

# How to Help Kids Share About Their School Day

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Parents are all too familiar with this scenario: Upon picking up your child from school or camp you ask excitedly, "What did you do today?" Your child responds with an unenthusiastic, "I don't know."

It may not be that your child does not want to share or did not have a good day, but that he does not know *how* to share. The problem is with that open-ended question; it is not specific enough and has too many possible answers.

To get more information and fewer shoulder shrugs, try this proven strategy.

1. Speak to the teacher or counselor and get the day's schedule. Pick one to three activities or people you plan to ask about.
2. At drop-off time, prepare or "pre-teach" your child by telling him the questions you will be asking when you pick him up at the end of the day.
3. Speak to the teacher or counselor to get the answers to your questions prior to asking your child. It is difficult to determine the accuracy of your child's responses if, for example, you do not know the name of the friend or the type of



activity you plan to ask about. Also, the teacher/counselor can act as a facilitator in recalling and retaining information, by reminding your child about another student's name or about the sequence of events throughout the day.

4. As soon as you have your child in the car, away from the distraction of others and while the information is fresh in their mind, ask your questions:

"What is your new friend's name?"

"Who was your partner during reading today?"

"What did you eat at snack time?"

Try asking the same questions every day for the next several days. Eventually, you can ask different questions or fade away the pre-teaching step at the beginning of the day.

As time goes on, your child will begin to anticipate these questions at pick-up time. You may find that it becomes easier for your child to share the details of the day, given less reminders and facilitation for recall.

You may also discover that your child begins to offer up information that was not predetermined or rehearsed. At the very least, it will help to add a little more chatter to your ride-home routine.



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