

Building Bridges for Kids

December 9, 2020 @ 6:30-7:30 p.m.

White River Branch, Topic: Poverty

Conversation Guides

- Your child may ask you a question when they see something.
- Tips for Talking to Children About Difficult Conversations <https://bit.ly/2vlpAmY>

1. **Wait for your child to bring it up.** If you encounter a homeless person, your child may have questions, and this is a good opportunity to teach them.
2. **Express empathy and sadness for the person.** By emphasizing how you feel sad that some people don't have a place to live, you provide an opportunity for children to understand the importance of recognizing others' hardships while modeling empathy.
3. **Provide a simple explanation to their question.** We've all been asked questions by small children about our homeless neighbors (Why? How come?) It's best to respond with an answer that a small child can understand, i.e. "*Some people don't have enough money to pay for a house.*"
4. **Avoid discussing additional components such as mental illness or disability.** Unless your child has specifically asked, adding in this layer will only confuse a young child.
5. **Encourage your child to discuss how to help.** At this age, donating toys or picking-out items to give to a nonprofit may make more of an impact than donating money, which may be too abstract for some young children. That said, depending on your level of involvement, it may be appropriate to provide opportunities for your children to give through family activities like hosting a donation drive, or collecting donations in lieu of birthday gifts or holiday gifts.
6. **Assure your child that there are options for those struggling with homelessness.** Young children may have feelings of sadness or worry after hearing that some children don't have a place to live. Assure them that there are organizations who help homeless people find places to live, and reassure them of their own safety and security.

Source: Wellspring Family Services @ <https://bit.ly/38tPiJp>

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Additional Resources

- Talking to Kids About Poverty <https://bit.ly/2SCFxTr>
- 14 Ways to Effectively Explain Homelessness and Poverty to Your Child <https://bit.ly/2vnLPy0>
- How to talk to your child about poverty and homelessness (ages 5-8)
<https://bit.ly/2w9lyEI>
- Inspire My Kids: How Kids Can Help Reduce Poverty <https://bit.ly/38rgCaY>

Books

- On Our Street: Our First Talk about Poverty by Jillian Roberts J 362.5 ROB
- Poverty and Hunger by Louise Spilsbury J 362.5 SPI
- What is Given From the Heart by Pat McKissack
- A Bike Like Sergio's by Maribeth Boelts
- Adrian Simcox Does NOT have a Horse by Marcy Campbell and Corinna Luyken

Join us January 2021 on Zoom
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