



Conversation Starter 4: “I Had a Really Great Day Today; Let Me Tell You Why!”

Finding the Moment:

Blow your kids’ minds one day by bursting through the back door and, instead of immediately asking them about homework or complaining about the traffic, say exuberantly, “I had such a great day today!” Then, whether they ask about it or not, tell them what was so great about it. Let your enthusiasm spill into your tone of voice and your gestures; jump up and down, if that’s your style. And set the stage for a confidential talk to begin.

Questions, Probes, and Ideas:

- When’s the last time you had a day like that?
- What were you doing? What was so great about it?
- [If it has been awhile] What could we do to make tomorrow or the next day a day like that for you?
- What would you want to do? How would you spend your time?
- What would you have accomplished at the end of the day?
- I don’t always have days like this, but I love it when I do—and it happens more often when I do what I love. What do you love to do?
- One thing that always improves my days is doing something to help other people; did you help someone today?

Follow-through:

Encourage your young person to make some plans for a really great day; offer to help on some parts of it, but be sure to leave room for his or her initiative, too. Consider planning a little surprise for the young person—a bit of extra time together, an unexpected early-breakfast date on a school day, a “new” used book or CD from the thrift store. Help him or her see that the more you visualize and plan for having great days, the more often they happen!