

A HEART FOR THE HURTING: HELPING YOUR CHILD SUPPORT THEIR FRIEND DURING DIVORCE

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Jesus was the greatest comforter of all. He had a unique way of meeting people where they were at and caring for them in the manner that they needed at just the right moment. The gospel beautifully illustrates for us what it means to show Christ-like love and instructs us that we are to bear one another's burdens and share one another's joys. We are to build one another up as the body of Christ.



If your child is trying to process divorce within a friend's family, they may find themselves feeling sad and helpless. Sometimes it is hard to know what to say or do when a friend goes through something so painful. Fortunately, you can help guide your child in demonstrating Christ-like love and compassion in their friendships so that they may thrive and build one another up in Christ.

Teach Them How to Love:

Teach your children about what it means to have compassion for others, and that comforting a hurting friend is a selfless act of love and humility. You can teach them about the fruits of the Holy Spirit ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)) or how we are to love one another ([1 Corinthians 13](#)) to help them understand how bearing one another's burdens is an act of love.

Teach Them How to Comfort:

Your child may already have a sense of how to comfort others through seeing it modeled in interactions at home or school. Maybe they have seen you send a card to someone who has lost a loved one. Or perhaps they have seen a teacher comfort a student in school. In [Ephesians 4:2](#) we learn that we are to comfort others "with all humility, gentleness, and with patience." But your child may need further guidance on how to apply that toward helping a hurting friend.

Be sure to teach them the importance of acknowledging a friend's pain, being quick to listen, offering encouragement, showing humility, speaking the truth in love, being inclusive, and sharing unconditional love. All of these exemplify ways in which Christ comforts us and how we can in turn lift up others.

Lastly, let them know that comforting others can include cheering them up, doing fun activities, or continuing with the everyday things that they typically do together. Encouraging a sense of joy and normalcy can do wonders for their friend's spirit.

Teach Them About Boundaries:

In supporting your children in helping a friend, it is also important to help them realize their limitations and instill in them a sense of healthy boundaries. It can be easy for children to become consumed by their friend's problems, try to help fix them, or take on their peer's emotions. They may even be tempted to keep secrets for them that can be unhealthy or unsafe. Be sure to have discussions with your child about their friendships, what is their responsibility and what is not, and let them know to seek help from an adult when a problem is too big or unsafe.

As you encourage your child in demonstrating Christ's love and offering comfort to a hurting friend, remember that they need your example and guidance to help them nurture and protect their friendships as

well as themselves.

Want to Dig Deeper? Check out Family Fire's article "[Teaching Compassion](#)"

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