



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.