

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT WAR

Talking with your kids about war depends on their age, stage of life, and understanding of complex topics such as history and war. Before you begin your conversation, consider how you will approach your child. Then, you can think through these 5 principles when talking to your kids about war.

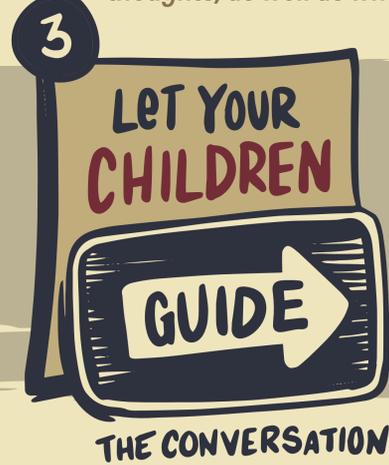


At the beginning of your conversations with your kids, remind yourself that listening is more important than talking. There's a good chance your kid will hear about topics involving war from multiple different voices and opinions. So, these conversations require your investigation into your kid's thoughts, which leads to our next point.

If you think your child is already exposed to conversations about war, find a quiet moment to check in with them. Maybe after dinner or before bedtime. In these moments, create a safe space for your kids to reflect and share their thoughts.



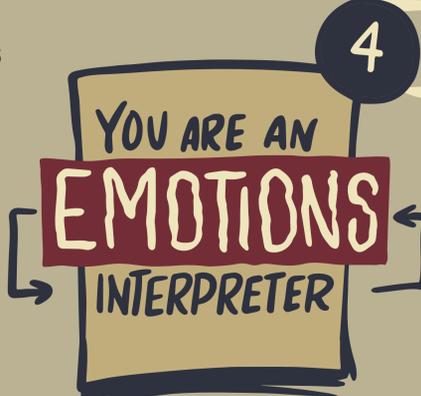
Ask questions like "What have you heard about ____?" or "How does ____ make you feel?" Choose questions that are open-ended and allow your child to speak freely. In conversations about war, your goal should include understanding your child's feelings and thoughts, as well as what they're seeing and hearing.



As you allow your child to ask questions, they will naturally guide the conversation. These check-in conversations allow you to hear their hearts, fears, and worries involving the topic of war.

Check-ins also allow you to debunk any misconceptions your children might have. Sometimes, introducing visual elements such as a map can help your children picture the war situation better. While providing facts and context, prioritize your children's thoughts and feelings over your own opinions.

As you listen to and digest your kid's thoughts and questions, you'll start to get a better idea of their emotions. Depending on your kid's exposure to the topic of war, their emotions could vary. The most important things you can provide your kid is support and encouragement. Through listening, asking questions, and providing appropriate context, you can interpret your children's emotions to provide a calming presence and hope.



Talking with your kids about war is rarely a one-time conversation. And we don't recommend that it is. These sorts of topics are complex. While monitoring your children's emotions, set appropriate boundaries for these conversations. Keep an eye on how often your children watch the news or spend time using social media.

Remember: it's natural for your kids to feel anxious or confused, even upset. But those feelings aren't meant to linger. In these conversations, focus on God's control over the situations and His love for everyone involved.

BIBLE VERSES ABOUT WAR

ECCLESIASTES 3:8

"[There is] a time to love, a time to hate, a time for war, and a time for peace."

PROVERBS 6:16-18

"There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil..."

JEREMIAH 51:20-21

"You are my hammer and weapon of war: with you I break nations in pieces; with you I destroy kingdoms..."

JAMES 4:1-2

"What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel..."