



## 52 Questions to Ask a Child Instead of "How Was Your Day?"

As parents, we are always looking for unique ways to connect and reconnect with our kids after a long day.

Adults tend to use quick and informal greetings with each other like "How are you?" or "How was your day?" and typically this ends up with a brief conversation, if anything!

But if you get into that pattern with your children, you might find yourself not knowing much about their days, including their experiences, thoughts, emotions, and dreams!



The way you talk to your children while they're young will shape how they process and talk about their own lives, including their experiences and emotions, all the way into adulthood.

We compiled a list of thoughtful and engaging questions that will help you start an extended conversation with your children. We all live busy and distracted lives, but these questions will help you reconnect in deeper ways, even when you only have a few minutes to devote to a conversation.

### The Most Powerful 52 Questions to Ask your Child Every Day

Research shows that children ask up to about 300 questions every day! Now is the chance to turn the tables and ask them a question or two!



As your child gets older, the rate of asking questions tends to decline over time. While you might be happy to avoid some of the constant "why?" questions, it's important to keep their minds open and inquisitive. Spending some time to ask them thought-provoking questions is a great way to keep those creative juices flowing!

1. **What did you do today to move your body?**

As parents and children spend more time on remote learning throughout the day, it's more important than ever to help your child think about ways to move their bodies. Stretches, jumping jacks, or a little dancing to a favorite song are perfect ways to get moving during the day. Asking this question will help get your child thinking about unique ways to move their bodies, and why it's so important!

2. **How did you exercise your mind today?**

Learning is both challenging and rewarding, and some of the best learning happens when children are not only engaged but challenged to thinking flexibly about a topic. Asking your child this question helps them realize the importance of effortful thinking, exercising not only their bodies but also their minds!

3. **Did you try anything new today?**

They say novelty is the spice of life, and trying new things can help children overcome anxieties and develop their confidence. Asking this question helps kids think about pushing themselves to try new things, take healthy risks throughout the day, and develop their self-esteem!

4. **What was the most fun thing you did today?**

You probably realize by now that most of these questions are not just about getting your child to talk, but also helping you learn a bit more about the things they cherish most in their days. It might be something as simple as swinging at recess or playing a game, or asking your child this question might reveal something you didn't realize about your child!

5. **Did you see your friend [insert name] today?**

Even for a shy child who might not have a big group of friends, or someone they truly consider a friend, this type of question can help them realize the connections they do have at school. This question can be framed around a typical friend that you hear a lot about, someone you don't hear as



much about as you used to, or even someone in their class you think might be a good potential friend.

**6. What did your friend [insert name] do over the weekend (or vacation!)?**

This type of question can help your child figure out the things they know and don't know about their friends. In the same way that you're reading this list to find good topics to connect on, your child can use this to help them connect with their peers in meaningful ways. Sometimes your child will spend so much time talking about what they did over the weekend that they'll forget to ask their friend what they did! This is a great way to facilitate those reciprocal conversations that are important throughout life.

**7. What was something good that happened today?**

Just like a day at work, a day at school has its ups and downs. Identifying and verbalizing those ups and downs is an important first step towards developing lifelong emotion regulation skills. When you ask your child this question, it makes them begin to classify different parts of their day into bins, maybe one OK bin, one good bin, and one awesome bin!

**8. What was something you wish would have gone differently?**

Sometimes a day at school can have more downs than ups, and a child might be holding onto some negative feelings at home. Giving your child the opportunity to identify and discuss the things that could have gone differently is a helpful way for them to think critically about cause and effect, and maybe what they could do next time to help the situation.

**9. Did you help anyone today?**

Selflessness and acts of kindness towards others are critical aspects of childhood and adulthood alike! Even if your child is not at the stage when they start helping others, this is a good way to get them to realize its importance and start thinking about how they can impart positive change in the world. You never know, you might be surprised by what your child is doing already!

**10. Did anyone help you do something hard today?**

Appreciating others and what they offer to the world is an important skill that even some adults don't master! Someone helping your child is one of the most obvious ways to help them appreciate



others (both teachers and peers), but a question like this can also help your child think more deeply about how they can similarly help others.

