



1: Keeping Conversation Going

It is important for children to learn that a conversation moves back and forth between conversational partners.

Many Parents and Educators are not aware how quickly asking a child many questions can shut the conversation down.

"What is your name?"
"What is that?"
"Is this a moo cow?"
"Do you want a drink?"

In most cases, the adult asking these questions usually already knows the answers and children are often aware of this. At best, these types of questions are often met with silence or a one word answernot the stuff great conversations are made of!

To keep a conversation going, Parents and Educators need to:

1. Get down to a child's level.
2. Comment on what the child is doing or saying. This puts no pressure on the child to respond and often places the child at ease.

Child: "I went to the park."

Adult: "Oh..."

Child: "I went on the swings."

Adult: "I like swings. I like slippery dips too."

Child: "Me too!"

3. Limit your use of questions but occasionally ask open ended questions that help keep the conversation going. These types of questions often start with 'Who?' 'What?' 'Where?' 'When?' and 'How?'.

Adult: "Who went to the park with you?"

Child: "Mummy and Daddy"

Adult: "What else did you do at the park?"

Child: "We had a yummy picnic."

