



Habits in Action

"Relationships are what stimulate growth and learning"

—DAN SIEGEL

Asking Open Ended Questions



- Parenting isn't a set of strategies. It's a relationship.
- Build Decision Making Skills: Problem solving skills are built by thinking things through.
- Enhance Self Respect: Children feel good about themselves when they feel heard.
- Better Cooperation: Children are more likely to cooperate when they feel heard.
- Improve Listening Skills: Children listen more when they feel listened to.
- Quick and Easy: 3-5 minutes can be a very meaningful moment.



- ✓ Nod your head.
- ✓ Look at them.
- ✓ Don't correct, opine, or judge.
- ✓ Stop multitasking.
- ✓ Get down at their eye level or sit next to them.
- ✓ If child pauses, simply repeat last thing they said in form of a question. "So, you'd put the cat on the roof?"

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS/STARTER LIST

- What do you like best about having a brother/sister/dog?
- What is your plan (for xyz project, for your playdate, to fix the argument with your friend)?
- Can you think of...?
- What were you trying to accomplish?
- How does it work?
- How do you decide what to do with your friends when they...?
- What would you do differently (good one for someone complaining about a peer, teacher, coach)?
- How do you feel about what happened?
- What made you think of that?
- Tell me why...?
- Can you think of a different way that I could (fit this fruit in the fridge, help the coach get organized, show my appreciation... anything!)?
- What do you think?
- Will you tell me about a time when someone was kind to you today?
- What do you think he/she was thinking?
- Consider a little praise to wrap it up: "Wow, I really like how you thought about that."

Mary Smith is passionate about sharing the habits and best practices for parents to simply and quickly begin helping their kids navigate stress and anxiety. On top of her own experience with kids and anxiety and depression and using bite-sized practices, she has synthesized the most updated insights from authors, neuroscientists, and experts into bite-sized habits for parents to be present and create lasting connections with their children.

