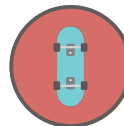


PARENTING PLAN

YEAR 18: LAUNCH



HI FRIEND!



We've heard it through the grapevine that there's a birthday in your family this month! As your child enters into Year 18, we want to focus on **Launch**.

At First Capital, we believe that a child's home is the number 1 faith-building, disciple-making environment that there is. We want to partner with you as you raise your fearfully and wonderfully made child. We've created a discipleship program that goes from year 1 all the way to year 18 when you're launching your child out into the world. We offer this plan that focuses on one thing every year when it comes to following Jesus.

This plan isn't supposed to be a course in everything you need to know when it comes to parenting and raising a child to love and follow Jesus. But we hope that every year, this plan will help you and your family take one step closer to Jesus.

This plan is just one part of many resources that we want to provide for you. Many of those resources can be found on our Parent Resources Wall in the lobby.

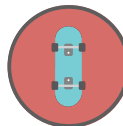
During this first phase of your child's life we label as the **Mobilize Phase**, we focus on **starting to put your faith to action**.

If you have any questions or just need an adult to talk to anytime this year, we are available to you! You can reach out to anybody on the Family Ministry Team.

Evalina Pinnick - evalina@churchanywhere.us
Marianne Rader - marianne@firstcapitalchristian.org
Spencer Roberts - spencer@firstcapitalchristian.org
Patrick Crawford - patrick@churchanywhere.us

We are praying for you and your family,
The Family Ministry Team

WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR FUTURE 18-YEAR-OLD

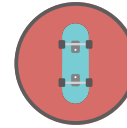


Each year throughout the parenting plan, take time to write your child a letter. Below are some ideas of things to include that will speak life and love into your child, as well as give them an invaluable collection of insights into their upbringing and a storyline of memories to be cherished for the rest of their lives

1. Things I've loved about you this year...
2. Important memories from this past year...
3. Some of my favorite time with you is when we...
4. Your favorite type of music is...
5. Your favorite hobbies are...
6. Your favorite things to do with your friends...
7. Something I saw in you at a young age...
8. Ways I saw you grow the most over the years...
9. I've been praying about this for you this year...
10. I've been praying about this for me as a parent this year...
11. What I'll be praying for you as you leave...
12. A Bible verse I have picked out for you as you leave...

Take all of the photos and all of the letters you have written throughout the past years and put them in a special box. Present your child with all of the letters and pictures before they leave home. Maybe you can incorporate some time in your LAUNCH meal to take out the old letters and read them. If you have just started the parenting plan, you can still write this letter, but cover more of the memories from over the years in just this one letter. Include photos from throughout their childhood.

LAUNCH

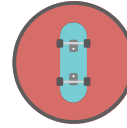


Perhaps you've heard the phrase "failure to launch" describing young men and women who don't make the transition into responsible adulthood. Unfortunately, many parents inadvertently keep their children from growing up due to overprotection and lack of intentionality. Whether your son or daughter is going off to college, joining the military or entering the workforce, how can you be intentional about successfully launching them into a God-honoring life?

BE A GOOD COACH: As the parent of an older teen on the verge of adulthood, you are a very important coach. You can motivate, encourage, challenge and advise, but you can't force feed. You can help them articulate what they believe, challenge their thinking, remind them of the "basics" already learned during earlier years, but the time has come for your child to truly own his or her own beliefs and choices. Provide a listening ear as they wrestle with and possibly question the values they learned as a child. Try to maintain a strong relationship that includes frequent, open dialogue. They might be leaving home soon, but you will continue to parent them... it just won't be the same... it shouldn't be the same.

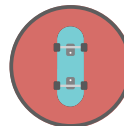
GIVE PERSPECTIVE CONCERNING BIG QUESTIONS: During the transition into adulthood your son or daughter will face big questions including: Where should I go to college? What kind of work should I do? Where should I live? What should I do with my life? Who should I marry? Direct your child back to overarching Biblical principles. The last words of King David to his son Solomon (in 1 Chronicles 28:9) provide a model for parents advising emerging adults: "And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind." In the midst of the practical advice parents may offer on setting goals, choosing a job, finding a spouse and so forth, we must also elevate the importance of making decisions in light of the scriptures.

NOTES



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LAUNCH

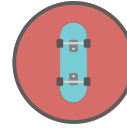


MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR REMAINING TIME: While leaving home is a healthy and good process, it can be emotional for parent and child alike. Ease the pain by using the remaining time your son or daughter has at home to create lasting memories. Spend quality time together connecting and talking about the exciting adventure of adulthood, affirming that you believe they are ready and can handle it.