**11. Did you make anyone happy (or smile) today?**

Whether it was a joke from a friend, an encouraging comment from a teacher, or a beautiful drawing, something likely made your child smile or laugh today! Helping your child remember those little moments can lead to positive thought patterns that will carry over onto the entire day.

**12. What was the hardest thing you did today?**

One of our jobs as parents is to help our children take safe risks and to challenge themselves. Sometimes those challenges can be very hard. Maybe it's a social interaction that was hard, maybe a project or homework, or maybe something physical during recess or gym. Either way, asking this question will help you learn a bit more about the things that your child considers relatively easy or difficult.

**13. Who did you spend the most time with today?**

Sometimes friendships get so automatic and powerful that children don't even realize that they're spending the entire day with a special friend! Asking a question like this can help them think about who they are spending time with, who else they might want to include more time with, and whether they might want to extend and diversify their friendships.

**14. What do you think you could do better or differently tomorrow?**

Some psychologists believe that true learning only happens as a result of making errors and self-correcting. Whether they're right or wrong, making mistakes is definitely a natural part of life and your child should be encouraged to take risks, make mistakes, and use those experiences to figure out the best ways to accomplish future goals. This question can help bring out the little things like participating more in class, or the really big things like increasing kindness, compassion, and empathy.

**15. What was the most interesting story you heard today?**

Whether in the classroom, at recess, or in the gym or cafeteria, stories abound! Some of these stories will be serious, some silly, and some heart-breaking. Stories help people communicate, understand



others, and even inspire action! There is almost definitely an interesting story your child can tell you about at the end of each day!

**16. What do you think you will dream about tonight?**

Sleep is where kids and adults consolidate memories and process emotions, and dreams can offer vivid ways of reliving the day's events. Asking your child about their dreams can help you learn a bit more about what worries them, what they fantasize about, and what they think was the most memorable aspect of their day.

**17. What made you smile today?**

Not every child laughs every day, but most days are worth at least a few smiles. This question can be especially helpful after a rough day, and helps a child focus on some of the smaller things that may have elicited a smile, whether big or small!

**18. Did you have any memories today?**

Just like adults, children will have fleeting moments when they recall an earlier event from life. Maybe thinking back to a birthday party, vacation, or special time with family. Sometimes those memories can elicit happiness, and sometimes a little sadness. Asking about memories that might have been cued during the day is a great way to access your child's inner-most thoughts!

**19. What makes your friends so amazing?**

Talking about friends and all the things that make them special is a great way to remind your child how grateful they are for the positive contributions their friends make to their daily lives!

**20. What teacher made you smile today?**

When it comes to teachers we have so much to be grateful for! They spend all day caring for, nurturing, and making sure our children are safe, comfortable, and learning to the best of their abilities. Teachers are an important part of any child's life, and it's important to help them realize the value they add to their daily experiences.

**21. Can you tell me something you learned today?**



One of the most powerful ways to help a child learn is retrieving newly learned information from memory, thinking about it, talking about it, and expanding upon it. Not only is this a great way to start a conversation about a topic your child might have a lot of new information about, it's also a sneaky way to help them learn without them realizing it!

**22. What are three things you want to do this summer?**

Planning and structuring the summer months is important for helping children feel like their worlds are a bit more predictable even in the absence of the rigorous school schedule and routine. Let them help you make plans for the summer months, talk about what they dream of doing during their time off, and help them be a part of family planning!

**23. What are two things you want to do this weekend?**

At a smaller scale, instead of leaping ahead to the summer you can ask your child what they hope to accomplish this weekend. It might be some homework and downtime, but they might also have some fun ideas that will help you get out of the house, spend quality time together, and build upon your relationship.

**24. What was the craziest thing you heard today?**

Sometimes even the little things can drive some serious wonder and curiosity in your child. With this question, you might be surprised to hear what your child thinks is crazy! Maybe just a little fact regarding an animal they're learning about, or maybe something bigger like a story they overheard, or something a friend told them.

