

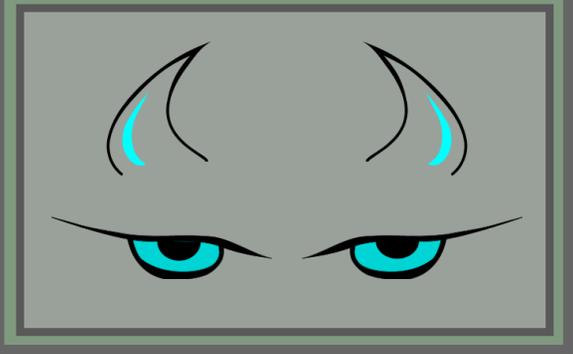
Do you remember the first time you realized that there were REAL bad people in the world and not just in books or movies? That realization probably came during your elementary school years. It is during this stage that children begin to understand that bad things happen in our world. When our children are faced with this reality, it begs us, the parent, to ask: How do I talk to my child about evil; that evil is real, that it exists?

We want to help you navigate how to talk candidly with your child about evil, while at the same time protecting them from the fear and anxiety that can develop when people think about evil in our world.

Source: [ministrytoparents.com](http://ministrytoparents.com)

# Helping Kids Process Evil

## Teaching Children About Evil in Our World



## The Concern of Evil

Think about the first time you faced evil. For many of you 9-11 was a moment where you watched evil play out before your eyes. Every year, at some point, your kids hear about 9-11 as we remember and once again you are pushed to relive the memories. On a daily basis, kids hear about evil in the world through conversations at school or through watching the news or by reading a news article on an iPad. How do we have conversations about evil with our kids?

By 8 years old, children know the difference between fantasy and reality, so they are more likely to be frightened by televised news coverage of events such as kidnappings, murders, and terrorism. Kids figure out quickly that bad things happen and evil is real. As parents we struggle to know how to respond to our kids when they learn that reality. What I have learned as a parent is that I can't explain everything to my 3rd grader, but I can be a voice of clarity to her when it comes to evil in the world. As parents we shape the response of our children toward evil. We are going to give you some simple tips when it comes to talking with your child about the issue.

Here is the tension: although it is important to protect our children's innocence and give them only information their developing minds can handle, we're reminded nearly every day that this planet can be a horrible place. How we as parents respond to evil shapes how our kids respond. God responded and is still responding to evil through Jesus. God is not passive when it comes to evil. God is not surprised by evil. The Bible says that God is confronting evil through people who follow Him and through the power of Jesus.

## Encouragement

*Romans 12:21 (NLT) 21 Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.*

We help our kids understand evil so that they will not be overcome by it. We step into the conversations about evil with our kids so they will have confidence to conquer it through good. They can stand against it and we will stand with them. Kids need to know that, no matter what happens in the world, we will walk with them. Kids gain their confidence through us, so be willing to help them discover it through your presence.

## Practical Steps

1. When you talk about evil, make sure kids know good wins because God will make things right.
2. We know there is evil in the world, but our kids need to know that God is pushing back evil through the good we choose every day. Good wins because God wins. Evil flows from people choosing evil actions. We push against evil with the good that we choose. Your confidence in God helps your child have confidence in God.
3. Let your kids ask you questions. Silence is a bad choice for parents to choose when it comes to evil. When your child faces evil they need you to help them process, not shut down. They need to know they can come to you when they don't understand. When you allow that to happen as kids you set yourself up for more conversations as they grow up. Kids need a safe place to process the reality of evil.
4. Limit social media and TV access for kids. Your child needs to hear you explain horrible situations and not from their friends on social media or from the anchor on the news. To have a shot at being able to help your kids face evil and protect them from evil, guard them from overexposure to news and social media.