



EXPRESS CARE

Colorful Conversations

Express Care With the Questions You Ask

Description

In small groups, participants take turns sharing about themselves using a set of prompts tied to each color of candy they have.

Objective

- Build and strengthen relationships among participants
- Build and strengthen relationships between participants and leaders
- Deepen understanding of Express Care within the Developmental Relationships Framework

Connecting with the Framework

We know from our research that listening, or as young people have said, “really paying attention when we are together” is foundational for showing care in a relationship. One aspect of really listening to others is asking good questions.

Planning and Preparation

 **Participants:** Any size group, works best with groups of 5 or more participants

 **Time:** 30 minutes

 **Set up:**

 **Materials:**

- A bag of colored candies like M&Ms or Skittles (enough for each participant to take a small handful or enough individual bags for each participant to have one). If candy isn't an option in your setting, you can use marbles, small pieces of colored paper, Legos, or other small items that come in a variety of colors.

- You may want to begin with participants sitting in a circle. Later they will break into small groups, so this activity will work best where there's enough space for participants to spread out.

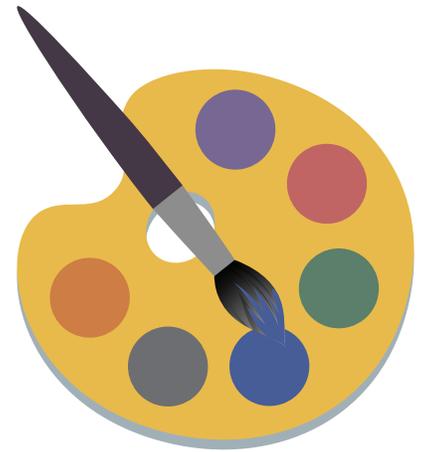
Facilitator Notes:

Ahead of time, decide which version of the Colorful Conversations Code Handout to use. There are two versions ready to print/copy. Alternatively, you can choose questions from the page of Supplemental Questions and put them into the blank handout 3.

- When selecting questions, make sure you choose questions that are appropriate for your group. Feel free to make up your own questions that relate to your program's context. Or, Share Power with participants by having them choose and write in the questions.
- If you are using candies or other objects that are different colors than the provided handout, remember to make adjustments to the handout, so it matches.
- Feel free to use the questions provided in this activity in other ways as well. There are a wide range of potential adaptations for this activity. For example, you can have all participants answer each question.

Facilitator Instructions

1. If participants have been introduced to the Developmental Relationships Framework, let them know that through this activity we will be practicing the element of Express Care. Let participants know that each person is going to share something about themselves, and that everyone else in the group is going to show that they care about that person by listening and asking questions. Remind participants that they should listen carefully when their peer is speaking so they can come up with a question to ask them about what they said.
2. Pass a bag of colored candy to each participant. Ask them each to take a small handful of candies in as many different colors as possible, but not to eat the candy until they hear the instructions. The facilitator should take a handful of candy as well.
3. Divide into groups of 3-5 participants. (Depending on the size of the group, this activity could also be done in pairs.) Give each group a copy of the Colorful Conversation Codes Handout.



Putting It Into Practice

While this activity is typically used for introductions when a group is just starting to get to know one another, consider bringing it back over the course of your time together. You can modify the questions over time in a variety of ways:

- If your program follows a curriculum with different topics, connect questions to each topic.
- Increase the level of risk in questions over time as your group builds trust.
- Use this activity as a daily or weekly check-in with questions about things that may be happening in participants' lives.

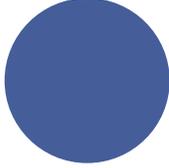
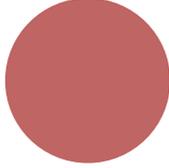
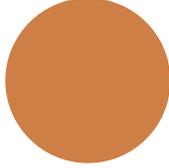
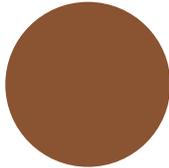
4. Ask each participant to select one candy and compare its color to the conversation topics on the Colorful Conversation Codes Handout. Based on that color, participants respond to the relevant question. The facilitator can model the process by sharing facts about themselves corresponding to the candy they have. After each participant responds to their question, one other participant should ask a follow-up question about what they heard.
5. In their small groups, have participants take turns responding to the topics. They can eat their candy after each turn. Give participants the opportunity to share at least three times with the group.
6. Bring the participants back to the large group to reflect.

