

What should I do when I know my friends are breaking the commandments?

While it's hard to watch friends do things that we know will cause them pain, we need to respect their agency and keep loving them. However, there are things we can do to encourage them to make better choices.

Youth from Mexico recently shared their ideas:

1. Pray for them. Cynthia G., 18, says, "Prayer is one of the most powerful gifts our Heavenly Father has given us. I know that Heavenly Father will help my friends and answer my prayers. Prayer is powerful."

2. Guide them to a better way. Reynaldo A., 16, adds, "Sometimes your friends may not realize that they are doing bad things, or maybe they just don't want to admit it. Let them know that what they're doing isn't good. Then you can try to persuade them to stop doing those things and find something better to do. Don't give up on them."

3. Help them feel the Savior's love. Keilany G., 18, says, "Help them feel the endless love that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have for them. Judging them is not the way, but loving them is. Little by little you can remind them that the Lord has not abandoned them and that He never will."

Consider the words of President N. Eldon Tanner (1898–1982), First Counselor in the First Presidency, as you help your friends: "Always remember that people are looking to you for leadership and you are influencing the lives of individuals either for good or for bad, which influence will be felt for generations to come" ("For They Loved the Praise of Men More Than the Praise of God," *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 74). **NE**



Love Them

They may be going through a hard time, and unkind comments probably won't help.

Just be encouraging and love them for who they are. Your love and support may be just what they need. You may know that what they're doing is bad, but they don't. If the opportunity arises, you may gently refer to counsel from the prophets. Be kind and do all you can to uplift them and set a good example.

Aliza B., 15, Oregon, USA

Let Them Know You Care

We may be afraid to talk to our friends when they're doing something wrong because we don't want to seem uncool or as though we're judging them. The best way to help them is to let the Spirit guide us in encouraging them in the nicest way possible. It helps to let them know that we only want to help because we care about them. We need to pray for our friends and to have the Spirit with us; it can help us know what we should do to help our friend get back on the right track.

Megan C., 19, Texas, USA

Got a QUESTION?

Do you have a question you'd like answered in the *New Era*? Send it to us at newera@ldschurch.org.



Encourage Them

We all have agency to choose between right and wrong. We can't force people to choose the right, but we can help them make the choice. We can have an open, honest dialogue with our friends, teach them the importance of keeping the Lord's commandments, and then encourage them to keep those commandments.

Victor C., 18, Mexico



Set a Good Example

The Mutual theme from a couple years ago explains well what we need to do: "Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations" (D&C 115:5). We don't have to stop being friends with them or do what they do. But we can be ourselves and set a good example.

Beth M., 17, Idaho, USA

Don't Judge Them

When I know my friends are doing something against the commandments, I try to help them do what's right. Whenever I'm with my friends,

I try to set a good example. Don't judge them, because none of us is perfect. Try to create a good environment and suggest doing something worthwhile to help them make better choices.

Matthew T., 17, New Mexico, USA

Follow the Spirit

Pray for them, ask for inspiration to know what to do, and then read your scriptures and be prepared to receive an answer. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit and have faith. The Lord knows exactly what will be best for everyone.

Kyelle T., 17, Utah, USA

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.



BE A RIGHTEOUS EXAMPLE

"When we maintain our personal purity and honor our priesthood, we become righteous examples for others to follow. The Apostle Paul admonished, 'Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity' (1 Timothy 4:12)."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Guided Safely Home," *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 68.

UPCOMING QUESTION

Why is it wrong to cheat at school if you're only trying to help another person?

Send your answer and photo by October 15, 2015.

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Responses may be edited for length or clarity.