

## After-school conversations with our children and young people

Sometimes at the end of the day we are eager to find out all about our child's/ young person's day. It can be disheartening when they don't respond or seem to avoid our questions. Sometimes our questions, however meaningful they are, can cause stress, and our children can feel pressured to answer.

When your child gets home from school, they may be feeling:

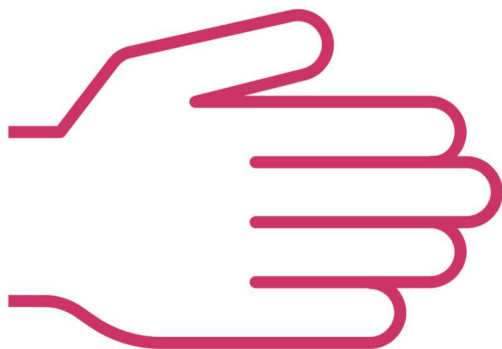
- Tired
- Frustrated
- Hot and bothered
- Overwhelmed
- Disorientated
- Upset
- Hyper
- Over stimulated
- Excited

As parents we want to know how our child's day has gone, and we instinctively ask questions. Question after question can cause a negative response or even shutdown. The questions can become very demanding very quickly and the children or young person may not respond or avoid our questions. It's easily done to over-ask questions, so being mindful and recognising this can really help.

### Top Tips:

- Give your child time to transition from school to home
- Give them a chance to regulate
- Please do ask them how they are and if they are ok
- Don't be afraid of quiet moments – there isn't a need to always fill in silent moments.
- Once your child has had sometime ask them a question
- It's good to role model and share your day with them
- When you ask your question, you may need to ensure you are specific, how was your day is quite broad and they may be unsure of an answer
- If your child is unable to describe their day ask them 3 of the things they learnt, or 3 things you really like about today.
- Space your questions out so they are not demanding or over complicated
- Give time for answers
- Be an active listener when they do respond and acknowledge
- Remember Elkan's **hand rule** for each question:
  - Follow with four comments/repetitions/expansions or explanations before asking the next question.
  - This is good ratio of questions to comments.
  - This is used to encourage responses from children and young people.

One question to... four:



*Comment*

*Repetition*

*Explanation*

or *Expansion*

Comment: When you say what is going on

Repetition: Repeat what the child has said or your interpretation.

Explanation: repeat back word for word or

Expansion: repeat what has been said but add 1 or 2 more words.