



DAD MODE

A REAL-WORLD GUIDE FOR DADS WHO WANT TO SHOW UP

Hey Dad, We Get It.

You're busy. You've got a lot on your plate. Work, life, family—it's a juggle.

But at the end of the day, you want to be there for your kids. You want them to grow up confident, kind, and ready for whatever life throws at them. And that means having real conversations—about the stuff that matters.

This isn't a lecture or a how-to manual. It's a simple guide to help you kick off important talks with your kids, whether they're little or practically grown. No perfect scripts. Just ways to get the conversation going.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

Pick one question and go for it.

In the car, at dinner, during a Target run — whatever works.

Keep it simple.
Keep it real.
Keep showing up.

DAD MODE: 10 CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER (AND HOW TO ACTUALLY START THEM)



RESPECT (IT STARTS AT HOME)

Respect isn't just about "please" and "thank you." It's how we treat each other, even when no one's watching. And yes, that includes how we treat ourselves, too.

TRY THIS: >>

"Hey, in our family, how do you think we show respect for each other? Anything we could be doing better?"

FOLLOW
UP

How does it feel when someone really respects you?

What do you usually do when you feel disrespected?



FAILING ISN'T THE END OF THE WORLD.

Messing up doesn't mean you're a mess. We all fall—it's what we do after that counts.

TRY THIS: >>

"I've failed plenty of times. Want to hear about one? What about you, ever had something go sideways?"

FOLLOW
UP

What would you do differently next time?

What did you learn from it?

VULNERABILITY BUILDS RESPECT.

DAD MODE ISN'T A BREAK FROM LEADERSHIP, IT'S THE TRAINING GROUND.



CHOOSING GOOD FRIENDS (AND BEING ONE)

Their friends shape how they see themselves, and sometimes they're listening to their friends more than they are to us.

TRY THIS: »

"Tell me about your closest friends. What makes them good ones? And what kind of friend do you think you are?"

FOLLOW
UP

What would you do if a friend wasn't treating you right?

What makes a friendship worth keeping?



WHAT WE STAND FOR (AKA: OUR FAMILY VALUES)

Kids need to know what we believe, and why we believe it. That's what helps them make solid decisions when we're not around.

TRY THIS: »

"In our family, we believe in [kindness, honesty, working hard—insert your non-negotiable]. Why do you think that matters?"

FOLLOW
UP

Ever been in a situation where it was hard to stick to that?

How do we hold each other accountable, without being harsh?

LEGACY ISN'T LOUD. IT'S IN THE EVERYDAY.
THE ORDINARY.
THE THINGS WE DO WITHOUT APPLAUSE.

IN DAD MODE, LISTENING IS LOUDER THAN ANY LECTURE.



CONFIDENCE & COURAGE (EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD)

Life is going to throw curveballs. We want our kids to believe they can handle it—and know we've got their back. As they see themselves, and sometimes they're listening to their friends more than they are to us.

TRY THIS: »

"You were really brave when you [insert something they did]. What helped you do it? Is there something you wish you had the guts to try?"

FOLLOW
UP

What's getting in your way?

How can I help you take the first step?



CONSENT & BOUNDARIES

They need to know early, and often, that consent isn't optional, and respect goes both ways.

TRY THIS: »

"Let's talk about personal space and boundaries. How do you tell someone when you're not okay with something? And how do you know when to stop?"

FOLLOW
UP

"Why do you think 'no' always means no?"

What would you do if someone crossed your boundary—or someone else's?

**BOUNDARIES AREN'T ABOUT SAYING NO,
THEY'RE ABOUT SAYING YES
TO WHAT MATTERS MOST.**

DAD MODE MEANS TEACHING THEM THAT EFFORT, NOT ENTITLEMENT, IS THE FOUNDATION OF SUCCESS.



SCREEN TIME & SOCIAL MEDIA

They're growing up online. It's our job to help them navigate that world, without turning into the bad guy.

TRY THIS: >>

"After you've been on your phone or gaming for a while, how do you feel? Do you think it's too much, not enough, or just right?"

FOLLOW
UP

What's one change we could make that wouldn't feel like a punishment?

How do we make sure screens aren't getting in the way of sleep, school, or just being a kid?



MONEY & WORK (AKA: REAL-LIFE STUFF THEY WON'T LEARN ON TIKTOK)

If we don't talk to them about money, someone else will, and it might not be someone we trust.

TRY THIS: >>

"What do you think about money? Do you ever think about how much things cost? Like that [game/sneaker/movie night]?"

FOLLOW
UP

If you earned \$50, what would you do with it?

How would we save for something big, together?

**MONEY TALKS, BUT YOUR WORK ETHIC SHOUTS,
AND YOUR KIDS ARE ALWAYS LISTENING**

**IN DAD MODE, WE DON'T CRUSH DREAMS.
WE HELP BUILD THE BLUEPRINT.**



MENTAL HEALTH (FEELINGS AREN'T WEAK)

If they know it's safe to talk to you, they'll keep coming to you—even when it's hard.

TRY THIS: »

"We all have days that feel heavy. How are you really doing lately? Anything been weighing on you?"

**FOLLOW
UP**

What helps you feel better when you're stressed or down?

What's something I can do that helps, without being annoying?



BIG DREAMS, SMALL STEPS

Every kid needs to know someone believes in them. Especially you.

TRY THIS: »

"What's something you'd love to do if nothing were standing in your way? What's one small step we could take to get you closer?"

**FOLLOW
UP**

What's holding you back?

What's one thing you could try this week to move toward it?

**YOU DON'T NEED A SCRIPT.
YOU DON'T NEED TO BE PERFECT.
SHOW UP. ASK THE QUESTION. LISTEN.**