



Where little hearts learn to bloom.

Talk Cards

Gladiolus and the Hair Don'ts

How to use your Talk Cards

1. Print on card stock if you can, then cut along the dashed lines.
2. Pick a card at bedtime, in the car, at the table, or right after reading.
3. Read the question for your child's age. Take turns answering. Grown-ups can go first!
4. The grown-up tip at the bottom is just for you: a gentle idea for what to say next.



Gentle conversation starters, not therapy.



After the Story



AGES 3-5

Glad loves his big, curly hair. What's something about you that you love?

AGES 6-9

Glad's curls made him feel like himself. What makes you feel the most like you?

GROWN-UP TIP

Go first and share one thing you love about yourself. Kids open up faster when a grown-up goes first.

From the book: Page 1: Glad and his magnificent mop.

After the Story



AGES 3-5

Glad didn't want a haircut. Is there something you didn't want to change?

AGES 6-9

Mom said "just a little trim," but Glad liked his hair the way it was. Has someone ever asked you to change something you liked?

GROWN-UP TIP

You don't have to convince them the change was good. Try: "It makes sense you didn't want that."

From the book: Page 3: "But I like my hair just the way it is!"

After the Story



AGES 3-5

How do you think Glad felt when he looked in the mirror?

AGES 6-9

Glad gasped at the mirror. Has something ever turned out really different from what you expected?

GROWN-UP TIP

Help them name the feeling: surprised, upset, embarrassed. Naming a feeling makes it a little smaller.

From the book: Page 6: Glad looked at himself and gasped.

After the Story



AGES 3-5

Glad thought everyone would laugh at him. Did they?

AGES 6-9

Glad's worry said, "No one will want to be my friend." Was the worry telling the truth?

GROWN-UP TIP

Gently separate the worry from the facts: "That's a big worry. Let's check if it's true." You're teaching that thoughts aren't always facts.

From the book: Page 8: Glad's mind raced with terrible thoughts.

After the Story



AGES 3-5

Why do you think Glad wore his hood?

AGES 6-9

Have you ever wanted to hide, like Glad in his hood? What helped you come back out?

GROWN-UP TIP

Hiding is a normal way to feel safe. Don't push. Just let them know they can come out whenever they're ready.

From the book: Page 9: Glad wore a sweatshirt with a hood.

After the Story



AGES 3-5

Poppy said, "You're still Glad." Who makes you feel that way?

AGES 6-9

What could you say to a friend who is having a really hard day, like Poppy did for Glad?

GROWN-UP TIP

Praise kindness when you hear it: "That would make a friend feel so good." Kids repeat what gets noticed.

From the book: Page 10: "But you're still Glad."

After the Story



AGES 3-5

Glad couldn't think about his quiz. Do big feelings make it hard to think?

AGES 6-9

Glad decided his teacher hated his haircut. Do you think that was true? Why do you think he thought it?

GROWN-UP TIP

Big feelings can color everything around us. You can say: "When I'm upset, everything looks worse for a while too."

From the book: Page 11: the subtraction quiz.

After the Story



AGES 3-5

Glad told Mom how he felt. Who can you tell when you feel bad?

AGES 6-9

Mom didn't fix it. She said "I know" and listened. What helps you more: fixing it, or someone listening?

GROWN-UP TIP

This is the big one. Try listening without fixing. "I know" and a hug can be enough.

From the book: Page 13: "I know," said Mom. She listened.

After the Story



AGES 3-5

Hair grows. Flowers grow. What else grows and changes?

AGES 6-9

Mom said feelings change like hair grows. Can you think of a feeling that changed for you?

GROWN-UP TIP

Point to a real change you've both seen, like a scary first day that turned into a favorite place.

From the book: Page 15: "They all grow. They all change!"

After the Story



AGES 3-5

Glad was still Glad, even with short hair. What's always true about you?

AGES 6-9

Does having a sad feeling make you a sad kid? Why not?

GROWN-UP TIP

Help them see that feelings are something we have, not something we are. Say it out loud: "You can feel sad and still be you."

From the book: Last page: Glad was glad to be Glad.

Feelings



AGES 3-5

Where do you feel worry in your body? Your tummy? Your chest?

AGES 6-9

What's a worry you had that turned out okay?

GROWN-UP TIP

Body clues help kids notice feelings early. Share yours: "When I'm worried, my shoulders get tight."

Feelings



AGES 3-5

What helps you when you feel sad?

AGES 6-9

What's something that made you sad that feels better now?

GROWN-UP TIP

Make a little list together. Next time sadness shows up, you'll both know what to try.

Feelings



AGES 3-5

What does your face do when you feel embarrassed?

AGES 6-9

Has something embarrassing ever turned funny later on?

GROWN-UP TIP

A gentle laugh together, never at them, shows embarrassment doesn't last forever.

Feelings



AGES 3-5

When did you do something even though you felt scared?

AGES 6-9

What's something brave you'd like to try this year?

GROWN-UP TIP

Brave doesn't mean not scared. Tell them: "Brave is when you're scared and you try anyway."

