

# Reflective Journal for Parents/Caregivers

An invitation for parents and caregivers to delve into and reflect on fostering meaningful connections with their children.





## Building Meaningful Connections with my Child.

### Parent Reflections

This **reflective journal for parents** is inspired by the thoughts and insights shared with us by youth from Burnaby Secondary Schools. Their perspectives offer valuable insights into what they wish their parents understand about their lives in a digital/social media world, as well as their understanding of meaningful parent-child connections.

Our goal is not to change opinions or persuade, but rather to foster an exchange of perspectives to enhance mutual understanding between children and parents.

We hope that the students' quotes, and reflective questions will be helpful in defining and envisioning the essence of meaningful connection within the context of your individual parent-child relationship and your child's specific needs and interests.

**We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to:**

The thoughtful, courageous and generous students who shared their insights and thoughts with us so that we can learn from them.

Susan Montabella, Gayle Bevil, Dave Rawnsley, Noam Samet and Laida Falsetto, in making these conversations with the youth & children possible.

# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

An invitation for parents and caregivers to delve into and reflect on fostering meaningful connections with their children.

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# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

### Navigating the digital world with my child



TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### High School Student Quotes

“

*“Parents Are not AROUND all the time to monitor their kids on what they're doing online.”*

*“I think kids often turn to social media for comfort instead of turning to their family for comfort because some kids believe that, oh, my family wouldn't understand.”*

”

**When I read this what comes up for me? Is this something I need to be concerned about?**

**If yes, What are some things I can do to create a safe space for having a constructive and meaningful conversation with my child?**

**How can I phrase my questions & concerns to convey genuine curiosity rather than judgement when discussing the struggles my child is facing?**

# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

### Navigating the digital world with my child



TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### High School Student Quote

“ You got to understand what your [child] needs, what [they] want[s], and what [they] should not do. And you got to support [them] always You've got to talk to [them] more. Give [them] advice about social media especially because it's (Social media) is spreading out now. ”

**Five things I can do to learn more about social media.**

**Five things I can do to learn more about how my child engages with social media.**

**Things I can do to check in with my child on a regular basis or things we can do to create more meaningful family time?**

# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections



## The eternal generational differences!

TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### High School Student Quotes

“I think parents need to understand why it's hard, you know,... I think when you're a kid, you're very vulnerable. that's why parents are so, like, important. [parents play an important] role in kids' lives to help influence them. And the way you raise your child will carry on with them forever.”

“I think a lot of parents need to be open to the new ideas, and parents always say, "Oh, well, back in my days, it's just, okay, well, we're not back in your days. We're a new generation in a new life." You can say this as much as you want, but at times have changed.”

”

**When I read this what comes up for me? In what ways does this fit (or not) with my experience?**

**What can I do to understand the challenges my child is facing in today's world?  
What are some of the questions that convey genuine curiosity and compassion when trying to understand my child's point of view?**

# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

### Building trust, the foundation of our relationship



TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### High School Student Quotes

“I think rather than trying to prevent it you kind of got to learn to understand it and to have a relationship with your kid where they know they can talk to you. Yeah. If something goes wrong with this rather than being in a situation where they think what they're doing is wrong already and they can't come talk to that..”

“I'm so scared that I talk to my parents because the thing is, there isn't time I'm scared or I'm too scared to talk about how I feel. For example, I'm having struggle, mental health or anything. I'm so scared to talk to them because they're going to be like, "Oh, what's the problem? You already have roof, you have food." "I pay for rent, you have house to leave." "What's the problem? Why are you having mental health and struggle?." You can say this as much as you want, but at times have changed.”

