

4 WAYS TO RESPOND TO HURTING STUDENTS

It's not always easy to know how to respond when we find out a student we care about is going through a difficult time. What do I say to a student whose parents are fighting? How do I care for a student whose parents are going through a divorce? How do I care for a student whose being bullied? Without questions, *the Student Ministries staff is always here to support you* but these four tips will go a long ways. Listen, empathize, comfort, and pray.

1. LISTEN

Find a place and time where you can talk. Ask a lot of questions. Get to know the situation and the feelings involved. Let them vent. Call to check in. Make yourself available.

2. EMPATHIZE

Put yourself in their situation and imagine how you would feel. Allow your own emotions to connect. Share with them what you would be thinking and feeling. Show them that you're with them and you understand.

3. COMFORT

Remind them of God's love and nearness. Always lead them to the Bible. What biblical characters share a story similar to theirs? What verses have comforted you in difficult times? Teach them how to look things up. Encourage them to memorize and meditate on God's Word.

4. PRAY

Always pray with them and for them and for others involved in the situation. Pray God would give you the words to say. Lead them to the source of hope, truth, and power. Teach them how to pray for themselves.

SOME VERSES OR PASSAGES THAT OFFER COMFORT AND PEACE:

- Exodus 33:14
- Lamentations 3:19-25
- Psalm 23
- Psalm 37
- Psalm 46
- Psalm 62:5-7
- Psalm 71:20
- Matthew 7:25-34
- Romans 5:3-5
- Romans 12:12
- Ephesians 4:32
- Philippians 4:6-7
- 1 John 1:9
- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4
- 2 Corinthians 4:16-17