

Talking to Students

Communicating effectively with students is important. While there are differences in how you might have a discussion with a grade one kid as opposed to a grade twelve student, some principles are important for all conversations.

- Talk to students the same way you would like them to talk to you. Always be courteous.
- Be there. Make eye contact. Give your full attention to the student.
- *How* you say something is just as important as *what* you say. Sometimes more important.
- Don't judge. Describe what you see and feel.
- Always *think* about what you are going to say, before you say it. If you're angry, don't say anything until you aren't.
- Encourage your students to share their thoughts and feelings by sharing your own.
- Never make fun of a student's dreams or aspirations, even if they're unrealistic.
- Remember that God isn't finished with them yet. It's your job to help. Always be positive.
- Show in your reply or your actions that you take what they say seriously.
- Show that you enjoy listening to students. It will make it more likely that they will listen to you.
- One-on-one is always best for complicated instructions. Small groups are better than the whole class.
- Be willing to talk about what students want to talk about. Don't put them off.
- Answer the questions that are really asked, not just the ones you want to answer.
- Be passionate about what you stand for, about your values and beliefs. Passion is persuasive.

I got some help with this one, from a book by Robert D. Ramsay entitled "How to Say the Right Thing Every Time". Highly recommended reading for all teachers.