

# Teacher Helps



## Leading Children in Prayer Times

Discuss with your children why we bow our heads and close our eyes when we pray. The reason is that it helps to cut out distractions and bowing our heads is a token of respect. However, kids need to understand that they can pray anytime, anywhere in any which we they are—standing, sitting, eyes open, eyes closed, half-standing, eyes-half-open, hands raised, hands down, hands in their pockets, aloud, in a whisper, in their thoughts, kneeling, eating, running, jumping, falling, tripping, laughing, picking their noses...prayer is not about our physical position; it's about our hearts.

Ask your children to bow their heads and close their eyes. Then use your prayer times to teach them how to pray. Consider the following suggestions:

- Don't always do the praying for your kids. Ask them to pray silently. Give them specific things to pray for or about. For example, "Think of someone at your school or someone you've met who is not nice or good. Maybe a bully, Pray silently for them that they will..."
- Model praying for specific things. For example, instead of asking them to pray silently for bullies, guide them in how to pray specific things for those who treat others badly.
- Let your kids pray aloud. "Can you lead us in praying for bullies, that they will learn to love Jesus and treat others right?" Kids are much more comfortable praying aloud when you give them something specific to pray for instead of just, "How about you pray for us?"
- Take prayer requests each week. Also, be sure to pray specifically for each request given. Write them down and pray for these during the week. Even drop the child a postcard. "I'm praying for..."
- Keep track of how God is answering your kids' prayer requests. Help your children to understand that God ALWAYS answers prayer—sometimes with a yes, sometimes a *no* and sometimes He tells us to *wait*.

