

Talk about faith

You might worry that you don't have all the answers or that you can't imagine having a long family devotional time together. But what you do doesn't need to be complicated and you don't need to have all the answers. The main thing is that your child sees that your faith is real and you can all learn together. The best conversations are often those that happen very naturally as part of our everyday family life. Think about simple ways you can build these into your existing routines – whether that's reading a short Bible story together at bedtime; asking God's help for the day ahead as you walk to school; or saying short thank yous to God on car journeys.

Remember that every family is unique, so do what works for you. And, above all ... have fun!



Helping you to be an even better mum or dad





For more information and tips on family life, visit cff.org.uk/faith-in-the-family/support-for-parents

You might like to:

- **Read** a book such as *Sticky Faith* by Kara E. Powell and Chap Clark, or *Parenting Children for a Life of Faith* by Rachel Turner.
- **Visit** the Kitchen Table Project website for encouragement and ideas for faith at home. kitchentable.org.uk
- **Connect** with other parents by hosting an easy-to-run 90 minute *Inspire* session with video, activities and discussion cards – download your free pack from the Kitchen Table Project website.

Care for the Family seeks to promote strong family relationships and help those who face family difficulties.

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Care for the Family is a Christian initiative to strengthen family life. A registered charity (England and Wales: 1066905; Scotland: SC038497).

Top Tips

For Christian Parents

Sharing faith and values



As parents, we want to raise children who will be healthy and well-balanced physically, emotionally and socially. But do we ever stop to think about our child's spiritual development and how we can help it grow? We may feel a bit daunted at that, or unsure of where to start. Here are some tips to help you.

Be encouraged

Research shows that even very young children have an inherent tendency to naturally believe in a supernatural God who created the world. We can therefore encourage them to think curiously about who made the world and what it might be like to be an all-knowing and powerful being. Talk naturally about trusting God and how he makes a difference in our lives today.

Let your child know you love them

Don't assume that because you love your child they automatically know it. Tell them you love them and use lots of kind words and encouragement. You also show your love when you listen to them, have fun together, take an interest in their world and give them support. When our children feel loved and accepted by us, they will be in a better position to build secure trusting attachments with others – including God. Also tell them often that God loves and accepts us all – even when we make mistakes.

Create traditions

Family traditions give everyone in the family the opportunity to interact closely and develop a sense of connectedness. A strong bond is formed as you feel part of something unique and special. As we build a sense of family identity and togetherness, our children are more likely to embrace our values and beliefs as their own.

Such traditions can include everyday activities, like always eating fish and chips on a Friday night, or reading a bedtime story to your child. They also encompass things we do on special occasions – maybe lighting candles on Christmas Eve, or celebrating birthdays in a particular way. Why not add some specific 'faith' traditions too? For example, find a special way to pray together for friends and family, or celebrate the anniversary of your child's dedication or christening, if appropriate.

Involve others

Grandparents, wider family and our church community can all help too. If your children's grandparents or other family members share your faith, encourage them to share stories with the children of how God has helped them in the past, or to create a safe place where children can raise questions and doubts.

If you are a 'first generation' believer, think about whether there are other mums, dads or older people in your church. Ask your child which adults they would like to get to know better. Could some of them be encouraged to take an interest in your child, to support them or show they care in some small ways? Inter-generational relationships are a strong way of building a sense of belonging for your children at church.

Let them see your faith

Do your children have a chance to 'see' your own relationship with God? Talk with them about times and ways in which God is helping you or things that you are praying about. You could chat about certain ways that God is encouraging you or has answered a prayer, and explain how your faith impacts your daily life.

