

Skills and tips to navigating these conversations

Disclaimer

Talking about mental health with your parents will be an individual experience. There are many ways to start and have conversations. This resource will help to provide some tips on navigating this conversation, but ultimately, it is up to you to decide to have this conversation.

Take your time by reading through these tips and talking about it with someone you trust. When you feel that you are ready and it is safe to do so, have that conversation with your parents. Remember, sometimes it might not go according to plan and that is okay - it takes practice.

Starting the conversation

TIP 1: Before starting the conversation with your parents, talk about it with someone you trust. This could be a sibling, cousin, or best friend.

“Hey Lauren, I want to talk to my parents about mental health but I am a bit nervous. Is it okay if we talk about this?”

Example: Sending an email to your school counsellor or trusted teacher about your intentions to talk to your parents about mental health, to organise a time to talk and receive available resources.

Dear Miss _____,

I want to talk with my parents about mental health, however I am a bit nervous about doing so. Can I set up a time with you to discuss my concerns, and also to receive some additional resources?

*Kind regards,
(Your name.)*

TIP 2: Think about when would be a good time to talk to your parents about this. Consider your mood, your parent's mood and if it is in a safe space to do so. Alternatively, set up a time with your parents to talk about mental health.

Example: If your parents are exhausted from work, they may not be able to absorb the information that you provide them.

Example: If you are stressed and tired, you may not be able to articulate what you wanted to say to your parents.

Hi Mum, are you free to talk this weekend about mental health?

TIP 3: Talk about an event that relates to mental health, such as world mental health day or headspace day. The event could also be related to a homework task you did at school.

Example: Relating mental health to an event

Mum, do you know about Headspace day? It's a day to celebrate Mental health and wellbeing in children at school

Example: Relating mental health to school

Mum, Headspace visited my school today to talk about how mental health could affect studying.

Dad, I learnt about mental health and its impact on children in Australia.

TIP 4: Have resources available to talk about mental health. Some helpful resources are linked below.

Example: Showing your mum translated resources on the computer or phone

Dad, look at this website (<https://embracementalhealth.org.au/translated-content>). It talks about mental health in Vietnamese!

I'm not sure how to explain that, but have a look at this website, it might provide more information.

TIP 5: Have a list of what you want to talk about. Although the conversation may not go as structured, a list will help guide you when you are unsure of what to say.

Example: Your list may look like this:

*Mental health in Australia
What mental health looks like
How Mental health affects studying and work
Tips for keeping your mental health healthy
Extra resources to give mum and dad*