



PREPARING FOR ADOLESCENCE



Milestones



WHAT IS PREPARING FOR ADOLESCENCE?

Welcome to the great change. Your child is about to enter the journey to adulthood. There have certainly been rocks on the path they have traveled thus far, but the trail is about to get exceedingly more difficult, for you and them. Your child is about to begin climbing the mountain called adolescence. Guiding him or her through this process is essential to enable them to avoid the pitfalls and slopes that lead to destruction. The decisions your child will make through this time period can be life altering, positively or negatively.

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

At Peninsula, we want to help you navigate these preteen years so that you will not only survive, but you will actually enjoy each other through the teen years. We want to point out the struggles that your preteen is facing and give you some insight for how to point your child to Christ through it all. This Milestone, like all of the others, is about understanding the developmental needs of your child, being proactive in addressing those needs and leading them to live a life of purity focused on knowing and serving Christ.

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE LIFE OF YOUR PRETEEN?

The Quest for Identity

The adolescent years will challenge your child's identity to the very core of who they are. The question they may not verbalize but will continually ask through this process is "Who am I?" Certain influences on their life are forcing them to ask this question repeatedly. These influences include physical changes due to hormone surges, ignorance of the changes they are experiencing, school, media, peers, church, and parents. Each of these influences has a different effect on how our children think about themselves. Try to think about these factors and how they influenced you when you went through adolescence. Think about how these influence you today.

Adolescents ask themselves **who am I?** Encourage your adolescent to answer that question by asking it another way...**whose am I?**

The Lord's – Psalm 139:1-18

- God made you and knows you even better than you know yourself. He loves you intimately and, as a child of His, you are of great value.
- Jeremiah 29:11 – God has great plans for your life.
- Genesis 1:27 – You are created in God's image.
- Romans 8:28-29 – God causes all things to work for good in your life – even the most difficult circumstances.

Your family name...

- Reassure your son or daughter that they will always be your child. Reassure them that your love for them will never stop. Love them unconditionally (1 Corinthians 13).
- The legacy of your family name will not be perfect. But as parents, you can define or redefine your family name by the love, grace and discipline you display to your children.

2

Major Struggles during Adolescence

Inferiority

Conformity

Independence

Meaning of Love



*“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name,
he gave the right to become children of God.”*

John 1:12

3

Real Changes

Physical

- Hormonal imbalances
- Pain associated with growing areas
- More fatigue than normal
- Increased appetites

Emotional

- Insecurity as a result of physical changes
- Hormonal imbalance causing extreme highs and lows
- Deep commitments and passions developing

Social

- A greater desire for belonging with a group of friends
- Greater need for the approval of others
- Increased attention to clothing styles, hair, hygiene, etc.

Spiritual

- Owning their own faith
- Asking more complex, abstract questions about God and their faith
- Greater desire to connect socially at church
- Increased ability to understand a relationship with God

Need to Remain Pure and Understand God's Plan for Sex

As adolescence flows into everyday life, the issue of purity will be one that can literally alter life's course for teenagers. A commitment to physical purity is only part of the story. Without addressing the underlying issues, committing to sexual abstinence will be hollow and often broken. God created the human heart, soul, mind and strength to work cohesively to bring Him glory by following His path for life. The main goal of *Preparing for Adolescence* and all Milestones is guiding your children along the path that God has laid for them.

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Romans 12:1-2

What is Biblical Sex?

- It is good!
- It is two becoming one...God's design for creating unity within marriage – *Genesis 2:24*
- It is a gift from God for a husband and wife to show their love and create life.
- It is between one man and one woman – *Genesis 2, 1 Corinthians 7:1-5, Proverbs 6-7*
- It is to be saved for marriage – *Hebrews 13:4*

God invented and encourages sex to be enjoyed within the boundaries He has provided to bring maximum enjoyment to the marriage relationship – *1 Corinthians 6:18*

The Fireplace – sex provides warmth and intimacy in a good marriage. But if it is practiced outside of biblical boundaries, it will destroy the relationship.



HOW DO I LEAD THEM?

Heart Connection – Developing Relational Capital

Your child is entering a new phase of his or her life. Your son or daughter will challenge your authority and begin rolling their eyes with increased regularity. Your heart connection is more important than ever.

What a true heart connection is:

Demonstrating Life in Christ

- The Biblical Role of a Man – Sons are watching to emulate their fathers and daughters are watching to find a model of a Godly husband.
- The Biblical Role of a Woman – Daughters are watching to emulate their mothers and sons are watching to find a model for a future wife.
- Emotional – How do you respond when angry, frustrated, or when praised?
- Physical – What do you wear in public? How do you talk about other people? Do you live a healthy lifestyle?

What a true heart connection is:

Cultivating a Relationship

- Plan special dates with your sons and daughters.
- Build uninterrupted time into your schedule.
- Listen, talk and relate.
- Capture the Family Table at dinner each night!

2

Faith Talks and God Moments

The primary way to lead your child through this process is to continue the intentional study of God's Word each week and capitalize on moments in between.

Faith Talks are intentional times set aside each week for conversation around Scripture. Faith Talks (Family Devotions) are the times where the entire family joins together to discuss God's Word and what it means for their lives. These intentional, set aside times will provide a foundation of spiritual truth for your children. Faith Talks will also begin a lifelong conversation. Your child will be more likely to come to you about important issues and life questions instead of seeking peers or other adults. Building this bridge of trust is priceless.

God Moments are unplanned, spontaneous moments where God shows up in your child's life and you have an opportunity to capitalize on it. God Moments are often verbalized by your child because of the connection built by Faith Talks. These are teachable moments where you guide them through issues God has placed on their heart and mind.

3

Set aside a special time to discuss sex and purity with your preteen.

Plan an overnight stay away or an uninterrupted, safe environment. The best plan is mom with daughter and dad with son. Use resources to help guide your time: “The Talk” Milestone Resource, “Teaching the Birds and the Bees Without the Butterflies” by Traci Lester, “Passport to Purity” by Dennis and Barbara Rainey are all helpful guides.

Make sure that the foundation of these discussions is based on who your preteen is in Christ and in your family. Developing a Biblical sense of their identity is key to thriving during the teen years. Setting a goal for purity will be superficial and legalistic apart from the context of a loving relationship with Christ and family.

4

Discipline with Love, Patience and Understanding

Discipline well but remember they are going through a total transformation. Their hormones are beyond their understanding. Adolescents will often not understand themselves through this type of change.

5

Pray

Pray often and specifically for your children. Pray for their friends, teachers, future dating relationships and possible spouses.

RESOURCES

The Birds and The Bees Without the Butterflies *by Traci Lester*

Preparing for Adolescence *by James Dobson*

Passport to Purity *by Dennis and Barbara Rainey*

30 Days: Turning the Hearts of Parents *by Dr. Richard Ross*

Lies Young Women Believe *by Nancy Leigh DeMoss and Dannah K. Gresch*

Preparing Your Son for Every Man's Battle *by Stephen Arterburn*

Preparing Your Daughter for Every Woman's Battle *by Shannon Ethridge*

The Focus on the Family Guide to Talking with Your Kids about Sex

Interviewing Your Daughter's Date *by Dennis Rainey*

Sticky Faith *by Kara E. Powell & Chap Clark*