

Being a Good Friend

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a difficult time. *Proverbs 17:17*

We all hope that our children find good friends. We also desire that they would be a great friend to others. As they grow, we want to teach them empathy, kindness, and respect, pointing them to Jesus as the ultimate example. We also want to lead by example, showcasing positive friendships in our lives and praying that they have friendships built on trust, loyalty, and support.

➤ **conversation starter**

Begin the conversation by sharing a personal story from your own past about a meaningful friendship. It could be a positive experience that highlights one of the values you hope to talk about.

If you were to step into your friends' shoes for a moment, what kind of friend would they say you are? (Make sure this question does not hold a judgmental tone.)

➤ **navigating the conversation:**

- **Share Personal Experiences:** Start by sharing your own experiences of friendship, both the joys and challenges. Let them know that you don't have it all together and have made plenty of mistakes, revealing the wisdom you have learned along the way.
- **Introduce the Concept of Biblical Friendship:** Gently bring in the Christian perspective by mentioning verses that highlight the qualities of a good friend (see Prov. 27:17).
- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Instead of giving lectures, ask open-ended questions to encourage teens to share their thoughts. For example, "What do you think makes a good friend?" This invites them to think and express their own understanding.
- **Connect with Real-Life Examples:** Relate biblical principles to real-life situations. For instance, you might refer to Matthew 7:12, and discuss how treating others as they would like to be treated is an aspect of being a good friend.
- **Encourage Self-Reflection:** Pose questions that prompt self-reflection, such as, "How do you think your friends feel when they're around you?" or "In what ways do you think you can be a better friend?" Remember not to lay guilt or shame on teens. These questions should be used to build up not tear down.
- **Pray Together:** Consider ending the conversation with a prayer, asking for guidance in becoming better friends.