**When I read this what comes up for me? Is this something I need to be concerned about?**

**What can I do to understand the challenges my Child is facing in today's world?  
What are some of the questions that convey genuine curiosity rather than criticism  
when trying to understand my child's point of view?**

# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

### Building trust, the foundation of our relationship



TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### High School Student Quote

“ Trust your children, as long as you've instilled them with good values and ways to talk to you, they're probably doing okay. And when they ask for things, like freedoms, if they've demonstrated that they're able to be trusted with them, then I think you should let them, whatever that might be. And being intentional in creating that, that someone between parents and children, having that window on what they're doing, getting to know what they're hanging out with and all those little things, making sure that the kids feel that they can trust their PARENTS. ”

**When I read this what comes up for me? In what ways does this fit (or not) with my experience?**

**What are some of our family values? What do I do now to share these values with my child? What else could I do?**

**How can we learn from each other so that we have a shared understanding of our family values?**



# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

### Building trust, the foundation of our relationship



TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### High School Student Quote

“  
...listen to your kids, you know. But it's important to give your kid that freedom that they need so that they can grow up and become their own person. While at the same time maintaining a relationship with them that allows you to know if something's going wrong or to be able to help them if they need it. And when it comes to like the digital world, I think your kid is probably your best learning resource. It's important to create that safe space where kids can go to the parents and talk about anything because when there's too many barriers or things they disagree with you. And then it's going to be harder for kids to go to them because they think it's bad, they think it's different. They never talk about certain topics. So as soon as there's these taboo or lack of conversations about certain things then it's when kids are going on their own because they have to figure out by themselves because their parents are not going to be there to help..”

**Are there any topics that are off limit for me when talking to my child? What are some of my triggers?**

**What can I do to be more open to topics that challenge me as a parent?**

# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

### Building trust, the foundation of our relationship



TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### High School Student Quote

“  
*But like that's the whole point of communication, make them understand. And how do you help them understand? Communicate that to them. Tell them, hey, this is what I'm going through. This is how you can support me. Like just make a plan with you and your parents. And if your parents don't understand that and they need to, and they say that, oh, I don't understand you like this, need to show them how to understand. And say, well, if you don't understand me, then just try listening to me and my point. So the parents really need to listen, not come in and talk over you, but really listen to what it is you need to say.*”

**During conversations am I really listening or am I busy trying to find the words to give advice to my child?**

**Can I recognize the signs when my child is struggling or needs my help? If yes, how am I going to offer my help & support to my child? If not, what do I need to do to recognize the signs that tell me that my child is struggling?**

# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

### When things go wrong

TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### High School Student Quote

“

*If your child does something wrong and they tell you about it, number one thing is never get mad. Always seek to understand and help them resolve whatever happened and not be like, "Why did you do that?" Maybe you downloaded Snapchat, you're not supposed to. You can't be like--you're grounded. You have to be like, "It's unsafe and I just wanted to let you know." Like explain it.*

”

**Am I aware of my communication style with my child? Am I reactive or responsive?**

**Can I recognize when I am too stressed to have a calm conversation? What are some of my triggers?**

**What are some of the things I can do to calm myself down? What are some of my triggers?**

# Building Meaningful Connections With my Child

## Parent Reflections

The balancing act, setting boundaries and fostering independence.

TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### High School Student Quotes

“

*“I think strict parents make sneaky kids”*

*“... I think that if you're a very strict about something, like the way your child dresses, who they talk to, their phone limitations, they're just going to find a way around that to find their own sense of self”*

*“If you're too controlling, then kids often just go the other way and they don't feel they have any space to talk. I think that early bond, the way I see it, is that when kids, when they're on their own now, they usually not talk[ing] to their old friend anymore. And if they're having trouble, they will always go back to their parents for that early bond that's built, is what helps them go back to their parents comfortably, rather than going through a rough talk with their parents, who you've never even talked to that much”*

”

**Do I find myself trying to control my child's behaviour? In what ways? How might I shift my own actions to provide the 'space to talk'?**

**Do I know the difference between being controlling, supportive and permissive?**

**Do I take time to repair my relationship with my child after a big argument? If so, in what ways do I do this? If not, how can I begin?**