

# YOUR LAST BREATH [death]

## THIS WEEK

Death is a topic that more and more must be talked about with kids. An increasing number of young people are preoccupied with death—in their music, through the suicide of a classmate, in their contemplation of the meaning and purpose of life, and especially in the shocking wake of school violence and killings. This TalkSheet faces death in a straightforward manner. By talking about death, you're provided with the opportunity to talk about eternal salvation.

## OPENER

This is a sensitive topic—especially for those who have lost someone they've loved. Introduce this topic however you think is best for your group.

You may want to have your kids think about this—if they were to die, what would people say about them? What would they hear their friends saying at their funeral? What does this say about how they live today? Why is it so important to make the most of each day?

You may want to read a story dealing with death or show a movie clip that deals with death. How does the media portray death? How is death talked about in the media? Why do news programs report stories of death, murder, and suicide? Why is the media so caught up in death? How do Christians view death differently than non-Christians?

## THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. Many kids will share the experiences they have had with death, such as the death of a grandparent or a pet. Or perhaps they will talk about the suicide of a classmate or the death and destruction themes of some secular music. Be sensitive to young people who are mourning the loss of a friend or family member. Allow kids to share their stories and express their emotions.
2. What are the most common words dealing with death? Take some time to talk about these words. But be particularly sensitive to the issue of suicide.
3. These statements should generate some good healthy debate. Have the kids share their opinions on each one, and give reasons why they feel the way they do.
4. What would your kids ask God about death? You may get a lot of different questions, ranging from cremation to reincarnation and more. Spend some time talking about these questions with your group.

5. What are God's views of death? Take some time to talk about these verses with your group. Do these verses help them understand or deal with death differently? Why or why not? What comfort to they get knowing that there is an afterlife?

## THE CLOSE

Use this closing time to point out that the life of each individual involved in this TalkSheet discussion has meaning. It is God who gives life meaning. Because of Christ's work on the cross of Calvary, people can be saved from the despair of a meaningless life and ultimate death.

## MORE

- Suicide is a reality in the lives of teenagers—one of the top five causes of death among teenagers and young adults. You may want to spend some time talking about suicide, what causes teen suicide, how to recognize someone who is in danger of taking his or her own life. Visit a few on-line organizations for more information—Suicide Voices Awareness of Education ([www.save.org](http://www.save.org)) and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention ([www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)). If there is a suicide hotline in your area, post the number for the kids to write down. You might also suggest the names of adult counselors in your area who are qualified to provide help to potential suicide victims.
- School violence has also been a cause of teenage death in schools nationwide. You may want to talk about this as well, if you think it's appropriate for your group in your town. Ask your kids what causes teenagers to lash out in violence. Have they seen or experienced situations of school violence? What can your kids do to put an end to school violence and make their own schools safer? For more information, check out the Youth Specialties Web page ([www.YouthSpecialties.com](http://www.YouthSpecialties.com)) for links and information, including [www.disciples.org/violence.htm](http://www.disciples.org/violence.htm) and Bulletproof? A Student Violence Prevention Program by Neighbors Who Care ([www.neighborswhocare.org](http://www.neighborswhocare.org)).