

Connecting With Your Child

Uses of Energy Close to Home

To help your child learn more about uses of energy, spend some time looking around the house for examples of energy in action. Have them make a list of objects they use every day that require or use energy.

Ask them to rate the importance of each object on a number scale, with one being the most important. Some common examples of objects that require or use energy include lamps, computers, appliances, clocks, sports balls, and toys that move—for example, remote-controlled cars. Discuss how each object uses energy and which form(s) of energy it uses.

Take your child on a walk outside and ask them to look for other examples of energy they can observe. Birds flying, water flowing, and crickets chirping are some examples you might encounter. Ask them to describe the different forms of energy in each example they find outside. Encourage them to be specific and to describe the importance of each form of energy to the organism that uses it. For example, they may explain that a bird is using mechanical energy to move across the sky because it needs to find food and is using sound energy to communicate with other birds in order to mate.

Here are some questions to discuss with your child:

1. What form of energy do you consider most important in your life? Why?
2. What are some ways that you can reduce the amount of energy you use?
3. How might you be affected if you could not use certain forms of energy, such as electrical energy?
4. Do other organisms use the same forms of energy as humans? Give some examples.