

# How to Have Age-Appropriate Conversations About Abortion With Your Children

Raising children who believe in the intrinsic value of human life from conception is an ongoing journey, not a one-time conversation. However, honest conversations are where it all begins.

We understand that starting conversations about the sanctity of life can be challenging, especially when discussing abortion with children. That's why we turned to the real experts: parents! We believe it's crucial to approach this topic with sensitivity and age-appropriate information. Here are some valuable insights on how to have meaningful conversations with your children about abortion.

## Age 0-5 years old

When discussing abortion with children between 0 and 5, providing age-appropriate and straightforward explanations is essential. Here are some tips on how to approach the topic:

**Choose appropriate resources.** Select children's books that support life and convey positive messages about the value of every individual. Examples include "You Are Special" by Max Lucado and "God Gave Us You" by Lisa Tawn Bergren.

**Introduce life-affirming verses.** Memorize abbreviated Scripture verses that emphasize the beauty of human life. Explain these verses to your child and encourage them to ask questions. Some relevant verses include Genesis 1:27, Jeremiah 1:5, and Psalm 139:13-16.

**Involve them in the pregnancy journey.** If you or someone you know is pregnant, involve your child by letting them see sonograms, hear the baby's heartbeat, and feel the baby moving. You can also encourage them to sing or read to the growing baby.

**Attend pro-life events as a family.** Participate in Walk for Life events together. This allows your child to witness a supportive community and understand the importance of protecting life.

**Encourage curiosity and questions.** Let your child know their questions are valuable and essential. Create a safe space where they feel comfortable asking questions and learning more about life.

It is important to remember children in this age range have limited understanding, so keep explanations simple, positive, and focused on the beauty and value of every human life.

## Age 6-12 years old

When discussing abortion with children between the ages of 6 and 12, it's essential to provide more information while maintaining age-appropriate language and sensitivity. Here are some tips on how to approach the topic.

**Expand on previous knowledge.** Build upon the foundation laid during the earlier years.

**Expanded Verse Memorization.** Encourage your child to continue memorizing and understanding life-affirming verses.

**Utilize educational resources.** Share age-appropriate videos or materials explaining fetal development and pregnancy stages. For example, you can watch "Your Life." Before Birth," a free 4-D sonogram video that pauses at different growth stages to answer questions.

**Define abortion in simple terms.** Explain abortion as when a pregnancy ends purposefully before the child is born. Avoid graphic details and focus on the concept of ending a life.

**Emphasize the importance of protecting life.** Discuss the development of babies in the womb, highlighting their ability to hear, taste, and smell. Reinforce the idea that each life is unique, precious, and deserving of protection.

**Engage in age-appropriate pro-life activities.** Visit a local pregnancy center as a family and learn more about their work. Attend local March for Life events where graphic posters are prohibited, allowing your child to be part of a peaceful demonstration for life. Encourage your child to start or join a pro-life club at their school to engage in discussions and initiatives promoting life's sanctity.

**Discuss healthy relationships.** Talk about healthy and Godly relationships, emphasizing the importance of respect, love, and understanding. Use examples of couples your child knows demonstrating positive dating and marriage dynamics.

**Encourage open dialogue.** Create a safe space for your child to ask questions and express their thoughts and feelings. Answer their questions honestly and age-appropriately, and let them know that their curiosity and understanding are valued.

**Teach empathy and understanding.** Discuss the perspectives of people with different views on abortion. Encourage your child to approach disagreements with kindness, respect, and the willingness to listen and learn.

**Share personal stories and experiences.** Open up about your challenges and victories in pursuing a Godly life and relationships. By sharing personal stories, you can impart valuable lessons and demonstrate the importance of faith and grace.

**Gently share the truth about what abortion is and does** when your child is ready.

*Abortion is hard to explain to children with two loving parents. We recommend emphasizing that moms are often lied to or deceived into having an abortion by people who make money off abortion services. Moms (and dads) sometimes feel like they can't afford a baby or won't have any help. That's why people must know about pregnancy centers - so parents can see there are resources available to them at no cost.*

Remember, you are tailoring the information and discussions to your child's emotional maturity and needs. Foster an environment of trust and understanding, allowing them to learn and grow in their knowledge of the value and sanctity of every human life.

