

Foundations

Leaders create leaders

Best for ages 9 and up. **The purpose of this conversation is to help your child understand the value of being a leader and to develop healthy and effective leadership skills.**

American Activist Ralph Nader once said, “The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers”.

People often think of leadership in terms of compliance and conformity when the reality is actually the opposite. Effective leaders help others self-actualize and become the very best version of themselves.

Start the conversation with asking your child if they would prefer to be a person who’s more of a leader or a follower. Prompt your child to identify their current perception of leadership and have them identify some qualities that an effective leader may have.

Explore with your child the value of having leadership skills and being a person who thinks for themselves. Process the above quote with your child and gather their thoughts on it. Once this is discussed, explore some practical leadership qualities of effective leaders.

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Resilience
- Problem-solving
- Resourcefulness
- Taking initiative
- Empathy
- Confidence
- Open-mindedness
- Authenticity

Explore with your child how the above traits are traits that people like to be around. When someone personifies the characteristics above, others feel comfortable and relaxed around them.

Sample conversation:

Parent: When you hear people talk about leaders and followers, which one do you identify with more? Do you think you are more of a leader or more of a follower?

Child: Um, I don’t know. I probably would want to be a leader and not a follower.

Parent: Me too! What are things you think of when you think of the words “leader” or “leadership?”

Child: Like someone in charge, or someone telling you what to do.

Parent: Yes, there is a strong image that comes along with the word “leader” that makes us think about people in positions of authority telling others what to do. The truth is, good leaders lead by example. Just by having some great character traits and overall integrity, other people often get inspired and strive to become better versions of themselves.

Child: So that’s like a different type of leader. Not like a teacher or a boss but just a smart or healthy person.

Parent: Sort of. Research shows that teachers or bosses who have certain character traits actually are much more effective than others who lack them. You mentioned a healthy or smart person. What are some traits that you can think of now, that someone who’s healthy with good leadership skills might have?



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