

CONVERSATION STARTERS

STEPS

1. Smile & Find Common Ground
2. Normalize & Support
3. Suggest & Write It Down
4. Offer Caring Statement

TIPS

- **Stress happens to all of us—especially parents:** It's OK to acknowledge that.
- **Common connections build rapport:** "My best friend lost her job...." "My father never trusted doctors either...." "My son would have tantrums at the store...." "My daughter's best friend was homeless for a while...."
- **It's a hot tip from an insider:** "I just found out about this great resource, and I'm letting everyone know about it." OR "This program was a lifesaver for my sister, so I have to tell people about it."
- **The central message is:** You are not alone. Many parents go through what you are going through.
- **The fact is:** We all need help sometimes. Can I give you some ideas to find your family some support?

What it might sound like:

"Hi there little princess. What's your name? How old are you?" (To parent) "I have a little girl who was once 4, and she didn't like waiting at the grocery store either. She's 23 now, but when she was 4, her favorite thing was play princess." (To girl) "Do you ever play princess?"

(To parent) "I remember my 4-year-old was just like her—full of energy and quite a handful. I felt just like you, and her teacher recommended soccer. So we signed her up, and she loved it. She ran around for an hour every afternoon, and our evenings were so much calmer and happier. Some kids have a lot of energy and really need physical activity."

"This is a challenging age for all parents. Don't be too hard on yourself. Look how healthy and beautiful she is. Clearly, she is an excellent communicator! Here, let me write down the soccer league my daughter participated in. (Write local soccer assoc.) I met some of my best friends watching the kids play soccer. It's a lot of fun. Let me know how it goes. Call me if you can't connect, and I'll help. I want to support you and [child's name]." (To girl) "Bye-bye, [child's name]."