

The 1 Key to Reaching Your Child

Jesus said, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matt. 12:34). Parents can use this principle to gain some understanding and insight into a child’s heart. Listening becomes key.

It’s surprising how many times we ask kids why they don’t talk to their parents and hear the answer, “Because they don’t listen to me.” Yes, it’s true some children confuse listening with agreeing. On the other hand, we find some parents really don’t listen to their children, whether they agree or not. They’re irritated by the lack of logic, the different viewpoints, or the naïve opinions of their children.

Listening can feel like torture as a child goes on and on about things that don’t make sense to the parent. It’s in these moments, however, that parents can learn about a child’s heart. Children may be wrong, but they’re usually following some kind of internal logic. Listening allows you to figure out what’s going on and offer more truth where helpful.

As you listen to your kids talk, try to discern what may be distracting them from understanding the truth. Don’t feel like you have to point it out on the spot. Take time to listen and make mental notes of errors in their thinking. Look for creative ways to help them understand truth more fully.

An accepting, safe, listening ear often opens the heart in ways that nothing else can. As you listen to your child, you’ll learn about their dreams, goals and commitments. Good or bad, time spent listening to your children gives you a greater sense of what’s going on inside, offering you ideas and direction about the heart change that’s needed.

This parenting tip comes from the book Parenting is Heart

Work *by* **Dr Scott Turansky** *and* **Joanne Miller, RN, BSN.**