

# IF YOU CAN'T TALK TO YOUR PARENTS YOU COULD TRY -

**"I talk to my friends or my older brother first,  
or I get my older brother to tell Mum and Dad."**

**"I'll tell my cousins because they'll support me."**

**"Sometimes if I'm having a problem I'll text  
or email my cousin in Australia and writing it  
down helps sort it out in my brain a bit more  
and makes me feel better. Sometimes I just  
write it down anyway even if I rip it up and  
burn it. But it makes me feel better."**

**"I would talk to someone I know and trust. That  
way they really value how I feel."**

**"Talk to someone close to you, I talk to my best  
friend."**

You could also try a helping agency like Youthline, Family Planning or Citizens Advice. These services are confidential so you can trust them - they are there to listen and to help you. Their contact details are on the back panel of this leaflet.



## GETTING HELP

### Youthline

Help Line: 0800 37 66 33  
Email: [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz)  
Free text: 234  
[www.youthline.co.nz](http://www.youthline.co.nz)

### Family Planning Association

Help Line: 0800 372 5463  
[www.fpanz.org.nz](http://www.fpanz.org.nz)

### Citizens Advice Bureau

Phone: 0800 367 222  
[www.cab.org.nz](http://www.cab.org.nz)

There are also other internet sites that have useful information, but not all are helpful so exercise caution. One we recommend is [www.thelowdown.co.nz](http://www.thelowdown.co.nz)

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Mental Health Foundation has a comprehensive range of information on mental health and wellbeing including pamphlets, books and videos for purchase or loan.

### Resource & Information Service

Phone: 09 300 7030  
Email: [resource@mentalhealth.org.nz](mailto:resource@mentalhealth.org.nz)

### Mental Health Foundation

PO Box 10051, Dominion Road  
81 New North Road, Eden Terrace,  
Auckland 1446  
Phone: 09 300 7010  
Fax 09 300 7020  
[www.mentalhealth.org.nz](http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz)

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 **Mental Health Foundation**  
of New Zealand

## How to get heard Talking to your parents



# GETTING HEARD

# YOUR PARENTS

Talking to your parents or the other people you live with about the hard things – sex, drugs, trouble with the police, bad reports and exam results, bullying, feeling bad about yourself, violence – can be really difficult.

This leaflet isn't going to solve all of your communication problems, but it can give you some ideas and some places to start.

Everyone's situation is different. It's difficult for you and for your parents. Both of you are looking for ways to be heard.



## GETTING HEARD

A lot of these ideas are about planning what to say in advance. This doesn't mean lying. It's about being aware of what makes your parents angry and upset and finding other ways to put things, or better times to talk.

The teenagers we talked to suggested some of these ways to make things easier –

**“Work your way into it. Start out by talking about something else and just work it into the conversation.”**

**“Depends on their mood and what they’re doing. If they’re in a bad mood you might leave it for later.”**

**"If it's something bad, I'll sort of figure out in my mind what to say. I'll sit there thinking and in the end I'll get up the nerve to go and tell them."**

**"You've got to say how there's going to be all your friends there and how you've got a ride home and you've got to say that first because otherwise they'll just say no."**

**“I talk to my parents with some respect and that works most of the time.”**

**“You should give a reason. ‘Mum I want to talk to you about something because it’s affecting my schoolwork’ or some stuff like that, because you’re explaining to her why. I think that’s best if you want to tell her something that’s bothering you.”**

**"Mum usually comes in every night and says goodnight and if I've got something on my mind I'll usually ask her then and she'll sit down and talk to me."**

## REASONS THINGS MIGHT NOT WORK

Sometimes, no matter how good you are at communicating, it doesn't seem to work. Parents usually do what they do because they love you and they're worried about you. Parents want to feel respected and they're often afraid of losing your respect. They want to be able to trust you. They also want to have some control over what's happening, just like you do and this can result in disagreements and arguments.

**“Either they’re overprotective or they just don’t want anything bad to happen to us.”**

**"It's just the way parents have been brought up I think. They treat their kids how they've been treated."**

**“It depends what kind of mood they’re in what sort of reaction you get.”**

**“If you’ve done something wrong they get all angry and disappointed.”**

**“My Mum seems to think she didn’t get enough opportunities so she wants to make me what she wasn’t.”**

**“Parents lived in a time when sex was safer and there weren’t many STDs around. Now they’re freaked out about AIDS and stuff.”**



# GETTING IT DONE