

How to Talk to a Child



To some of us, having a conversation with a child seems like a natural and simple thing to do. To others it is awkward and even a little intimidating at first. Here are some simple tips to help you along the way.

Try this:

- Get on the child's level and maintain direct eye contact. This may mean you need to get on your knees, squat down or sit in a chair.
- Listen attentively (in the same way you would like to be listened to).
- Talk about things you have in common (freckles, dark hair, taste in food, number of siblings).
- Ask the child for his or her opinion on a topic.
- Compliment the child's actions and choices and not just how the child looks or dresses.
- Say the child's name often.

Avoid this:

- Do not use "baby talk".
- Do not rush the child but listen patiently.
- Do not make everything a lesson or lecture. Just enjoy getting to know the child better.
- Do not force conversation when a child is not in the mood to talk.

Easy Conversation Starters:

- Of all colours, my favourite colour is purple. What is your favourite colour?
- When I was your age I used to hunt for lizards (or whatever you liked to do). Can you guess where I used to find them?

- I like to read stories about Jesus in the bible. Who do you like to learn about?
- Could you teach me how to play that game (or sing that song, or draw a picture like that...)?
- You seem so big now. I remember when you were too little to tie your shoes (or skip or read).
- Which game do you like better... “Hide ‘n Seek” or “Snakes and Ladders”?

Jesus Blessed Children

In the story [Jesus Blesses the Children](#) (Mark 10:13-16) we learn how Jesus interacted with children. When his disciples tried to keep children from him he became indignant.

In fact, Jesus turned the situation around completely by telling the disciples that they must receive the kingdom of God like little children or not enter it at all. Then Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them.

Get to know children. They can teach us something about what we need to know to receive God's Kingdom.