Feelings



AGES 3-5

What color is mad? What color is calm?

AGES 6-9

When you feel really mad, what helps your body calm down?

GROWN-UP TIP

Try one calming idea together right now, like three slow breaths or a big squeeze-and-let-go.

Feelings



AGES 3-5

What made you smile today?

AGES 6-9

What's one happy thing from today you want to remember?

GROWN-UP TIP

Ending on a happy card is a great bedtime habit.

Remember a Time



AGES 3-5

Tell me about a time something felt bad but got better.

AGES 6-9

Tell me about a time something felt terrible at first but turned out okay.

GROWN-UP TIP

This is the heart of the book. Afterward, say: "See? Feelings change."

Remember a Time



AGES 3-5

Tell me about a time you tried something new.

AGES 6-9

Tell me about a time you tried something new even though you weren't sure.

GROWN-UP TIP

Ask what helped them try. That helper can be used again.

Remember a Time



AGES 3–5

Tell me about a time a friend helped you.

AGES 6–9

Tell me about a time a friend made a hard day better.

GROWN-UP TIP

Ask what the friend did or said. It shows them how to be that friend too.

Remember a Time



AGES 3–5

Tell me about a time you helped someone.

AGES 6–9

Tell me about a time you were kind and nobody asked you to be.

GROWN-UP TIP

Tell them how it made you feel to hear it.

Remember a Time



AGES 3–5

Tell me about a time you changed your mind.

AGES 6–9

Tell me about a time you felt one way about something and later felt totally different.

GROWN-UP TIP

Changing your mind is a skill. Celebrate it.

Remember a Time



AGES 3–5

Tell me about a time you felt proud of yourself.

AGES 6–9

What's something you worked hard on and felt proud of?

GROWN-UP TIP

Ask "How did it feel?" before saying you're proud. Their pride matters most.

Silly Warm-ups



AGES 3–5

If your hair could be any color, what would you pick?

AGES 6–9

If your hair could be any color and any shape, what would it look like?

GROWN-UP TIP

Silly cards warm kids up. Play along and give your own silly answer.

Silly Warm-ups



AGES 3–5

If Max could talk, what would he say first?

AGES 6–9

If Max could talk, what secret would he tell?

GROWN-UP TIP

Pure fun. Laughing together makes the deeper cards easier.

Silly Warm-ups



AGES 3–5

Would you rather have curls as big as Glad's or a tail like his?

AGES 6–9

Would you rather have Glad's giant curls or Poppy's tentacles? Why?

GROWN-UP TIP

Follow their imagination wherever it goes.

Silly Warm-ups



AGES 3–5

If you were a little monster, what would your name be?

AGES 6–9

Make up a monster name for everyone in our family.

GROWN-UP TIP

Write the names down. Kids love seeing them again later.

Silly Warm-ups



AGES 3–5

What song is Glad listening to in his headphones?

AGES 6–9

If your feelings today were a song, what would it sound like?

GROWN-UP TIP

Hum it together. Music is a sneaky way to talk about feelings.

Silly Warm-ups



AGES 3–5

If you could make anything grow super fast, what would it be?

AGES 6–9

If you could plant a magic seed, what would grow from it?

GROWN-UP TIP

A gentle nod to the book: some things take time to grow.

Ask a Grown-up



AGES 3–5

Ask: "What's the worst haircut you ever had?"

AGES 6–9

Ask your grown-up: "What's the worst haircut you ever had? How did you feel?"

GROWN-UP TIP

Answer honestly and keep it short. Hearing that grown-ups had hard days too helps kids feel normal.

Ask a Grown-up



AGES 3–5

Ask: "What did you worry about when you were little?"

AGES 6–9

Ask your grown-up: "What did you worry about when you were my age?"

GROWN-UP TIP

Share a real worry from childhood and how it turned out. This is cycle-breaking in action.

Ask a Grown-up



AGES 3–5

Ask: “When did a feeling change for you?”

AGES 6–9

Ask your grown-up: “Tell me about a feeling that changed for you.”

GROWN-UP TIP

Pick a small, safe example. The point is showing that feelings change for grown-ups too.

Ask a Grown-up



AGES 3–5

Ask: “Who did you talk to when you were sad?”

AGES 6–9

Ask your grown-up: “Who did you talk to when you were sad as a kid?”

GROWN-UP TIP

If you didn't have someone, it's okay to say so. You can add: “That's why I want to be that person for you.”

Ask a Grown-up



AGES 3–5

Ask: “What's something you were scared to try?”

AGES 6–9

Ask your grown-up: “What's something you were scared to try but did anyway?”

GROWN-UP TIP

Tell them how it turned out, even if it didn't go perfectly.

Ask a Grown-up



AGES 3–5

Ask: “What's always true about you?”

AGES 6–9

Ask your grown-up: “What's one thing that's always true about you, no matter how you feel?”

GROWN-UP TIP

Answer, then turn it around and tell them one thing that's always true about them.