

# fact sheet

## HOW TO HAVE A 'CHECK-IN' CONVERSATION WITH EXPECTANT AND NEW PARENTS



"Check-in" conversation 21.05.21

If you know an expectant or new parent there are many ways to offer support. It can be hard to know where to start.

If you are having a difficult time, it can be hard to even recognise, let alone acknowledge it yourself. It is often others who notice changes in you before you do.

Here are some ideas to start a conversation.

### ASKING YOUR DAUGHTER OR SON

It can be tough to watch your daughter or son adjusting to parenthood if they seem overwhelmed. You could reflect on your own experience to open up a discussion or tell them about what they were like as a baby. Being open and honest whilst offering reassurance may also help. You could also ask what help they might need, whether it be some practical support or just a hug.

### ASKING YOUR FRIEND/OTHER FAMILY MEMBER

Going for a walk or heading to a cafe and simply talking at the same time might be useful. Check in often, offer times to connect and give them space to respond. If you can ask them "How is it going being a parent?", or share a funny story of your own, this might also encourage them to open up. Validate their feelings and listen attentively.

### ASKING YOUR PARTNER

A weekly catch up where there are limited interruptions might be a good time to really ask how your partner is going. Make a regular time to do this, a scheduled time, and you can plan around it. If something unexpected comes up, organise another time. Phones are best kept away for this time to connect. Make space to offer support, ideas, or just being a good listener.

### ASKING YOURSELF

If you notice changes in yourself then take some quiet time, reflect on how you are feeling and be patient with yourself as you settle into this expectant or new parenting space. Recognise and label the emotions. If what you normally do is not helping you feel better, then reach out to a trusted friend or family member so they can help you get further support. There is no shame in asking for help. In fact, at Gidget Foundation Australia we know it is hard but view it as a sign of strength! 🌸



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Gidget Foundation Australia exists to support the emotional wellbeing of expectant and new parents to ensure they receive timely, appropriate and specialist care.