

THE FIVE KEY TOOLS

Creating Windows

Give your child or teenager small, natural glimpses into your own relationship with God through everyday words and actions.

01

Key points

- Children learn by watching, listening and having a go. A lot of our relationship with God happens where our children can't see it. That could be inside our heads, behind closed doors, or when they're at school, nursery or university.
- Creating Windows means deliberately giving our children and teenagers little glimpses into our real relationship with God, so they can see what life with God can look like and begin to work out what their own relationship with him might look like.
- You don't need to perform a better version of Christianity for them. Let them see the relationship with God you already have, in whatever season you're in.
- Windows can include:
 - letting children hear you pray;
 - talking about how God helped you with something;
 - sharing a story about you and God;
 - letting them see how you respond when life is difficult;
 - talking about something you're grateful to God for;
 - letting them see you worship, read the Bible or seek God's help.
- Windows don't have to be dramatic. Often they're tiny moments or a sentence in passing. And they don't always have to happen in the moment — you can tell your child afterwards about something that happened when they weren't there.

- Creating Windows is also not about explaining everything. Sometimes the window is simply allowing your child to see or hear you doing life with God.
- Creating windows might feel strange at first but as you practise, you'll notice opportunities more naturally.

02 Things to think about/chat about

- What parts of your relationship with God do your children currently get to see or hear?
- What do they probably not see or hear?
- Which idea from the session feels natural for your family?
- What would be a tiny "window" you could create this week?

03 Have a go – under-fives

With young children, simply narrating some of what's happening inside you can make a big difference.

- When something delights you, tell God about it out loud: “God, look at those beautiful flowers!”
- When you're struggling, let them hear a simple glimpse: “I'm finding this really hard. I'm going to talk to God about it.”
- Let them see you pray, worship or read the Bible.
- Tell them a story about something that happened with God.
- If they're strapped into the buggy or car, use that time to practise saying some of the things you'd normally say to God silently, out loud.
- Remember that you don't have to make a big thing of it. Your child simply hearing you naturally talk to God can become part of their picture of what life with God looks like.

04

Have a go – children and teenagers

- Try praying out loud or reading the Bible where your child can see or hear you.
- Tell them a story about you and God — perhaps a time you knew he was real, he helped you decide or change something.
- When talking about your day, mention where you noticed God in it.
- If you've had a difficult day, tell them afterwards how you experienced God in it.
- If you're facing something difficult, let them see what you do with God before and afterwards.
- Leave your Bible, a book, journal or other faith resource somewhere they might notice it.
- Instead of listening to a Christian podcast with headphones, sometimes put it on the speaker when your children are around.
- Invite them into something you're already doing with God when that feels appropriate.

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 Creating Windows tool (1 min watch, 4 min read)
- › Creating windows into every aspect of our lives (7 min read)
- › Creating windows and additional needs: FAQs (7 min read)
- › Sharing Creating Windows with parents and under fives (3 min read)

› Session 1 of the Original Parenting for Faith course (27 min watch)

SPACE FOR YOUR THOUGHTS