## **Ages 13-18**

When discussing abortion with teenagers between the ages of 13 and 18 years old, it's essential to approach the topic respectfully and open-mindedly. Here are some tips on how to have meaningful conversations about abortion with this age group:

**Create a safe and non-judgmental environment.** Establish an atmosphere where your teenager feels comfortable expressing their thoughts and opinions without fear of judgment. Assure them that their views and questions are valid and valued.

**Encourage critical thinking.** Discuss the complexities of the abortion issue and encourage your teenager to think critically about different perspectives. Help them explore the topic's ethical, moral, and personal considerations.

**Provide comprehensive information.** Offer age-appropriate information about the science of fetal development, the different stages of pregnancy, and the medical procedures involved in abortion. Use reliable sources and encourage them to seek further knowledge if they are interested.

**Explore legal, scientific, and ethical aspects.** Discuss the legal framework surrounding abortion in your country or region. Explore the ethical debates regarding when life begins and the unborn child's rights. Dive deeper into the science of when life begins and how we are created.

**Engage in pro-life apologetics.** Introduce your teenager to books and resources that provide well-reasoned arguments from a pro-life perspective. Books such as "Courageously Pro-Life" by Sarah Bowen and "Why Pro-Life" by Randy Alcorn can be starting points for further discussions.

**Discuss real-life scenarios.** Talk about different situations in which individuals might consider abortion an option, such as unplanned pregnancies or health complications. Encourage your teenager to consider alternative solutions and the potential impact of those choices.

**Foster empathy and compassion.** Help your teenager understand the emotions and challenges individuals may face with a pregnancy decision. Encourage them to approach the topic with kindness and respect for each woman and remind them of God's love for her.

**Address emotional aspects.** Recognize that discussing abortion can bring up strong emotions. Be supportive and understanding if your teenager expresses confusion, sadness, or anger. Provide a listening ear and validate their feelings.

**Discuss healthy relationships and responsible choices.** Emphasize the importance of healthy relational choices, God's design for sex and marriage, and how God created fertility to be shared between a man and woman as a gift. Encourage open conversations about boundaries and the potential consequences of decisions, good or bad.

**Encourage civic engagement.** Discuss how your teenager can peacefully advocate for life-affirming issues, such as participating in pro-life events, volunteering at pregnancy centers, or engaging in community service projects that support families and children.

Remember to approach these discussions with patience, respect, and a willingness to listen. Allow your teenager to form their opinions while providing guidance and sharing your values. Remember to lead the discussion to foster critical thinking skills, empathy, and a deep understanding of the value of human life.

## **All Ages**

- Create a safe and non-judgmental environment for open discussions.
- Answer questions honestly and age-appropriately.
- Use language and concepts that the child can understand.
- Be sensitive to their emotional responses and validate their feelings.
- Emphasize the value of every human life and the importance of showing empathy and compassion towards others.

Adapting the conversation to the child's age and maturity level is crucial, recognizing that some topics may be more suitable for older children. Be a good listener, provide guidance, and encourage children to think critically, fostering a deep understanding of the sanctity of life at an appropriate level for their age.

Discussing abortion with children of all ages is an ongoing journey that requires adaptability and sensitivity. By creating an atmosphere of trust and open dialogue, you can foster an environment where questions are encouraged, opinions are valued, and understanding can flourish.

Let us embrace the opportunity to instill empathy, compassion, and respect for every individual, regardless of their stage of development. Together, we can empower our children to navigate complex issues, form their own beliefs, and contribute to a society that upholds the inherent value of every human life.

These conversations are not just about abortion but about nurturing a mindset that values life, empathy, and understanding. By embarking on this journey with our children, we can shape a future where everyone is respected, cherished, and allowed to live and thrive!