.
- Show your children how to accept compliments with a smile and a “thank you,” instead of them discounting the compliments. Accepting compliments helps your children believe and internalize what was said.

How to Talk to Your Children About Their Mental Health

It's been just over a year now since COVID-19 disrupted the world. Adults and children alike have experienced mental health issues due to the disruptions. One way that you as a parent can pay attention to your children's mental health is to talk with them about it. Here are some tips to help you have effective conversations about mental health with your children.

Conversation Tips

- **Acknowledge your feelings.** By sharing your feelings (using language appropriate for your children's age) with your children, you show them that it's OK for them to acknowledge what they're feeling too. You can even discuss how you cope with any mental health struggles or how you get help, to give them examples of what they could do.
- **Always ask questions.** Have frequent conversations with your children even if they aren't showing any [mental health warning signs](#).

Ask specific questions and open-ended questions. Offer some information about your day as well, especially if your children are reluctant to share at first.

- **Pick a good time.** Whenever you're talking with your children about their day or about mental health, choose a place that's away from distractions, especially screens. Pay attention and really listen to what your children say.
- **Validate feelings.** When your children talk about their feelings, resist the urge to give them all the solutions and fix their problems. Instead, ask what they've done to help, then ask what else they could try. And although their feelings may seem trivial to you sometimes, remember that you don't know how it's affecting them.
- **Offer help.** If a conversation with your children reveals a mental health struggle, let them know you are there for them. If needed, discuss others who could help, such as school counselors, pediatricians, and therapists.