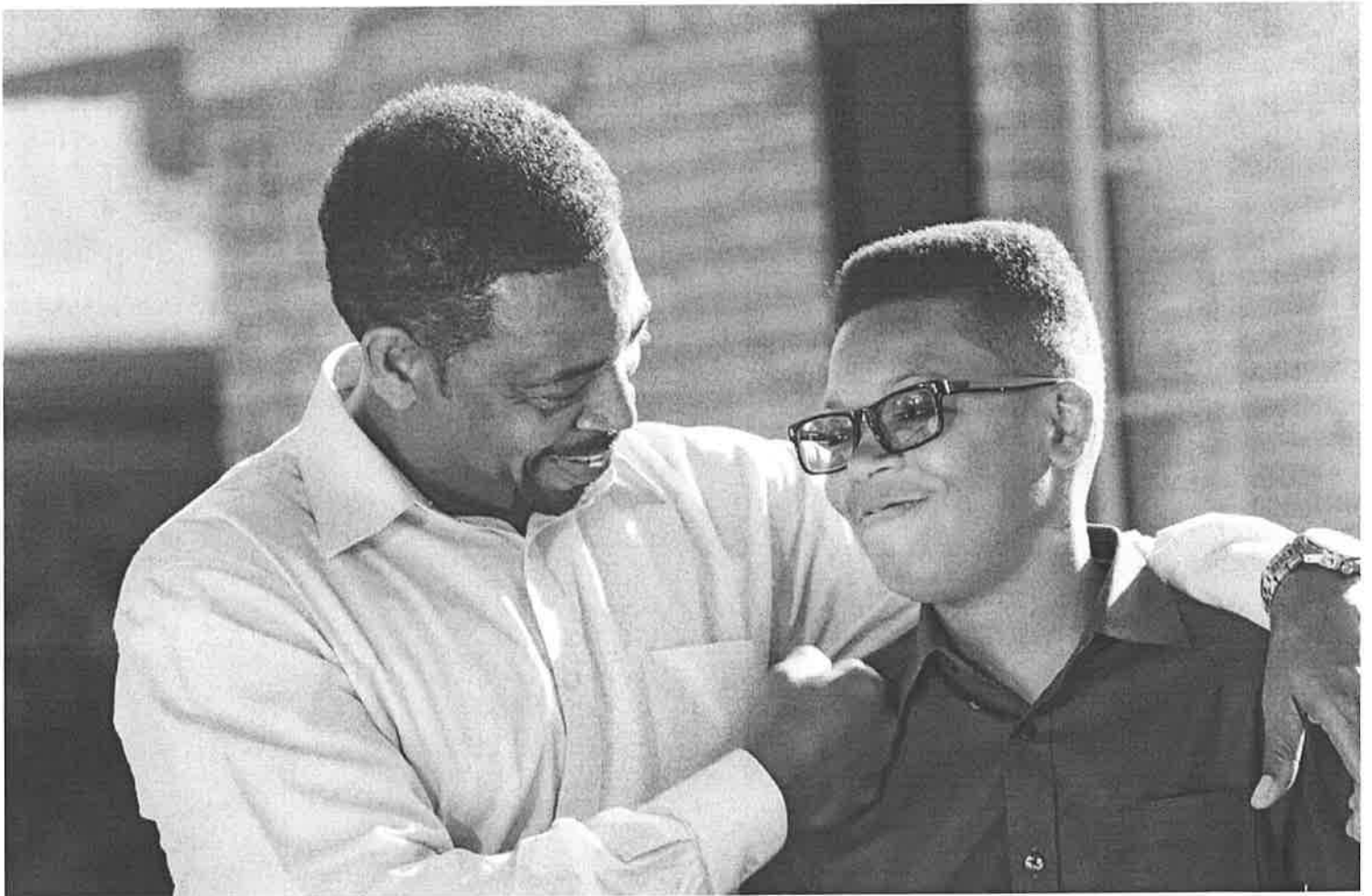


☰ Talking With Your Child

How to Talk to Your Child About Learning and Thinking Differences

By Amanda Morin



At a Glance

- Talking openly about differences shows kids there's nothing to be ashamed of.
- The first conversation can be hard, so try to keep it simple.
- Tell your child that everyone is different in some way.