GIVE A VISION FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY: Parents often go to extremes to help a child prepare for college or the workforce but don't know exactly what they can do when it comes to preparing them for the more important work of marriage and family. While a small minority will be called to life-long celibate service, most young people are called to marriage and family (Genesis 2:18-24). We sometimes overlook how much marriage and family serve as the organizing structure of life and the prime arena for our spiritual development. You have a vital part to play in helping your child leave your nest and cling to their future spouse.

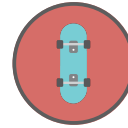
PREPARE THEM TO LEAVE HOME: Set your child up for the best opportunity to succeed and make an easy transition. Plan a special time together to discuss the Before You Leave page later in this booklet. Use the conversation to identify areas that might require some coaching before they leave. Make a list of practical skills like laundry, cooking, balancing a checking account, jumping a dead battery, etc. and make time to teach them how to survive when you're not there. Keep things light and fun, but make sure you've prepared them to be the grown up now.

NOTES



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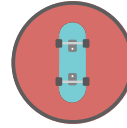
LAUNCH



HEAL WOUNDS: Set aside some time to spend with you child, and ask them if there is any way that you have wounded them over the years. Maybe they've never talked to you about it but it affects them. Ready yourself with humility and prayer for their answer. Then own your mistakes, ask their forgiveness and work towards healing those wounds while they are still at home.

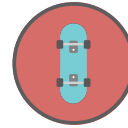
RAISING GOD'S KID: Ultimately, over the past 18 years, you have not been raising your child, you've been raising God's. God gave him or her to you to bring up to know Him. As your child leaves home, continue to lift your child up to God. "Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children." (Lam. 2:19) Your fervent prayers as a parent will continue to impact the life of your child into adulthood.

NOTES



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BEFORE YOU LEAVE CHECKLIST



This is a guide to help your young adult gain the skills and confidence to be on their own before leaving for college or moving into their own place.

Plan a special time with your son or daughter and keep it fun and light hearted. You don't want them to be overwhelmed or you to be crying the whole time about your baby growing up. Discuss the following items and find out how you still need to help them prepare before they leave:

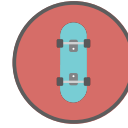
CAR

- **Can you change a tire?**
- **Can you check air pressure in your tires, and fluid levels?**
- **Help them find a reputable mechanic and wrecker service in the town they are moving to. Have them save them in their phones.**
- **Do you understand how and when to change the oil?**
- **Do you have appropriate gear for the weather where you are going?**

LAUNDRY

- **Do you know how to wash and dry a load of laundry?**
- **Do you understand how to handle colors and whites?**
- **Can you treat stains?**
- **Do you know what products to purchase?**
- **Can you iron your clothes? Consider taking your son/daughter to a laundry mat before they leave.**

BEFORE YOU LEAVE CHECKLIST



MONEY

- **Do you have a budget? Help them establish a budget that will keep them within their means. Warn strongly about credit card use.**
- **Do you have a job? Help them discover what is available in the area.**
- **Do you have access to your bank? Do you need to open an account in the town you are moving to?**

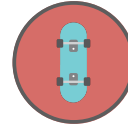
FOOD

- **Can you cook a handful of nutritious meals that don't come from a box or a can?**
- **Can you shop for groceries, pick out ripe produce, shop for sales, etc?**
- **Do you understand the meal program we are paying for at school?**
- **Do you know how to start and cook on a grill?**
- **Consider letting your child choose a menu for a few meals, and help them shop for, prepare and serve the meal.**

HEALTH

- **Where will you go if you become sick? Prompt Care? Doctor? ER?**
- **When should you go to the doctor?**
- **If your child is moving to a new town to stay, help them find a primary care doctor and a dentist.**
- **If they are still under your insurance, make sure they understand how that works (insurance cards, copays at the door, prescription copays, etc.)**
- **Can you get any refills on prescriptions that you might need?**

BEFORE YOU LEAVE CHECKLIST



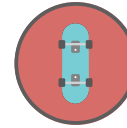
COLLEGE CAMPUS/TOWN

- Are you comfortable with the town they are moving to?
- Can you get around to places you need?
- Are you familiar with the Public Transportation system there?
- Do you understand where you are on the campus?
- Do you know what to do in an emergency?

CAMPUS MINISTRY/CHURCH

- What church are you going to attend?
- Are you going to get plugged into a campus ministry?
- You can ask the Family Ministry Team if they have any recommendations for the college/town you are moving to.
- Do you have transportation to church?

