

Helping children and young people connect with God – an overview for leaders

This is a quick overview of the ideas in this video, with links to posts that will help you discover more.

God-smart and God-connected

This idea is at the heart of Parenting for Faith – the difference between knowing about God and having a heart-to-heart relationship with him. This is unpacked here: [Session 1 of the Parenting for Faith course \(starting at 01:56\)](#). In church groups, we want there to be opportunities for children and young people to grow their relationship with God as well as learn information about him.

How do children and young people connect with God?

In church groups, we can teach children to recognise when God is communicating with them as well as encourage them to chat freely to him in prayer. This is explained fully in [sessions 4 and 5 of the Parenting for Faith course](#).

Whatever the personality, ability or experience of the children and young people, we can be confident God will be connecting with them in ways they can understand. If you have children with additional needs in your group, these may be helpful: [Parenting for Faith when my child is on the autistic spectrum](#) and [Chat and catch and additional needs FAQs](#).

How can I help children and young people connect in our sessions?

When you plan sessions, build in space for the children and young people to connect with God. If chat and catch is new to your group, we have notes to help you introduce it well and ideas for using chat and catch with under-fives, children and teens:

- [Being the coach, not the high priest](#)
- [Introducing chat and catch to children's groups](#)
- [Chat and catch with under-fives](#)
- [Chat and catch with a group](#)
- Listen to a youth leader's experience of helping teens connect – [Episode 87 of the Parenting for Faith podcast](#)

Sometimes children or young people need help to start connecting with God. [Session 7 of the course](#) unpacks a model of prayer ministry you can use that get them started well.

One of the skills we want to equip our children and young people with is how to discern if what they've caught is from God. This post gives you some ideas for doing that: [How do we teach our kids to discern?](#)

Finally, think about how you can encourage and equip parents and carers to help their children or young people continue to connect with God at home: [Giving parents next steps at the door](#).

We do hope these notes are helpful. If you'd like to explore more fully how to create a church culture where Parenting for Faith can flourish, we have a book, [It Takes a Church to Raise a Parent](#), and [a course in partnership with Cliff College](#), both of which unpack these ideas and will help you apply them to your unique situation.