

ELEMENTARY CRISIS



CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR SGLs

When a crisis occurs, the kids in your group will probably have more questions than you have answers. What they're going through could be scary or driving you crazy. Either way, there are some things you can do and say to offer grace and support along the way.

Remember that your few are building their worldviews, and when they experience a crisis, it's important to reiterate what is true. When you don't have answers, you can assure them that you're there and that they're loved.

VALIDATE THEIR FEELINGS BY REVISITING WHAT IS TRUE

When you interact with a kid, there are some things you should say and do to help them feel validated and secure. There are also a few things you should try to avoid saying. Here are a few:

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WHAT TO SAY:

- “Some things are changing, and that can be tough. But there are some things that will never change. Want me to tell you about some of those?” *(For example: I love you. God loves you. We can trust God no matter what.)*
- “Why do you think you [or they] are acting this way?”
- “This doesn’t make sense to me either. How can I help you feel safe?”
- “Help me understand, give me an example . . . ”
- “What are you reading or listening to? I want to get to know you better.”
- “You don’t have to pretend with me. You can tell me how you really feel.”

WHAT **NOT** TO SAY:

- “I know exactly how you feel because I was your age once.”
- “I know why you’re acting this way.”
- “Jesus must have had better plans for [name] in heaven.”
- “This is freaking me out.”
- “Why can’t you be more like [name]?”

When necessary, involve professional counselors, as well as your ministry leader.

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