



High School

CRISIS

PARENT CONVERSATION GUIDE

... for great conversations with kids

With teenagers, it seems that pressures increase along with their responsibilities. The potential for them to experience a crisis—whether from their own decisions or from the actions or decisions of others—also increases.

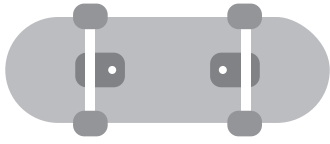
Teenagers will tend to go to others in their circle for support, like their peers and even social media. They likely won't come running to you. So when a crisis happens, initiate the conversation.

Encourage without adding pressure. See your teenager for the adult they are soon becoming, and offer more help if they need it. When you come alongside them instead of trying to fix things for them, or adding more pressure, it helps them to open up to you and not shut down.

Here are a few ideas of what to say to enter into their world so that you can offer your support and show them how much you believe in their potential:

- "I'm listening. Tell me what you're thinking when you are ready."
- "How are your friends handling this? . . . What about you, how are you processing it?"
- "It seems like you might be feeling_____. Am I right?"
- "This is how I'm doing, how are you feeling?" (*Putting words to your feelings helps them put words to theirs.*)
- "I don't have all the answers. It might help if you talked with a counselor/pastor/coach. Would you like me to help connect you?"
- "You may not feel like you have what it takes to get through this, but we (me, your Small Group Leaders, your friends) will sit with you until you can make your next step."
- "Scary things do happen in our world. But God is always with you. You can talk to Him anytime, anywhere."
- "It's okay to feel confused about this situation."
- "When you're ready to talk about it, let me know."

Make sure to involve professionals, counselors (as needed), as well as your ministry leader.



Middle School

CRISIS

PARENT CONVERSATION GUIDE

... for great conversations with kids

Your middle schooler is changing—their rapidly changing bodies and brains make everything extra interesting, and sometimes extra challenging. When you add to that a cultural or local crisis—like the tragic death of a student or an act of violence in your community—this time in their life can be very difficult. During this time, your goal is to consistently affirm your middle schooler.

Strengthen their resilience. Support and affirm their ability to thrive through the difficult things they might experience. Here are some words to say during these times:

- “I hear you. Keep talking.”
- “When you’re ready to talk, I’m here.”
- “Help me understand.”
- “What do you wish I knew about all of this?”
- “This really stinks. It’s bad. I’m sorry.”
- “I’m not trying to fix it. I just want to be here for you.”
- “I don’t think I have an answer, but I can sit here with you.”
- “I believe you have what it takes to get through this, and I’ll help you.”
- “How are your friends handling this situation. . . What about you, how does it make you feel?”
- “It might be helpful if you talked to someone besides me. Would you be willing to meet with a counselor/Small Group Leader/coach?”
- “Scary things happen in the world we live in. It’s okay if that worries you/makes you afraid. You can always stop, pray, and ask God to give you courage.”

Make sure to involve professionals, counselors (as needed), as well as your ministry leader.



PARENT
CUE

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