



HIGH SCHOOL CRISIS CONVERSATION GUIDE **FOR PARENTS**

WITH TEENAGERS, THE PRESSURE SEEMS TO INCREASE as their responsibility does. The potential for them to experience a crisis—whether from bad decisions, rejection, or trauma—also increases. Sometimes, it's easy to want to jump in and fix things, but supporting their efforts to handle their crisis helps them more.

Be aware of signs that your teen is experiencing a crisis and don't take them lightly. Try to understand more than you feel like you know. See them for the adults they are soon becoming, be careful to respond, and offer more help if they need it.

SUPPORT THEIR EFFORTS BY RELIEVING PRESSURE.

Your faith in your teenager relieves some of the pressure and helps them grow, and your words are a great place to begin expressing belief in them. Here are a few ideas of what to say and what not to say.

WHAT **TO** SAY

- "I'm listening. Tell me more about how you feel."
- "It seems as if you're feeling _____, am I right?"
- "Want to walk with me? You don't have to talk, unless you want to."
- "This situation looks like it could have some consequences. What do you think we can do to support you or help you with the outcomes?"
- "From what you've told me, I think we may need some extra support for you. Would you be okay with talking to a counselor/pastor/coach?"
- "You may not feel like you can make it to where you need to go next, but we (me, your small group leaders, your friends) will carry you or sit with you until you can make your next step."

WHAT **NOT** TO SAY

- "It's a crisis for you, so it's a crisis for me too." (*Don't let their crisis become your crisis. They will need you to support them while they learn to navigate through things.*)
- "You caused this problem. You can find a way out of it."
- "I'll fix it so you don't have to."
- Nothing. (*Don't ignore a crisis that freaks you out. If you don't have something to say to support, find someone else who can.*)

Make sure to involve professional counselors, as needed, as well as your ministry leader.
