

PARENTING THROUGH TRAGEDY

Helping Your Student Process Pain and Confusion

When tragedy strikes in the news, online, or even in our own city, our kids are watching, listening, and trying to make sense of it all.

Pastor Jonathan recently reminded us: Evil is present in the world, but it will *not* win. Even in heartbreaking times, God is moving, hearts are turning to Him, and the truth of Jesus shines through the darkness. While God doesn't cause all things to happen, Romans 8:28 tells us that, "God causes *everything to work together* for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."

Parents, you don't have to have all the answers. Even an imperfect conversation matters more than silence. What matters most is showing up, creating space, and pointing your kids back to the hope of Jesus.

Point Them to God's Word

Our role as parents is to echo the hope of God's Word in real, tangible ways, so our kids know He's present even when life feels chaotic.

- "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted." Psalm 34:18
- "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." Peter 5:7
- "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you." John 14:27
- "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." John 16:33

Encourage Courage & Truth

In a world that often celebrates what is wrong and silences what is right, God calls us to be the light in the darkness and the salt that preserves what is good. Encourage your students to live out their faith boldly, not in anger or hate, but through love, gentleness, and courage.

Even small acts of truth, kindness, and faithfulness can make a powerful difference in their schools and friendships.

Parents, if you don't help your kids process, the internet will.

How NorthRock Wants to Partner With You

Prayer

Click [here](#) for ways to connect with our team.

NorthRock Students

Wednesday Midweeks and Rally Nights create safe spaces for students to process and grow in their faith. Click [here](#) for more info.

Resources for Parents

We provide practical tools for parents to use at home on our [website](#).

Trusted Referrals

If your student needs more, we can connect you with Christian counselors and partners in our city.

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How to Start the Conversation - A Step-by-Step Guide

The questions below are designed to help you start meaningful conversations with your student. Use them as a guide to listen, validate, pray, and offer encouragement.

1. Ask, don't assume.

Start by opening the door without jumping to conclusions.

- “I know there’s a lot of news and talk right now. What have you seen or read?”
- “How are you feeling about everything you’re seeing/hearing?”

2. Listen fully.

Give your student space to process.

- “From what you’ve seen/heard, what worries or frustrates you most?”
- “Have you noticed any strong emotions in yourself or your friends?”

3. Check what they’ve seen online.

Students often encounter graphic or misleading content.

- “What videos or posts have you come across?” or “Who are you listening to online about this?”
- “Do you feel scared or confused about what you’ve seen?”

4. Validate their feelings.

Show that their emotions are normal and safe to express.

- “It’s okay to feel sad, scared, or angry.”
- “I understand why you might feel that way. I have felt that way too.”

5. Pray together.

Prayer is our first response, not our last resort.

- “Can we pray together about this?”
- “Let’s ask God to give us peace and direction. He wants us to talk to Him about this.”

6. Point them to Scripture.

Use the scripture references provided to give hope.

- “How can we live out God’s truth even when the world seems dark?”
- “What does Romans 8:28 mean for situations like this?”

7. Keep the door open.

These conversations aren’t one-and-done. Check in regularly.

- “Do you want to talk more about this later?”
- “If you have questions or worries, you can always come to me.”