

Let's Talk About Dylan

Exploring thoughts, feelings and emotions together.

Stories can help us understand ourselves and each other.

Sometimes we see parts of ourselves in a character. Sometimes we notice something we have never thought about before. Sometimes we simply become more curious about how another person might be feeling.

This discussion guide is an invitation to wonder. There are no right or wrong answers. You don't have to agree with Dylan's choices or have experienced the same things he has. The most important part is being curious, asking questions and listening to one another.

Some questions might feel easy to answer, while others may take a little more thinking. It's okay to skip a question, come back to it later or simply say, "I'm not sure."

Everyone experiences worries differently. What felt big for Dylan may feel different for someone else—and that's okay too. Together, let's explore Dylan's story with kindness, curiosity and understanding.

A note about using these questions

These questions are examples only. They are not intended to be used as a script or checklist, and should always be considered within the context of the individual child.

A trauma-informed approach is essential when asking children questions about their experiences, feelings or behaviour. Before asking, consider the child's developmental stage, communication capacity, trauma history, emotional readiness and current level of safety and regulation.

It is also important to consider the role, skills and capacity of the person asking the questions. They should be able to respond appropriately to the child's answers, including providing support if the conversation brings up difficult emotions or experiences.

Questions should never be used to encourage a child to disclose information they are not ready or able to share. Children should be given choice, time and permission not to answer.

Finally, anyone asking questions about a child's experiences must understand the legal and organisational responsibilities that apply to their role. This includes knowing what to do if a child makes a disclosure or raises a concern about their safety or the safety of another person.

The goal is not to obtain information. The goal is to create a safe opportunity for a child to communicate, if and when they are ready.

Thinking About Dylan

- "What did you notice about Dylan?"
- "What do you think Dylan is feeling or thinking?"
- "What makes you wonder about him?"

Using our senses

Imagine you were Dylan, what do you think he might be:

Hearing ...
Seeing ...
Smelling ...
Touching ...

What is something you'll remember from the book?

Examples:

- One thing I learnt from Dylan is...
- One thing I want Dylan to know is...
- If I could say something to Dylan, I would tell him...

In the story we learnt that Dylan feels he has to make others happy.

What else did you notice was hard for Dylan?

Dylan's carers Henry and Carol help him to feel valued. How do you think they do that?

Imagine you were Sarah.

What 3 things would be helpful for Carol or Henry to say to Dylan e.g. "I'm here with you"

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What 3 things do you think would be unhelpful? E.g. "Stop worrying".

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

You can find more resources at
www.ourlifetales.com.au