

# The Conversation Guide

## Short guide: Thinking about the conversation

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**Not all disrespect towards women results in violence. But all violence against women starts with disrespectful behaviour.**

Disrespect and harmful behaviours aren't always easy subjects to discuss.

As parents, carers, and family members, you never know when you may need to talk about respectful behaviour both online and offline with the young people in your life.

By thinking through what you believe, what you might say, and how you can have positive conversations, you will feel more confident to make the most of each opportunity.

### Be ready to talk early and often

You might be in the car, making dinner, watching television, or walking the dog. Be prepared to talk when you see or hear something you are uncomfortable with, when your child asks a question, or when they just want to chat with you.

Try to take advantage of opportunities that come up in everyday situations, so that 'difficult' conversations become normal. Let the young people in your life know where you stand and that they can talk to you.

Be curious and look out for openings or invitations into their world and ask questions. This helps keep the lines of communication open.

It's important to address disrespectful behaviour quickly and calmly. Explain why their behaviour was disrespectful and how it made others feel.

### Think of examples

You may find it helpful to illustrate your points with examples from television, online, or other situations you have observed together. For example, if you hear a comment in a news story that a woman who was hurt by a man shouldn't have been out on her own, you could use this to talk about inappropriate views that women are to blame. Or, you may have seen a viral video online that suggests women should 'obey their partner', that you could use to talk about gender roles.

### Find out more

*The Conversation Guide* has more information on how to talk to young people about respect.

### Teach by example

As a parent or carer, you are an important teacher for the young people in your life. Every day they watch you and listen to you. What you say and do influences their attitudes and behaviours. That's why it is so important to think about how they could interpret your actions and attitudes.

No one expects you to be perfect. The important thing is to be honest and consistent. You could even use personal examples when discussing how not to react to certain situations. This will help you be a positive role model for them.

Kids Helpline has more information about [helping kids handle conflict](#).

### Stay connected

Young people engage in a wide range of online activities and experience many benefits from using the internet. The spaces where young people talk to and interact with their friends online changes rapidly.

You don't need to be an expert in the latest technology but it's important to understand what platforms they are accessing. Ask them about what is trending on social media and who they're engaging with online but avoid excessively monitoring or restricting their online activities.

This will help you to understand what they are being exposed to.

### When to get involved

Talk through how young people can handle situations themselves. Ask them if there are other trusted adults they can speak to like a teacher, counsellor or other family members. If you feel you need to intervene, discuss with them what you might do and why. Even if they say they don't want you to get involved, if they are at risk of harm then an adult must intervene.

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**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**  
**LET'S STOP IT**  
**AT THE START**