

Having great **conversations** with your **junior higher.**



Be available.

Remove distractions.

Put down the phone, turn off the TV, close the laptop, etc.

Be interruptible.

Give them interrupting power.

Go to their world.

Do something that they enjoy, even if you don't love it.

Find regular times to check in.

Take advantage of car time, take them out on a monthly date to their favorite place, walk the dog together.

Ask good questions.

Be curious.

Ask them all about the things they are into. Sit there and let them talk your ear off about their favorite YouTuber or the new band they like.

*What was the best thing that happened to you today?
Is there something new you'd like to learn or try?
What are your thoughts/feelings about (insert local or world event)?
Who would you say are your best friends right now?
What's something you have been wondering about lately?*

Don't forget...

Freak out on the inside, stay calm on the outside.

This is one of the hardest skills for parents to master, but it's also one of the most important. Even when they say something shocking, try your best to *respond* instead of *react*. Your body language can say a lot!

Batting .300 will get you in the Hall of Fame!

Not every conversation is going to be a home run. You're going to strike out. Probably a lot... That's ok! Just keep taking swings and eventually you'll knock it out of the park. Ok, we're done with the baseball metaphor...

Affirm. Affirm. Affirm.

Take advantage of every opportunity you have to affirm your kid. Your words have so much power to build them up and encourage them. There's no such thing as too much encouragement for a junior higher.