

Young Children's Difficult Questions and Adults' Answers

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ABSTRACT It is valuable to examine children's questions that are particularly difficult for adults to answer, and the latter's responses, to better prepare and inform parents and other caregivers of their roles. Despite the crucial nature of these questions and answers for the children's development, research on them remains rare. The aim of this study was to examine pre-school children's difficult questions and the parents' answers to them. In this basic qualitative research, data was gathered via interviews with 46 parents whose children were attending pre-school. Word lists and word-repetition techniques were used for data analysis. Five main themes of the children's difficult questions were identified: religion, science and nature, sex and fertility, daily life, and miscellaneous concepts. Among the parents' answers, seven main themes were discerned: giving realistic answers (with examples), giving realistic answers (without examples), providing wrong explanations, providing purely religious explanations, leaving the question unanswered, answering insufficiently, and threatening or exhorting.