



CIRCLE OF HOPE'S
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raising caring kids

How to Talk to Your Child about Homelessness and Poverty

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Many parents struggle with how to respond to questions from their children that do not have easy answers. It is easy to feel stumped when talking about important social issues such as homelessness and poverty.

This is a short guide of suggestions of how to navigate these questions into teachable moments.

Try to gauge what your child understands

This may include waiting for a younger child (ages 2-6) to bring up the subject, or with an older child (ages 7-12), asking them to explain what “poor” and “homeless” mean to them. This gives the opportunity to have a meaningful discussion.

Don't avoid questions

For younger children, a simple explanation to their question is best, such as “some people don't have enough money to pay for a house.” For older children, use their curiosity as an opportunity to create a conversation. Watching the news or reading the newspaper together can spark a dialogue that shows that this is an important topic to be discussed.

Express empathy and encourage their empathy by talking about your own feelings

By discussing your own concern that some people don't have a place to live, you provide an opportunity for children to understand the importance of recognizing others' hardships and respect those in different living situations.

Assure your child that there are options for those struggling with homelessness.

Children may have feelings of sadness or worry that some families don't have a place to live. Reassure them that there are organizations that help people who are homeless to find places to live and provide clothing and food.

Encourage your child to discuss how to help and take action on their concerns

Having your young child pick out clothes to donate to organizations like Circle of Hope may have more of an impact than donating money, which may be too abstract for young children. Older children can be encouraged to find a cause that they care about and there are many ways that they can take action. Volunteering as a family is another wonderful way to continue the conversation and develop a lifelong habit of making a difference.

Circle of Hope

Circle of Hope provides homeless infants, children, women and men in and around Boston with clothing and basic necessities to preserve health and personal dignity. By providing seasonally appropriate clothing and toiletries to carefully vetted organizations, Circle of Hope gives the most vulnerable members of our community the needed items to protect themselves from dangers of illness and disease that come from being homeless.

Family homelessness in Boston increased 25% this year.

Circle of Hope is making a difference!

We provided clothing and necessities to over 4,500 homeless individuals last year.

This past winter we kept 2,659 children and adults who are homeless warm with winter coats.

Learn more at
www.circleofhopeonline.org

Full Circle
Saturday, September 24
The Common
Needham Center
10 am - 12 pm