

Preparing for Conversation

Exercise: Replacing polarizing language with underlying needs and values

Sample Quotes: Prenatal-to-Three

Church & Country

“Life is not fair. Life is hard. I’m bound by my faith in my obligations to my fellow man, but I don’t want the government dictating a redistribution of resources. That’s the basis of Marxism. That does not work.” — *State representative, male, 48, urban/suburban*

Economic Influenced

“I would support spending money to get more enriching resources into the home. Children are reading so far below grade level and many new parents are not good readers. The people who need the help are the parents with high school educations who were promoted through the system and now have minimal job skills, not the upper-income, educated parents.” — *President, state GOP organization, female, 60s*

Legacy Republican

“There is a huge difference between a handout and a helping hand. We want the best for everyone, but that doesn’t come with just a handout. We don’t want to create a cycle of dependency. We want to provide opportunity and access—not just hand things over. We want to create the hope that they can achieve the American dream.” — *State GOP activist, male, 42*

Populist-Aligned

“I struggle with the solutions. I’m not for more government spending, but you can’t expect people to work if they can’t get care for their kids and we have a labor shortage. So, I would say that you need to tie this issue to the labor shortage. The thing that really bothers me is Democrats around here talk about moms taking kids to a child care center. These don’t exist in rural places. They do not exist. It’s a false narrative. There is so much regulation that you can’t start a new one. We need to find a more individual-based solution.” — *Executive director, conservative think tank, female, mid-30s, rural*