

Communication Cards Instructions

Use these topic cards to engage a young person in your life in conversations about their identity:

1. Give the card to a young person in your life.
2. Let them know that you would like to talk to them about the topic on the card.*
They may not be ready to talk to you about it, and that's okay!
3. If they are ready and willing to talk to you about the topic, work with them to find a specific time when this conversation will happen. Conversations can happen in the car, on a walk, while you are cook together or sharing another activity that you both enjoy.

**There is a blank card included in this deck. Use the card to bring up a specific topic to the young person in your life.*

Communication Tips

When you engage LGBTQ+ youth in conversations about identity, it may be helpful to keep the following communication tips in mind. Remember to be patient with yourself, especially if concepts about gender identity and sexual orientation are new to you. Lastly, keep in mind that there may need to be more than one conversation for the LGBTQ+ youth in your life to feel comfortable sharing parts of their identity and having these conversations with you. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

1. These conversations do not have to be lengthy – short and sweet works too!
2. Validate the person's feelings. Let them know that you hear what they are going through even if you do not fully understand or have never experienced it yourself.
3. Let go of perfection. Instead, focus on being open and supportive. You may accidentally say or do the wrong thing. Making mistakes is a part of the learning process.
4. It's okay to be emotional during courageous conversations. Nonverbal communication is also important – be mindful of what your body language communicates, even if it's not said out loud.

Someone who loves you is ready to talk!

If you aren't ready to talk yet, that is okay. Your loved ones and friends will support you no matter what!



They want you to have access to information to help when you're ready. If you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious or stressed, check out Change to Chill!

<https://changetochill.org>



Let's talk about:

This card is blank. You can pick a topic that feels relevant to you and the LGBTQ+ young person in your life.



Let's talk about:

RELATIONSHIPS

Talking to a young person about relationships is important. LGBTQ+ youth may need additional support when navigating relationships.

Let's talk about:

LGBTQ+ ISSUES

Having conversations with a young person about LGBTQ+ issues is a great way to stay educated and up to date on what is happening in the LGBTQ+ community. Allow the young person to express their feelings about what is happening in their life, school, and community.

Let's talk about:

STRESS

Being a young person who identifies as LGBTQ+ can add particular stress to their life. Talking about stress and finding healthy ways to cope is essential for the well-being of LGBTQ+ youth.

Let's talk about:

SUPPORTIVE ADULTS IN YOUR LIFE

As young people grow up, they will need a team of adults in their lives to help support them. This is an opportunity to check in with a young person in your life and talk to them about the adults they have in their life who support them being their authentic selves.

Let's talk about:

LGBTQ+ HISTORY

It's important for LGBTQ+ young people to see themselves represented in the world. Use this card to engage in a conversation about the LGBTQ+ movement and history. You can ask a young person in your life how they feel about the movement and what changes they think still have to be made.

Let's talk about:

SCHOOL

For many young people, school can be a source of stress and anxiety. Identifying as LGBTQ+ may add additional stress and anxiety to a young person's life. This is a great opportunity to talk to a young person in your life about whether or not they feel safe and supported at school.

Let's talk about:

GENDER

Let the young person in your life take the lead. You can start the conversation with questions like:

- *What does gender mean to you?*
- *What do I need to know about gender?**
- *Can you share with me how you would describe your gender identity?*

*Keep in mind that it's important for you to do your own education around gender and sexuality in addition to listening to the young person in your life.

Let's talk about:

PEER SUPPORT

Young people need peer support. This is an opportunity to talk to the young person in your life about their peer support system. If they are in need of peer support, help them look up some local groups for LGBTQ+ youth or see if their school has a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA).

Let's talk about:

HELP ME HELP YOU

As a parent or trusted adult, it's common to not know or understanding everything about LGBTQ+ people or issues. Asking what they need from you lets them know you support them.

Here are some questions to get you started:

What are three things I need to learn or understand more about?

How can I best support you?