

How to respond to parenting problems

by Jeff Forrey

Giving wise parenting advice isn't easy. We can't assume other children will respond to what worked with our children. And if our advice isn't biblically grounded and rooted in a clear understanding of the parents' issues, we're likely to give poor parenting advice.

How to use the questions

The questions below help you gather the information you need before responding to a request from other parents for parenting advice. For more background on these questions and how to use them, see the article "Equipping your ministry leaders to give good parenting advice" by Jeff Forrey. You can find the article here <http://www.careleader.org/equipping-leaders-give-good-parenting-advice/>

A word of caution

Before delving into this set of questions with parents, be sure you understand how much their child's behavior is affecting them. Acknowledge the unique difficulties that their child's actions pose for the parents. Otherwise, parents may feel that you are simply and unsympathetically blaming them for their child's behavior.

Here are the questions:

1. What is the problem? Can you give examples?
2. Are you providing an example of what you are expecting of your child in this case?
3. How are you actively showing meaningful love to your child?
4. What motivates your child (what is the "treasure of the heart") in this case?
5. Do you know how to effectively instruct your child on this matter? (Have you discussed it with your child? Have you demonstrated it for your child?)
6. Do you know what incentives might help your child learn something new in this case?
7. Do you know what consequences for disobedience will get your child's attention in this case?
8. In what ways might you improve in order to disciple your child on this issue?