

How to Help Your Children Deal With Disappointment

Teach your **children** how to deal with **disappointment** by setting a good example. Dealing with disappointment is one of the hard things that comes from life. Seeing our **kids** deal with disappointment is even harder.

Yet we know that in every person's life, there will be **struggles**, and the older our kids get, the bigger the problems. Ugh!

John and I have always felt that one of the best things we can do to help our **teens** cope with life's **setbacks** is to handle them well ourselves. We know that what we say is only 10 percent of what our kids pick up. The other 90 percent comes from them seeing how we live. They watch and learn. (Whether we like that idea or not!)

How Do We Handle Unexpected Problems?

During our personal setbacks, we voice the problem with our kids, and we ask them to pray with us. We talk about solutions (finding wisdom from God's Word), and we look positively at steps we can take.

We also try to prepare our kids ahead of time for the challenges they will have in life. When it comes to talking about our time on this earth, we remind our kids that things will not be perfect—ever. There is no such thing as reaching perfection on earth. Rather, we tell them it's what's on the inside that counts. It's character and honor and resilience that will pull each of them through. It's having faith in God and moving forward even when you want to give up.

Another thing I do is talk to my kids about “scripting” their lives. They are the screenwriters of their own life stories. Instead of getting caught up in the drama of everyday circumstances, I've encouraged them to think through their

emotions and responses before those things happen.

For example, if Leslie's friend accuses her of something, how should she respond? By thinking ahead about this type of conflict and Leslie's potential response, it helps her know how to deal with the situation if and when it happens instead of being caught off-guard and allowing the emotions to flow.

Or what if Nathan doesn't do well in the science fair? What's next? I try to talk through different scenarios with him to help him prepare mentally for what is to come. This makes adversity easier to deal with when the situation arises.

Disappointment will come, but a **positive attitude, trust in God** and a focus on others will always pull us through.

Tricia Goyer *has written more than 35 books, including both novels that delight and entertain readers and nonfiction titles that offer encouragement and hope. She has also published more than 500 articles in national publications such as Guideposts, Thriving Family, Proverbs 31, and HomeLife Magazine.*