



# Welcome to 'Harbucks' Virtual Coffee House

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**How to Get Your Children to Open  
Up: Tips to Encourage  
Communication**  
**April 30, 2021**



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# Ask the Experts....



- **A Review of AL/DL**
- **An interesting video**
- ***Aha Parenting* Article**
- **Martyn Richards, Ph.D., TED Talk**



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# When Getting Kids to Open Up:

- Sometimes feels like this...?



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# Active Listening and Deep Listening

- **Naz Beheshti:**
  - **What is Active Listening (AL)?**
    - **Uses non-verbal communication skills**
    - **Be fully present**
    - **Be fully focused**
    - **Avoid distractions**
    - **Look at the person's eyes**
    - **Get on their level**



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# Active Listening and Deep Listening

- What is Deep Listening (DL)?
  - Deep listening goes further
    - Understanding feelings
    - Not directly moving into problem solving



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# Active Listening Versus Deep Listening



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Not ready for problem solving...



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# Active Listening and Deep Listening



Also probably not ready yet... Angry, sad? Hard to tell...



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# Deep Listening with Kids



- The opportunity isn't always going to fall in our laps like this...



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# Deep Listening with Kids



- As they get older, kids might not be as open to our overtures as they used to be...



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# Deep Listening with Kids



- It can feel like this sometimes...

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# How to Get Children to Open Up?



- This is not even a question of deep listening...
- Is this child open to communication what's on his mind?



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# Waiting for the Opportunity to Talk to Your Kids...



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# Deep Listening with Kids

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wx-j9sYE2nY>



## 4 Tips:

- Talk less - listen long
- Ask questions to bring out more
- Don't give advice
- Validate their feelings



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# *Aha Parenting Article:*



- **Notice conversation openers**
  - “Parents who have close relationships with their children often attribute their closeness to their child to be a willingness to be available if their child signals a desire to talk.”



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# *Aha Parenting Article:*



# Why?

- **Ask non-judgemental questions**
  - “Questions that begin with ‘Why?’ often make kids defensive. ‘Why did you wear that?’ won’t work as well as, ‘What do you think most kids will be wearing on the field trip?’”





# *Aha Parenting Article:*



- **Don't jump in with solutions or advice**
  - **"Your child needs a chance to vent and he can't hear advice until he does. Then he needs a chance to figure out his own solutions, which is how he develops confidence and competence."**







# *Aha Parenting Article:*



- **Don't jump in with solutions or advice**
  - **“But when we can reflect feelings and then help them brainstorm solutions, kids find us more useful to talk to - and they're more likely to seek us out when they have problems.”**



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# *Aha Parenting Article*



- **Connect every day**
  - **Don't expect closeness or vulnerable emotions at each interaction or when you expect/want it.**
  - **If you set up enough regular interactions, it will happen**
  - **I love you/touch**



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# *Aha Parenting Article:*



- **Build in special time**
  - **Monthly brunch**
  - **Car rides - eye contact**
  - **Weekly basketball**
  - **Art, drawing, cooking together**



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# *Aha Parenting Article*



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- If you don't get the response you want...
  - “I was hoping we could do XYZ (together)”, not: “You never tell me anything anymore.”



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# *Aha Parenting Article*



- **If you don't get the response you want...**
  - **Don't respond in anger. Just try again.**
  - **The psychology and biology of brain development...**



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# *Aha Parenting Article*



- **Stay available**
  - **Don't pressure them to talk**
  - **Go back to that indirect communication**
  - **Find something to connect about: sports teams, the family pet...**



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# *Aha Parenting Article*



- **LISTEN LONG**
- **Also, build trust:**
  - **Don't complain about sibling, grandparents, your spouse, anyone**
  - **Kids will not trust that you won't complain about them to those people too**
  - **Our children want to enjoy talking to us**

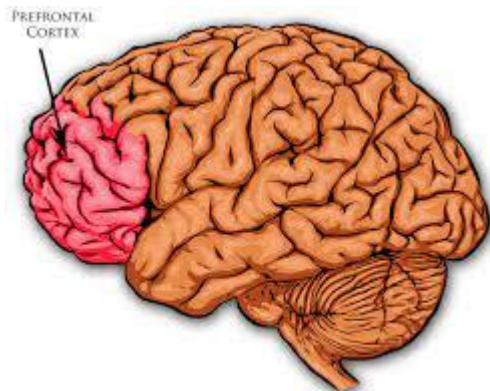


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# The Teen Brain: Martyn Richards, Ph.D.



- **Prefrontal Cortex**
  - **Inhibits us / French fries**
  - **Not developed in teens**
  - **MRI study: scans of faces**
  - **Adults use the PFC**
  - **Teens use the amygdala - emotional center of the brain**
    - **Makes them emotional responders**



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# The Teen Brain: Martyn Richards, Ph.D.



- **Cerebellum**
  - Responsible for higher thought
  - Still growing in adolescents
  - Don't ask teens, "Why?"
  - Get them to recount the events instead
  - Avoid questions that have more than one concept.
    - It is more confusing





# The Teen Brain: Martyn Richards, Ph.D.



- Two Tips:
- #1: Don't ask, "Why?"
  - Get them to recount their behavior: "What happened?"
  - Gets to the desired outcome without challenging their irrational thoughts
  - Fight or Flight



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# The Teen Brain: Martyn Richards, Ph.D.



- **Tip #2: Avoid questions that contain more than one concept in them. This adds confusion**
  - When faced with something new, teens often respond emotionally
  - The simpler the better



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**How to Get Your Children to  
Open Up  
Questions & Discussion**



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# **‘Harbucks’ Virtual Coffee House**

**THANK YOU  
FOR JOINING US!**



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# Resources

- AHA Parenting:  
<https://www.ahaparenting.com/parenting-tools/communication/foolproof-strategies-talk>
- jodi.aman.com:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wx-j9sYE2nY>
- David Kozlowski: TED Talk:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzhmBDrB8E4>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S05PBOIdSeE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbruY110Ql8>





# Resources

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