

PAEDIATRICIANS: 10 TOP TIPS FOR HAVING A CONVERSATION ABOUT CLEAN AIR

Created by the RCPCH &Us Climate Changers, a group of children & young people from across the UK committed to tackling the climate emergency.

1

KNOW WHO I AM

Take a few minutes before my appointment to remind yourself about ME and my situation: look at where I live and go to school or college, who I live with, my health conditions, my socio economic status and background. Appreciate that all of this affects what I can and cannot do to improve the air I breathe.

2

MAKE IT PRACTICAL & RELEVANT

Is what you're suggesting easy for me to do? Is it low (or no) cost? Is it accessible? Keep the conversation realistic and focused on what's practically possible.

3

BE HUMAN

Show how we are all trying to make sustainable choices by being relatable and offering examples from your own life where you can. Do you often choose to walk to places or cycle to work for example? Do you have an air quality monitor in your surgery?

THINK LANGUAGE & CONTENT

4

Consider the language you're using (no jargon, no acronyms) and the content you're sharing. I don't need to be stressed out by lots of facts and figures. Please don't make me more concerned about my health than I already am. Be solution focused.

5

DON'T ASSUME

Don't assume I know all about climate change, but don't assume I don't! Ask me what I know about the issue already and the links between air pollution and health. Make the conversation age and stage appropriate.

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6

ADDRESS THE WHOLE OF ME

My mental health is intrinsic to this conversation too. Ask me how I am feeling as well as about my physical health. Let me talk. Listen to my concerns.

7

GIVE ME CHOICE

Does what you're suggesting create choice for me? Is it empowering? Does it allow me to take some control over my health or just make me feel worse because I can't do what you suggest?

8

NO ETHICAL DILEMMAS

Don't make me choose between my health and the environment. It's not for me to fix the clean air problem by choosing a different kind of inhaler that might not work as well for me. Make ALL options environmentally sound.

9

BE INCLUSIVE

Include us all in the conversation. Have suggestions appropriate to each family member and what we can do. Don't shame my parents - they're struggling with this too. Not everyone can afford a bike for their children, or have time to walk to school.

10

PROVIDE FURTHER SUPPORT

Have something ready for us to take away and read later when we've had time to think about everything we've discussed. Make this practical e.g. signposting links to further resources or a checklist for the home.