**25. Did you do anything that made you feel brave today?**

Taking healthy risks doesn't always end with success, especially the first time your child tries it out. But that doesn't mean they shouldn't feel brave for having tried to conquer their fears! By asking this question, you might learn a bit about the things that make your child worry, how they are conquering them, and why that makes them feel great about themselves.

**26. Tell me something that made you feel smart today?**

Maybe they answered a question in class, maybe some made a comment about their work, or maybe they were able to help someone with something challenging. Whatever the reason, feeling smart is a



great step towards self-confidence, and this question can help your child highlight those moments from throughout their day.

**27. Who do you want to be better friends with?**

Answers to this question might surprise you! Sometimes your child might want to be better friends with the "cool kids" - but other times they might surprise you by letting you know about someone they find interesting, different, or otherwise intriguing! This conversation can be a great opportunity to help your child figure out strategies for making the new friendship a reality.

**28. What is the most popular thing to do during recess?**

A question like this helps you get access to your child's perception of the world around them. While certain things might seem popular to do, your child might be perceiving that popularity for other reasons - maybe because they're not always included, maybe because it's something they feel like they can't do. This can be a good opportunity to help your child take a broader perspective on what's going on, and finding some activities that suit their interests.

**29. How would you rate your day? Two thumbs up, one up one down, or both down?**

This question can be asked in a variety of ways. Most parents start with the simple thumbs-up or thumbs-down answer, because it's a relatively simple three-category rating system. After time, your child's perspectives on the day might become a bit more nuanced and you can upgrade to a more complex scale, like rating the day on a scale from one to five, or one to ten. No matter what the answer, there is always an easy follow-up question about what exactly made the day feel that way.

**30. If anyone in the universe could be your teacher for the day, who would you pick?**

This is a great way to get your child's creative juices flowing, and give them a chance to think about how cool it would be to have a super hero, a role model, or anyone else teaching their class for a day! What would they teach, what would be fun about it, and do they think their teacher could do the same?

**31. If you could change any rules at school what would they be?**

Rules are important, but they can also be frustrating or stifle flexibility and creativity. Every child goes through phases where they think the rules are wrong, too strict, or unfair. This question can be a





good way to access those thoughts, and try to help your child take the perspective of the school staff who need to keep safety and order a priority.

**32. If you could have one extra person in your class, who would it be?**

The answer to this might surprise you! Maybe a pet, maybe a family member, or maybe a younger or older sibling. Whoever it is, this question opens up a series of conversations about not only who it is but how they would make things different or better! Just don't be offended if it's not you!

**33. What do you think was the most fun part of the day for your teacher?**

Perspective-taking is an important skill that children start to develop at different times: some will start some perspective-taking at a very young age of 2-3 years, whereas others will take a few more years to fully develop those skills. Given the importance of perspective-taking for social interaction and successful communication, this type of question can help your child start thinking about the perspective of one of the most important people in their lives - their teacher!

**34. What is one fact you learned today that you think I don't know?**

Speaking of perspective-taking, this question challenges your child to think not only about their new knowledge from the day, but also take your perspective and try to think about which things you are unlikely to already know. This is a skill that adults use all the time, and the basis for "Hey, did you know..." questions that your child will use throughout their lives.

**35. What were you thankful for today?**

Feeling gratitude towards other people and events throughout the day is important for keeping a positive mindset, and this question can help your child think about the things they're most grateful for. It can also help them think about who they might want to thank for the special moments that happened during the day.

**36. If you were an inventor, what would you invent first?**

This question prompts creativity and imagination, helping your child put themselves in the shoes of someone they might only dream of becoming! Sometimes it helps to detach yourself from your ideas in this way, releasing yourself from the usual inhibitions that limit your thought, and letting you take creative risks with your thoughts (while blaming the inventor when they might be a half-baked idea!).





Speaking of cool inventions, check out our list of this year's [best baby products!](#)

### **37. How are you feeling emotionally today?**

Many children and adults have a hard time identifying their feelings, nevermind actually verbalizing and communicating about them. This is the sort of question that parents should consider asking their child early in life, and can be a powerful way to start introducing complex emotional constructs such as jealousy, guilt, and surprise.

