Communications

Communicating with Children and Youth

As a Parent, As a Sunday School Teacher and As a Church School Leader

Be Available for Children/Youth

⇒ Start the conversation; they will know you care about what's happening in their lives.

⇒ *Learn about the child's interests and show interest in them.*

⇒ Initiate conversations by sharing what you have been thinking about rather than beginning a conversation with a question.

⇒ *Notice times when children are most likely to talk - for example - at bedtime, before dinner, in the car - and be available.*

⇒ Find time each week for one-on-one activity with each child and avoid scheduling other activities during that time.

Let Children /Youth Know You Are Listening

◊ When children are talking about concerns, stop whatever you are doing and listen.

◊ *Express interest in what they are saying without being intrusive.*

◊ Listen to their point of view, even if it is difficult to hear.

◊ *Let them complete their point before you respond.*

◊ Repeat what you have heard them say to ensure you understand them correctly.

Respond in a Way Children/Youth Will Hear

☞ Soften strong reactions; they will tune you out if you appear angry or defensive.

☞ *Express your opinion without putting down theirs; acknowledge that it's okay to disagree.*

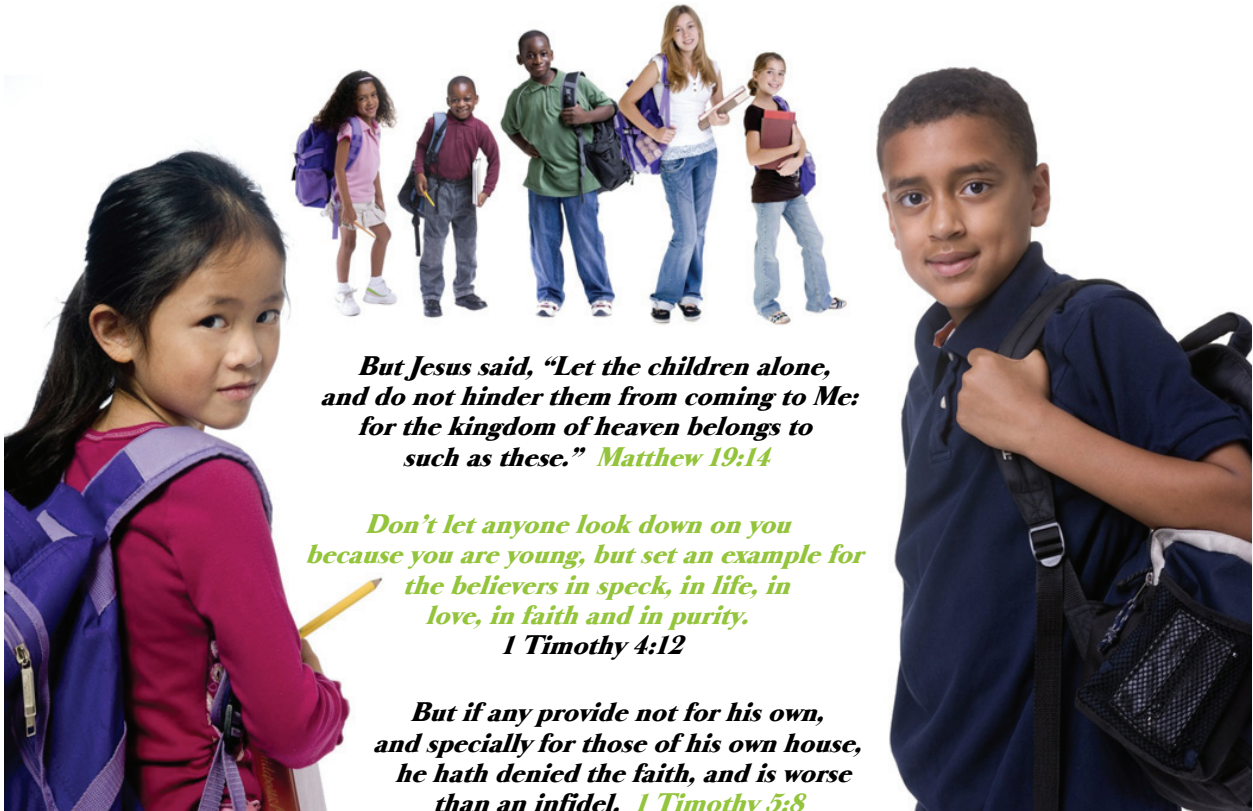☞ Resist arguing about who is right. Instead say, "I know you disagree with me, but that is what I think."

☞ *Focus on the child/youth's feelings rather than your own during your conversation.*

Remember

* Ask children/youth what they may want or need from you in a conversation, such as advice, simply listening, help in dealing with feelings or help in solving a problem.

* Kids learn by imitating. Most often, they will follow your lead in how they deal with anger, solve problems and work through difficult feelings.

* Talk to them - don't lecture, criticize, threaten or say hurtful things.

* Kids learn from their own choices. As long as the consequences are not dangerous, don't feel you have to step in.

* Realize they may test you by telling you a small part of what is bothering them. Listen carefully to what they say, encourage them to talk and they may share the rest of the story.

But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me: for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speck, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.
1 Timothy 4:12

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 1 Timothy 5:8