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# Balancing Questions

— and comments —

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# Asking Questions

- Firstly, when you are on the receiving end of a string of questions how do you feel? It is difficult to create an authentic connection with someone in this “one sided” conversation.
  - Unbalanced
  - The “hot seat”

# Unbalanced Conversations

1. Having these unbalanced conversations typically does not motivated kids (or anyone if we are honest) to have an engaging and robust conversation
  - a. Motivation is key for any learning but particularly when we are learning a new or challenging skill. We want to motivate our kids as much as possible.
  - b. Parent led conversations can sometimes miss the mark. We do the best that we can to interpret our kids behavior and cues, but maybe we are talking about the wrong thing.
2. You are the role models for everyone else in your child's life.
  - a. I want you to empower the people in your children's lives to interact with them naturally and in a way that has impact. The best way to do that is to model the behaviors we want to see: validate communication & talk about what interests your kid.

# The “hot seat”

1. These conversations put a lot of pressure on your kids to be “on” and respond
2. Communication and especially social communication are so difficult for our kids we want to create an environment where our kids feel supported and want to engage with us asking too many questions can hinder these efforts
3. Let’s have a conversation not a quiz

# So never ask a question?

Of course not. We are going to ask questions, they are a part of any typical conversation between a child and their parent.

This is meant to bring your awareness to how many questions you are asking and make sure to balance those questions with comments and statements.

# Different types of questions

1. Yes or No Questions- these questions tend to shut the conversation down the fastest. Your child needs only respond with one word then it done. Additionally, there is not much to expand on when your child gives you a one word response.
  - The same logic is true for closed questions like do you want apple juice or chocolate milk vs. what can I get you to drink
2. Open Questions- Questions like “what do you see” or “wow what will you do next” offer much more opportunity for robust responses.

# Why comments

1. Making statements gives us an opportunity to model more language and vocabulary.
  2. Increased length and complexity. We know that too many questions leads to reduced utterance length (number of words) and complexity
1. When looking at a flower instead of saying “what do you see?” you can say “look a big pink flower. Now you have modeled the noun “flower”, a concept “big”, and a describer “pink”.
  2. Making comments opens the door for our kids to comment back. When we expand on their language we have the chance to continually develop new language.

# The takeaway

What can we do with all this information

- Make an effort to ask fewer questions and make more statements. It is a hard habit to break so give yourself some grace.
  - Focus on getting the most bang for your buck! Comments/statements let you pack the most content into a single phrase.
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# Sources

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