When kids learn and think differently, it's important to talk openly about differences. Talking shows them there's nothing to be embarrassed about. It also shows them you're there to listen, and that you care.

Find out what you can say, and when to say it.

When to Talk to Your Child

Try not to think of it as a one-time conversation. It's important to talk about learning and thinking differences lots of times as your child gets older. This helps you and your child stay connected. It also makes the message stick, which can help your child build positive self-esteem.

The first conversation is just the beginning. As your child starts to understand more and gets more self-aware, your conversations will get richer. They often get easier, too. This open dialogue builds trust. It also helps kids learn to solve problems on their own and speak up for themselves.

Early on, try to keep things simple. Using clinical terms or diagnoses can come later, if it feels right.

Let your child know that we all have strengths and challenges. Give specific examples. You can even tell your child what you're really good at and what's difficult for you. You can also say that everyone needs extra help with something. That's how we get better at the things that are hard for us.

Remind your child, too, that differences aren't always easy to spot. You can say, "Some differences are easy to see. Others aren't." There might even be other kids in your child's class who struggle with the same things your child does.

"It's OK to talk to me about it."

The most helpful thing you can do is listen to your child's questions and concerns. Being empathetic and listening to what your child says is so important. It can lead to deeper conversations about obstacles and solutions. It also encourages your child to confide in you.

Try saying things like, "I'm glad you asked that question" or "I know it can feel uncomfortable to talk about this." This helps make your child more comfortable talking about sensitive topics.

"A disability is a difference."

If your child is curious about the word "disability," it's OK to talk about it. You can say that a disability is a difference that makes it harder for someone to do something that others can do easily.

For younger kids, it helps to use obvious examples. For instance, a person who uses a wheelchair is disabled. That person can't walk or stand as easily as others. But that



Cómo hablar con su hijo sobre las diferencias en la manera de pensar y aprender

Por Amanda Morin

Cuando los niños aprenden y piensan de manera diferente, es importante hablarles con sinceridad sobre las diferencias. Hacerlo les mostrará que no hay motivo para que se sientan avergonzados. También les hace ver que a usted le importa y quiere ayudar.

Cuándo hablar con su hijo

No piense que se trata de una sola conversación. Es necesario tener muchas conversaciones acerca de las diferencias en la manera de pensar y aprender a medida que su hijo crece. Esto ayuda a que estén comunicados, y a que el mensaje se arraigue y favorezca el desarrollo de la autoestima de su hijo.

La primera conversación es solo el comienzo. A medida que su hijo va comprendiendo más, la conversación se enriquecerá y será más fácil. Un diálogo abierto desarrolla la confianza y ayuda a los niños a resolver problemas y abogar por sí mismos.

Al principio mantenga la conversación simple. No use términos médicos o diagnósticos, eso puede hacerlo después.

Qué decir a su hijo

Los niños de todas las edades son muy observadores. Incluso los niños pequeños se dan cuenta de que hay cosas que les resultan más difíciles de hacer que a otros niños. También saben en qué son buenos, o qué hacen con más facilidad que otros.

Estas observaciones son excelentes para empezar su conversación, resaltar que todos somos diferentes. Estas son cosas que usted puede decir:

“Piensas diferente”

A los niños que piensan y aprenden de manera diferente puede que les preocupe ser “tontos”. Hable con su hijo sobre la idea de que su cerebro está “conectado distinto”. Lo importante es que entienda que pensar y aprender de diferente manera no está relacionado con la inteligencia. Para reforzar este mensaje, háblele de escritores de libros infantiles que piensan y aprenden diferente.

“Tus desafíos no te definen”