



Things I can Ask and Say – Parent Guide

This guide offers great ways to help your child feel more in control and engaged in their sessions. Empowering them to communicate effectively with their therapists and support workers can lead to better outcomes.

Why is this Important?

Often, young people feel like therapy is something that is just happening to them. By helping them use their own voice, you show them that what they think and feel is valuable. This builds their **confidence** and helps the sessions be more specific to their needs.

How You Can Help

Practice "I feel..." Statements

This is a great way for your child to express their emotions without making others feel bad. For example, if they say an activity is "boring," you can help them rephrase it to, "I feel bored when we do that." It helps them take ownership of their feelings.

Encourage questions

Remind your child that asking questions is a sign of being curious and strong. It helps them understand *why* they are doing certain activities and how those activities connect to their goals. You can even **role-play** with them beforehand to make it less scary.

You can also have a look at the "Questions to Ask" sheet together and pick out ones that make sense and would help them share their thoughts and feelings.



Normalize saying "No"

Teach your child that it's okay to have preferences and say "no" if an activity makes them feel uncomfortable. This helps them learn to set their own **boundaries**. Encourage them to think of something else, like, "I do not want to do that, but could we try this instead?"

About the "Questions to Ask" sheet

The list of questions on the prompt sheet is designed to help your young person understand what is happening in therapy and support sessions and feel more in control. Take a moment to read through them yourself to understand the purpose of each question:

- **"How will this help me?"** This question helps your young person see the bigger picture and feel more invested in their own progress.
- **"What is happening in my brain or body?"** This helps them develop self-awareness and a deeper understanding of their own strengths and challenges.
- **"What is something I have gotten better at?"** This question helps them build confidence by celebrating their progress.

By working with your young person, they can become a more active participant in their therapy and supports and feel seen, heard, and empowered.

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