Reflect

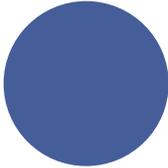
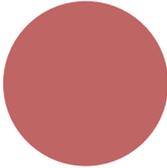
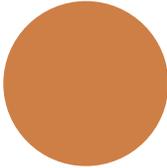
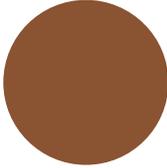
Discuss these questions as a large group:

- What surprising or interesting things did you learn about each other? Why did you find it surprising or interesting?
- What was it like to talk about yourself? What was it like to hear others talk about themselves?
- What strategies did you use to make sure you were listening actively to the other members of your group?
- Did you hear any really good follow-up questions that helped you feel that others were really listening and interested?
- If you could ask other questions (not just the six listed), what would you ask, and why?
- What did you experience in this activity that might be helpful in other relationships in your life?

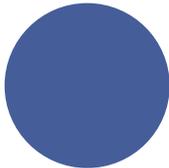
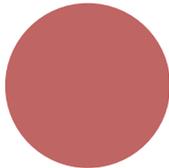
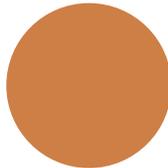
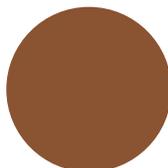
Colorful Conversations Code Handout 1

<p>Blue:</p> <p>Share a talent you have, and how long you have had that skill. What did you do to learn the skill? How do you practice?</p> 	<p>Red:</p> <p>What is a subject or topic you'd like to learn more about? Why?</p> 	<p>Orange:</p> <p>What is a value or rule you live by? How did you figure this out?</p> 
<p>Yellow:</p> <p>Who is someone you really respect? Why?</p> 	<p>Green:</p> <p>Describe your dream job. How did you learn about this job? What excites you about it?</p> 	<p>Brown:</p> <p>Where is a place you can really be yourself? Why?</p> 

Colorful Conversations Code Handout 2

<p>Blue: Share something you would like to become better at.</p> 	<p>Red: Share a skill or activity that has come naturally to you. How do you use this skill now? How could you use it in the future?</p> 	<p>Orange: What is your favorite celebrity or TV show? Why?</p> 
<p>Yellow: Who is someone you aspire to be like? Why?</p> 	<p>Green: Describe your dream life ten years from now. How did you come up with this dream?</p> 	<p>Brown: Where would you live if you could live anywhere on the planet?</p> 

Colorful Conversations Code Handout 3

<p>Blue:</p> 	<p>Red:</p> 	<p>Orange:</p> 
<p>Yellow:</p> 	<p>Green:</p> 	<p>Brown:</p> 

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Supplemental Questions

Introductions/About Me

- Where do you live?
- What is one of your favorite places on earth?
- Do you have any pets? If not, what kind of pet would you want?
- Tell us something about your name. (What do you like about it? Do you know what it means? Do you know how you got your name? Do you have a nickname?)
- What was your favorite thing to do when you were in kindergarten?
- Name something you are grateful for.*
- Share an embarrassing moment you've had.*

Academic

- What is your favorite subject in school? Why?*
- What subject in school is most challenging for you?*
- Name someone at school who you really admire. What do they do that inspires you?
- What are you interested in learning more about in the future?

Sparks/Hobbies/Activities/Interests

- If you had a whole day to do anything you wanted, what would you do?
- What is something you're really good at? How did you build this skill?
- What do you usually do after school?
- What do you usually do on the weekend?
- What is your favorite thing to do outside?
- What is your favorite sport to play or watch?
- What is your favorite type of art? (Singing, drawing, painting, playing an instrument, sculpture, creative writing, etc.)
- If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life what would it be?
- What's your favorite show or movie?
- Who is your favorite musical artist or band?
- What are you curious about?
- Would you like to be famous? What would you be famous for?
- What do you love to do with friends?
- Describe your perfect day.
- What's something you're involved in that's important to you outside school?

**Questions with an asterisk may be higher-risk for some groups or participants. Be mindful that while these questions can help foster even stronger relationships, they could be challenging for participants to answer if they have not yet built trust with the group.*

People

- Tell us about your family.*
- Tell us about a very good friend. What do they do that you appreciate?
- Who is your favorite musician? Why?
- Who is your favorite actor? Why?
- Who is someone from history that you admire? Why?
- If you could eat lunch with anyone in the world, alive or dead, who would you choose? Why?

Future

- Describe your dream life in ten/ twenty/thirty years.*
- If you could travel anywhere in the world (or universe!) in the future, where would you go and why?
- What do you think you might want to do for your job in the future? Why?
- What are your plans after [middle school, high school, etc.]?
- If you could know something about your life in the future, what would you want to know?*
- Tell us about the last time you tried something new.
- What is one new kind of technology you hope to see invented in your lifetime?

Funny/Silly

- Would you rather have a cat with a human face or a dog with human hands? Why?
- Tell us about the last time you laughed really hard.
- Would you rather fight ten duck-sized horses or one horse-sized duck? Why?
- If you were an animal right now, which would you be? Why?
- Would you rather own a magic carpet that flies or a personal robot?
- Would you rather be able to fly or be invisible?