

Help your child or teenager talk naturally with God, notice what he communicates and learn to discern what they catch.

01

Key points

- Chat and Catch is about helping children and teenagers develop their own two-way relationship with God.
- “Chat” means being free to talk to God about whatever is on their minds and hearts — the big things and the tiny things, wherever they are and however feels natural to them.
- “Catch” means being ready to notice what God communicates back.
- Prayer doesn't need to be a formula or a performance. Children can talk to God in ways that look like them — while walking, drawing, riding a bike, lying in bed or sitting in an exam.
- God can communicate in many different ways. We see this throughout the Bible, including through Scripture, pictures, dreams, emotions and physical experiences.
- But not everything we think or feel is automatically from God. Children need to learn to discern what they catch.
- Rachel uses the analogy of discerning if milk is good or not:
 - Look at it: is it clearly from God or not at a first glance?
 - Smell it: get closer, does it fit with what we know about God and Scripture?
 - Taste it: does it draw us towards God?
 - Ask someone else: what do other trusted, wise Christians think?
- The aim isn't to make children afraid of getting it wrong. It's to help them become increasingly confident at recognising God's voice while remaining grounded in Scripture, God's character and Christian community.

- You also don't have to hear or see what your child catches. The goal is to help them develop their own conversation with God, rather than turning it into something they perform for you.

02 Things to think about/chat about

- What does prayer look or feel like in your family at the moment?
- What might make prayer feel more natural or accessible for your child?
- Where might they already be noticing God communicating with them?
- How could you encourage this without making it feel like a performance?

03 Have a go – under-fives

- Ask your toddler to show God their favourite toy, animal or book.
- When they're happy, sad, angry or excited, encourage them to show God how they feel.
- Whisper a prayer into your hand and invite them to do the same.
- Leave a little pause and say, "Shall we see what we can catch from God?"
- Pray out loud in front of them.
- Bring God naturally into everyday conversations: "God, look at the sunshine!" or "Oh God, we're so tired."
- Tell them when you notice God communicating with you or when you're going to ask him for help.

04

Have a go – children and teenagers

- Let your child hear you chatting naturally to God about your day (out loud even if you normally just do this in your head).
- When they're telling you about something that happened, suggest that they tell God about it too.
- Encourage them to chat to God in whatever way suits them - silently, aloud, writing or drawing.
- Give them a simple prompt: "Why don't you tell God how you're feeling about your exam?"
- At bedtime, suggest they tell God about their day.
- Ask God a question together and leave some space to see what you might catch.
- Use a few of the 101 ways to start a conversation with God - don't try and work through all 101!
- When your child or teenager catches something they think is from God, talk it through using the "milk" idea above.
- Share your own experiences of chatting and catching, including when you're still figuring things out.

05

Keep exploring

- These ideas are a starting point, not a checklist. You don't need to try everything. Choose something that feels like it might fit your child, your family and the season you're in and see what happens.
- There is no one right way to parent for faith. You're the expert in your child, and you can experiment, notice what helps and work out their next step with God.

GO DEEPER

- › Summary of the Chat and Catch tool (1 min watch, 4 min read)
- › Chat and Catch and additional needs: FAQs (10 min read, 8 min listen)
- › Ideas for helping under-fives chat with God (3 min read, free download)

- › When catching from God is hard (7 min listen, 3 min read)
- › 101 ways to start a conversation with God (free download)
- › Different ways to engage kids and teens with Chat and Catch (33 min watch)
- › Sessions 4 and 5 of the Original Parenting for Faith Course (1 hour watch)
- › Session 3 of the Parenting Teens for a Life of Faith Course (45 min watch)
- › Session 3 of the Babies and Toddlers course (8 min watch)

SPACE FOR YOUR THOUGHTS