SENDING THEM OUT

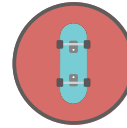


As it gets closer to the time that your child leaves home, plan a time to spend with your son or daughter where you can “send them out.” Rather than simply viewing it as though they are leaving, think about how you have prepared them to make their mark on the world and are sending them out to whatever God has next for them in life. This could be a part of their graduation season, or just something small right before they leave. You could have a nice dinner with just your immediate family - everyone takes a break from all the preparations for school or moving and enjoys an evening with each other. Or it could be a cookout where relatives and friends have a chance to say goodbye. If you opt for the bigger crowd, with everything you are doing to launch your child, take it easy on yourself and make it pot-luck to cut down on the work. You could even have it at a park so you don’t have to clean the house for company.

GIVE THEM YOUR LETTERS: If you’ve been in the Parenting Plan for very long, you would have a collection of letters you have written to your son or daughter. Put them in a folder, box or envelope and give the letters to them at their sending out dinner, taking time to read them as a family and look at the pictures. If you have not been in the program, or you would like to write a closing letter, use the letter guide but reflect on more than just this past year alone. Include reflections from over their childhood.

PRAY THEM OFF: Even if your child is attending a local college and living at home, this signifies an important time in his or her life. Have a special time of prayer as a family. If you’ve had a group of people come for dinner, ask a few of them who know your child well to voice a prayer and gather everyone around your child. Commit your child to the Lord, praying one of the prayers like: “I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.” -Ephesians 1:16-19

COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS



Now that your child is moving on to a new season, it is important to discuss what expectations you have for them. Below are some topics to get you started, but you will need to add your own. The concept is to have these discussions now, before the situation arises and you have different expectations than your child.

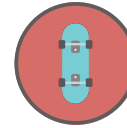
BUDGET ITEMS: You need to determine what, if any, costs your child will now be responsible for (phone, car expenses, tuition, etc.). Make sure you have clearly communicated with each other about how college is going to get paid for. Discuss who will pay for travel to and from school - especially if your child would need to purchase a plane ticket to come home for special events, breaks or holidays.

EXPECTATIONS AT HOME ON BREAKS: You need to communicate your expectations for your child when they are home for the weekend or for breaks. What do they need to ask your permission for? What time do you want them home? How will they split their time between being with family and meeting up with friends from high school? Will they need to help with chores, keep their room clean or attend certain events or programs? Do you expect them to come home for holidays as opposed to going home with a friend?

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS: Talk through your expectations for their studies. Include any conditions on your financial assistance from the start. In other words, if they fail a class, who pays for it? Talk about changing majors, studying abroad and intensive weeks of classes - anything that might increase or decrease the cost/time it takes to graduate.

COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS: If you expect your son or daughter to text or call on a regular basis, make sure you make that clear from the beginning. If you want to know certain things in advance, make that clear as well. Talk about if they need to ask permission for things like going home to a friend's house for the weekend or traveling with a group of friends to see a ballgame, etc. Making clear expectations from the start will help keep frustrations low when different situations arise.

MARRIAGE PLAN



Each year we want to encourage you to make a plan to keep your marriage healthy. One of the most important gifts you'll give to your child is the love you give to your spouse. When mom and dad love each other and demonstrate the traits of a healthy (NOT PERFECT!) marriage, it not only sets a good example of a godly marriage but gives them a greater sense of security and well-being.

- Good marriages require intentionality. Use the plan below to make an intentional effort in your marriage this year. Read *The Best Us* by Ted Lowe (@MarriedPeople 2016) for a full explanation of Have Serious Fun! Love God First; Respect and Love; Practice Your Promise.

Have Serious Fun! Date Night Scheduling:

- Grab your calendars and mark at least TWO date nights for each month and PROTECT those dates. Remember that you were boyfriend and girlfriend before you were dad and mom, and have fun together! No family administration discussions!

Love God First - Faith Practices 101:

- Research finds that couples who pray together at least twice a week have a divorce rate of less than 1% (HomePointe). Commit to praying as a couple at least twice a week. Plan which worship service the two of you will attend together each week – don't "divide and conquer" in order to volunteer.

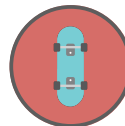
Love and Respect - Write an Annual Letter:

- Write a letter to your spouse for your anniversary this year, much like the one in this packet that you will write to your child. Write a letter of memories from this past year, affirmations, prayers and promises to each other.

Practice Your Promise - Personal Growth:

- Set a "secret goal" to grow as a spouse, such as "listening better," "praising her in public," or "initiating romance." Write it down and seal it in an envelope. When you receive next year's packet, open the envelope and assess your progress.

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**Parent Cue
creates the plan,
so you can make
the memories.**

