

Hope for a Strong Mind and a Strong Child

Draw my thoughts and hope from John ch 14

H = Hope for Hurting

- Hurt has been “In your face” recently – 3rd wave has been brutal, looting, lockdown, emigration, divorce
- So many have “flipped their brains” into fear, flight, fright, or freeze mode -> flourish mode
- John ch 14 vs 1 and 27: Do **not** let your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in Me.
- Offer hope to the hurting

O = Opportunity

- Help to navigate the child to a place of safety
- Watch out for tell tale behaviours and feelings
- Listen carefully and reflect feelings back safely
- Keep routines and boundaries in place
- Prepare the child for inevitable changes that could take place
- Be calm and build trust, openness and confidence
- Confidentiality, but be aware of your legal obligations to report abuse or possible suicide

P = Positivity and Promises

- Be a good listener and reflector of feelings
- Help regulate and reason – be positive
- Use powerful Biblical promises that are easy to remember – eg Bible verses and songs from Steve Green (Hide 'em in your heart). Short repetitive jingle songs are best <https://youtu.be/LLOKKGQWJV>s
- Make a small card, decorate a stone that is an easy reminder
- Use positive affirmation as much as possible
- Use Biblical answers to questions that may come up eg about heaven – refer to Revelation ch20 and 21

E = Example

- We need to be the best Role models to the children, in examining our personal walk with Christ
- Connect purposefully
- Learn by seeing and doing
- Plant life cycle – looking after it, placing it in the best position, watch for changes and growth. It is a difficult task and doesn't happen over night – slow process
- Display photos, use special recipes
- Are we ready to meet Jesus whenever He might come?

HOPE

- H = Hurting
- O = Opportunity and openness
- P = Positivity and Biblical Promises
- E = Example

What do we hope to achieve?

- Children put their faith and trust in God – John 14 vs 1
- The Helper (Spirit of Truth) will be with us John 14 vs 17
- Help children express their feelings and regulate their behaviour appropriately
- Be aware and understanding of varied reactions – sorrow, guilt, anger, blame, and indifference
- It's not their fault!
- Keep memories alive – photos, recipes, special places
- Treat the death of a family pet with dignity
- Get life back to normal as soon as possible
- Get Professional help if necessary – attend healing courses like Growing Seasons, DC4K, or Divorce recovery programs – not American versions if possible)
- Pray that the child might know the PEACE that only God can give – John 14 vs 27
- Play “You raise me up” by Secret Garden <https://youtu.be/9vdkqeshXJM>

Books to use

- Mike's lonely Summer by Caroline Nystrom
- Why did Grandpa die? by Barbara Shook Hazen
- Grandma has gone to Heaven by Alex J Foxhall
- Where did Grandad go? By Catherine House and Honor Ayres
- What is God like? By Beverly Lewis
- What is Heaven like? By Beverly Lewis
- Badger's parting gifts by Susan Varley
- Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan – children's version

Songs to learn and sing

- In my Father's House by Steve Green
- Heaven is a wonderful place
- When I get to Heaven
- Coming again (Just the chorus)
- You raise me up (just the chorus)
- Living He loved me
- Blessed be your name (just the chorus and bridge)
- Joy, joy, joy, with joy my heart is ringing
- When we all get to heaven (just the chorus)