



Low pressure conversations

How to have low pressure chats with young people during the festive season. Our thanks to the wonderful students from The Downs School, Newbury for co-creating these helpful tips with us.

- Let the young person take the lead on the conversation if they feel comfortable doing so.
- Instead of asking closed questions, try open ones or compliments. For example, “Are you taking GCSE Drama?” could be “You’re so great at drama, what do you enjoy about it?”
- Try not to force friendships, yes, we’re similar ages but we also haven’t seen each other in over a year!
- Sometimes having an activity or a “job” for your young person to focus on can help in busy environments.
- If it’s possible, have a hands-on activity somewhere, cookie decorating, card making or themed colouring. This will give people a change to “dip out” of conversation to focus on something, whilst still being a part of the celebrations.
- Talking in the car, or another environment where eye contact isn't necessary can be easier when you want to talk about something difficult or uncomfortable



- One hour a week doing whatever it is your young person feels comfortable with can go a long way. No questions just “hanging out” can make all the difference. Some Ideas: Play Mine Craft together, make a TikTok dance, watch a tv series together. It doesn't have to be big or expensive, if it's something they suggest even better! The important thing is you can share something together.
- If you're going to be seeing lots of wider family/friends, consider catching up before hand to fill them in to avoid lots of the same questions being asked multiple times in one sitting.
- Boundaries are important, having an open conversation about them in advance can be useful.
- Avoid comparisons where possible.
- Not every question has an answer, so don't always expect one.
- Beware when asking gender focused or relationship questions.



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Thank you!

Registered Charity Number: 261476. Registered Company Number: 4343625.
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