A parents' guide to teaching kids to forgive each other heals hurts, keeps the peace, and gives them an invaluable life skill. 

1. Ask the offended child to acknowledge the hurt. Address the offending behavior.

2. Have a cooling off period. (It's hard to forgive when you're upset.)

3. Ask your child, “Are you ready to consider forgiving?”

4. Assure your child that forgiving is NOT saying what the other person did is OK. It’s saying, “I’m going to change my hurt, angry feelings toward him.”

5. Make sure your child knows it’s his decision and it’s ok not to be ready! “I understand you’re still hurt/angry and maybe you need a little more time.”

6. If there’s lingering hurt, ask again — but let your child know it’s up to him. (If your child has moved on, there’s no need to force forgiveness!)

7. If your child is ready, suggest he put on “forgiveness glasses” that help him see the offender beyond the offending action. Ask, “Can you think of your brother in a way that’s bigger than this offense? Can you see the goodness in him?”

8. Now ask your child to notice how this changes how his heart feels. “Does it feel softer? How are you feeling inside now toward your brother?”

9. There are no magic words to say. Your child can show forgiveness with a smile or an offer to play. Ask, “Is there anything you want to say? You don’t have to.” (It may come out as “Want to go play?”)

* Based on the research of Dr. Robert Enright, founder of the International Forgiveness Institute (internationalforgiveness.com).