### **38. What would you like to do with me today?**

Sometimes this question will surprise children, especially if you usually develop and initiate the schedule and plans. Their answers can be equally surprising! You might find out some interests that your child hasn't expressed before, and that can guide not only more conversation but also some serious fun!

### **39. Is there anything you are worried about today?**

Everyone has worries, it's just that some people are better at recognizing and communicating them. Some worry about germs, some about friendships, some about love and connections, and some about big-picture existential questions (you might be surprised!). Asking about worries is not only a great way to help your child work through their concerns, but a great way for you to learn more about what is on their mind.

### **40. Is there anything you want to tell me that might be hard to say?**

Remember when you were a kid and didn't want to tell your parents something out of fear that you would disappoint them? Wouldn't it have been better if they gave you a judgment-free opportunity to share? That's what this is, a chance for your child to tell you anything they'd like, even if it's something they regret and think they might get in trouble for.

### **41. Was anyone in your class absent today?**

Noticing changes in the social environment is a challenging skill for many children, and questions like this can help your child pay attention to who is present, who isn't, and whether anything was unexpected.



**42. What made you feel loved today?**

Children need to feel loved and safe, and it's important for them to realize that this is an important part of their life. Maybe it was mom's kiss at drop-off or bus pick-up, maybe it was dad's little note in the lunchbox, or maybe it was a memory they had from seeing grandma over the weekend. This is a great way to help your child think about all those who love them, how to recognize and feel love, and maybe even how to impart it upon others.

**43. If you could be teacher tomorrow, what would you teach?**

While children tend to love their teachers, sometimes they think they could do a better job! This can be a fun way to help your child think critically about learning, how it could be changed, and how they might do it differently themselves. Maybe it's something small like giving students more time for quiet reading, or maybe something truly revolutionary! You won't know until you ask!

**44. What was the hardest rule to follow today?**

We already talked about how rules might be unfair or too strict, but on a day-to-day basis some rules might be harder to follow than others. Sometimes talking about which rule was the hardest to follow can help reveal the challenges your child might have been having during the day and give you an opportunity to help them navigate the feelings surrounding the topic.

**45. What did you pick for lunch or snack today?**

Kids love social eating, it's an amazing sensory and bonding experience between peers, and this question can help you gain some insights into not only what they like and dislike, but all of the contextual details that you might not know about their lunchtime and snack experiences!

**46. Did you learn any new words today?**

Reading and listening to others can help children learn a rich vocabulary that might surprise you! This question can help children not only think about new words they've learned, but also solidify their memory of it, and maybe teach you something you didn't know!

**47. Did anything make you frown today?**



While most people will tell you to focus only on the positive aspects of the day, over time this can cause children to hold onto a lot of emotional baggage, carry it around throughout the day, and limit their ability to verbalize their challenges and problem solve with others.

**48. What do you think is your teacher's favorite topic?**

We've already talked a bit about perspective-taking in earlier questions, but this one helps your child realize that even their teachers have likes and dislikes, and this can apply to certain lessons and activities!

**49. Does your teacher have any children? Can you tell me about them?**

For a child, learning something about a teacher can help humanize them, make them less intimidating, and help them make new connections that can be conversation-starters in the future.

**50. Do you feel prepared for your test?**

This is a question for older children, likely from about third grade and up. A question like this can help you understand your child's frustrations and worries, what difficulties they might face at school, and how they are learning to adapt to them. It can also help you realize when you might need to step in and help out!

**51. Who is the most popular kid at school, and why do you think so?**

Sometimes children can have interesting perspectives on what makes a peer popular or unpopular! This will give you a chance to learn a little bit about those perceptions, how it makes your son or daughter feel, and gives you a chance to tell some of your own stories from growing up!

**52. When were you bored today?**

All days have relatively exciting and boring phases, and sometimes the more boring times can be difficult for children to manage. Talking about those times and figuring out good strategies for helping deal with boredom can be a great conversation starter.

Have any questions you would like to see added to our list? Send us [a message!](#)



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