

# KNOW! TO HELP YOUTH FIND PURPOSE

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We live in a world filled with uncertainty. Political tensions, economic instability, and social divisions can make the future feel daunting, especially for young people.

That's why it's so important for young people to be hopeful about their future, find a sense of purpose, and see possibilities that lie before them. Having a sense of purpose helps them stay engaged in school, make healthy choices, and feel fulfilled in their lives.

As caring adults, we have a powerful role to play. By nurturing strong relationships and offering guidance, we can help young people discover more about themselves and inspire them to explore possibilities for their futures.

## HERE ARE FIVE WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUTH DISCOVER THEIR PURPOSE:

### 1. Provide a Secure Base

Young people won't succeed at everything they try, and that's completely normal. By offering encouragement and space for young people to regroup, you can help them feel supported and ready to try again or explore new interests. Be available when things don't go as planned, and help them reflect on their strengths and passions. Most importantly, remind them that they matter to you no matter what.<sup>1</sup>

**Talking tip:** Try saying, "No one is great at everything right away. How can I help you to try again or explore something new?"

### 2. Encourage Curiosity

Young people are naturally curious. Notice what interests them and find ways to build on those topics through conversations or activities. If they want to try something new, support them, and maybe even try the activity together. Demonstrate curiosity by asking questions and sharing what you're learning, too.<sup>1</sup>

**Talking tip:** When you see them interested in something, ask, "What about [x] excites you? What do you like about it?" This helps them reflect more deeply on their interests.

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### 3. Forge Connections and Provide Opportunities

As adults, we have access to resources and networks that young people might not. Use your influence to introduce them to people, experiences, and communities that align with their interests. Whether it's neighbors, teachers, local organizations, or clubs, these connections can help young people explore their interests, strengthen their skills, and feel a sense of purpose and belonging.<sup>1,2,3</sup>

**Talking tip:** Set aside time to explore a website like [DoSomething.org](https://dosomething.org) together to find opportunities that match their passions.

### 4. Share Your Experiences

You can be a role model for young people searching for purpose. Share your journey, both the successes and the setbacks. Being open about the challenges you faced and even dreams you didn't pursue helps them see that setbacks are part of growth and no one has everything figured out right away.<sup>2</sup>

**Talking tip:** Share the joy of exploration with youth. Talk about the different paths you've tried and what you learned along the way.

### 5. Keep the Conversation Going

Talking about purpose can be intimidating for young people, so it's better to start small. Instead of asking big questions like, "What do you want to do with your life?", focus on their strengths and interests. If they struggle to name them, point out what you see. Keep coming back to these conversations gently and remind them that finding purpose is a process, and you'll be there to support them along the way.<sup>2</sup>

**Talking tip:** Start small with questions like "What are three things that you are good at?" or "What's something you could teach someone else to do?" These can help youth think about their unique talents and passions.

## RESOURCES

- [Tips to Help Your Teen Cultivate Their Passion](#)
- [Ways to Nurture Interests That Inspire Kids to Explore Their Passions](#)
- [Tips to Guide Teens To Find Purpose in Life](#)

\*Numbered sources are hyperlinked\*

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