

CONNECTION BUILDERS

Conversation Starters for the Entire Family

Take the Eat.Talk.Connect! Challenge.

Try sharing 5 meals a week – any day, any meal. Use these questions to stimulate mealtime conversation and build family connections.

Why are family mealtimes so important? Children who share at least three meals with their families each week do better in school, experience less stress and depression, have better social skills, are healthier, and are less likely to smoke, use drugs or alcohol, or engage in sexual activity. Find out more at www.tonkacares.org.

Get everyone involved!

- › Take turns planning, cooking, and cleaning up. Even the smallest child enjoys the meal more if he gets to help cook or set the table.
- › Take turns leading the discussion. If one person seems to talk all the time, set time limits so everyone gets a turn.
- › Keep conversations enjoyable. This isn't the time for discipline, lectures or interrogations.
- › Make meals fun and special. Have a beach party in front of the fireplace in January.
- › Move the TV out of the dining area or turn it off during your meal.
- › Listen. Have fun!

EAT. TALK.  CONNECT!

Eat.Talk.Connect is used with permission from Carver County Public Health Partnership.

- 1 What is the most important quality you look for in a friend?
- 2 What is your most treasured possession? Why is it so valuable to you?
- 3 Who is your best friend? What are his/her three best qualities?
- 4 If you could have an endless supply of any food, what would it be?
- 5 If you could make three rules for parents, what would they be? Why?
- 6 If you were an animal, which one would you be and why?
- 7 Describe an ideal day for you, what would you do?
- 8 Name someone younger than you who looks up to you. How do you know that he or she looks up to you?
- 9 What is your favorite thing to do in the summer? In the winter?
- 10 Name four things you like best about yourself.
- 11 What are the advantages of being a child, a teenager, and an adult? What are the disadvantages?
- 12 Name a relative of yours that you admire. What makes this person admirable?
- 13 What is your favorite family tradition?
- 14 If you could take lessons in anything, what would you learn?

- 15 If you could know one thing about the future, what would it be?
- 16 What activities do you do to make the world a better place?
- 17 What makes a teacher a good teacher?
- 18 If you were granted one wish, what would it be?
- 19 If you were invisible, where would you go and what would you do?
- 20 Tell each person at the table something that is good or admirable about them.
- 21 How can you disagree without arguing? Have you ever been mad and someone answered you with kind words? How did that make you feel? Is it good to have disagreements?
- 22 What gifts can you give that don't require money?
- 23 If you could invent one thing, what would it be?
- 24 Have you changed as a person this past year? How and why?
- 25 If you could move anywhere in the world for one year, where would you go?
- 26 If you could be a famous athlete, actor, writer or musician, which would you choose and why?
- 27 If you could live the life of any fictional character, which character would it be?
- 28 What do you think is the greatest problem or challenge facing teenagers today?
- 29 What are 3 creative ways to say "no" to peer pressure?
- 30 Can young people change the world? If yes, how? If not, why?
- 31 What is your biggest dream? What is the first step to achieving it?
- 32 If you could visit any place in the world, where would you go and why?
- 33 Complete this sentence: One way I'd like to change the world is...
- 34 What is one thing about your cultural heritage that you are really proud of?
- 35 Was there ever a time when you had to stand up for something you believed, even when your friends weren't behind you 100%? What did you learn from the experience?
- 36 Have you ever found yourself not going along with the crowd? Why did you choose that route?
- 37 If you became mayor of this town, what is the first thing you would do?
- 38 Have you ever had a friend whom you later realized was a "bad influence" on you? How did you handle it?
- 39 Who would you talk to if you were feeling pressured to do something that you didn't want to do? Why would you choose this person?
- 40 How do you choose your friends?
- 41 Which teacher, coach or other school staff is a positive role model for you? What qualities do you value in him or her?
- 42 What is the most generous thing you have ever done?
- 43 What does it mean to be courageous? Does courage mean not having fear? What is the most courageous thing you have ever done?
- 44 Who is the nicest person you know? Why do you think that about this person? Can a person be too nice?
- 45 Is it easier to be a girl or a boy? Why do you think that?
- 46 Have you ever asked a teacher for help? Was it hard to ask?
- 47 Who at school do you look forward to seeing every day? Can you name at least one adult and one student?
- 48 What is your favorite book and why?
- 49 If you could choose between being inside or outside having fun, which would you choose?
- 50 What makes a good leader? Are you a good leader?



Tonka CARES and ICA are working together to support family meals for everyone.