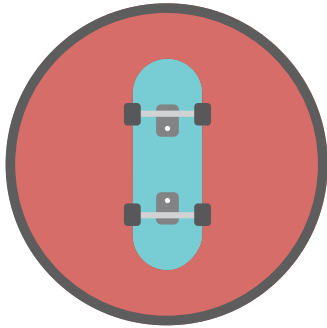
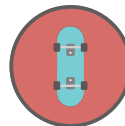


PARENTING PLAN

YEAR 11: PREPARING FOR ADOLESCENCE



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 11, we want to focus on **Preparing for Adolescence**.

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 Engage Phase, we focus on

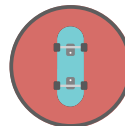
- I need to make the wise choice
- I should treat others the way I want to be treated
- I can trust God no matter what

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

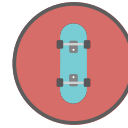


Each year throughout the parenting plan, take time to write your child a letter. Below are some ideas of things to include that will speak life and love into your child, as well as give them an invaluable collection of insights into their upbringing and a storyline of memories to be cherished for the 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 books to read are...
5. Your favorite hobbies are...
6. Things that make you laugh...
7. Your favorite things to do with your friends...
8. I am impressed that you...
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 want for you in life...
12. Ways you have learned to serve this past year...

You can write them all in a journal or write each letter as a separate piece of paper. Include a photo of your family with the letter to give a year by year collection of memories all in one place. Each year after giving your child the letter, get it back and keep them all somewhere safe. You will give them all to your child in the 18th year for LAUNCH.

PREPARING FOR ADOLESCENCE

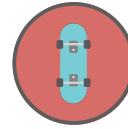


CHANGE: This is the one word description of the season of life your child is about to enter or has already begun. Many experts agree that your child will experience the greatest amount of change in early adolescence, second only to the first year of their life. The best way to prepare your child for the changes and challenges of adolescence is to walk through this time with a great deal of understanding and intentionality. We will provide some ideas on how to have some important discussions this year, but we highly recommend that you spend some time getting familiar with the Phase Summary included in this packet.

Now, obviously no two kids are the same. It is important for you to know your child in such a way as to gauge when your child is ready to start processing some of the information you will share with them this year. However awkward you might feel, it is the best thing for your child that the parents he or she loves and trusts explain the changes that are ahead, rather than leaving that to other sources who don't have the best interest of your child in mind, like the fellas on his baseball team. Help your child prepare for coming changes in a proactive and positive way, constantly affirming them and reassuring them along the way. The responsibility falls to us parents to help frame up puberty and adolescence for our children in a godly way.

When Should We Discuss Sensitive Topics: Often parents are concerned that they will overwhelm their preteen or encourage premature curiosity if they jump the gun in preparing them for adolescence. A greater concern, however, is the likelihood that someone else will beat you to it. Children are typically ready before their parents are, usually around eleven years old. Of course, not all children are the same. Ask God for wisdom about the timing of your conversations.

PREPARING FOR ADOLESCENCE



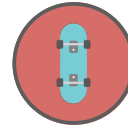
What Should I Talk to Her/Him About: You should plan to address the many areas of change your son or daughter will encounter during the transition to adulthood, especially bodily changes, decision-making and the changing relationship to you.

BODY: It's important to talk about the physical changes ahead as much more than only a plea for sexual abstinence. Your son or daughter needs a vision for how these internal and external changes will prepare the body for the joys of marriage and the miracle of creating new life.

DECISION MAKING: Increasingly, your child will need to make and assume responsibility for his or her own decisions. As you maintain your overall family values in areas like media choices, individual responsibilities (chores, homework, etc.), drugs and alcohol, etc., you also need to direct your son or daughter in how to make wise decisions in areas of health and integrity. The first nine chapters of Proverbs can help guide an early teen on choosing wisdom over folly.

RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU: Consider explaining to your preteen that over the next decade your role will progressively change from a teacher to that of a coach. You will begin to guide him or her in the transition toward independence. It is also a great time to intentionally foster relationships with other godly adults who can influence your child's life, like a small group leader in our student ministry

YOUR SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP



Multiple studies have shown that, by a large margin, statistically across the country among evangelical teens, the most spiritually influential person in their lives are mom and dad – much more so than the pastor or church programs. So even if over the next several years, you feel as though your influence is waning, take heart and continue to lead your child in their faith development. Lean into these years where your child is transitioning from a child into an adult.

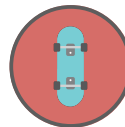
Continue to hold out the word of God in your home, pray with and for your kids often, model grace in your home, and pray daily for the Holy Spirit to bear his fruit in your parenting: love...joy...peace...patience... kindness...goodness... gentleness...and self-control. You are NOT irrelevant to your child. They still need you. If they try to dismiss you because of your mistakes, stay strong. Own your mistakes, assert your authority, express your love daily and be the parent!

ONE-ON-ONE TIME: Plan some “dates” throughout this year with your child. Even better if each parent takes the child out for one on one time. Go to dinner, take her shopping, go fishing or grab some coffee – choose an activity and environment where you can have a good talk. Talk to them about life and faith, praying beforehand that God will bless your conversation.

FAMILY DEVOTIONS: Continue to gather daily for family prayer and bible reading. This might work well when the youngest one in the family goes to bed, or at a meal you all are usually present for. You might even consider using a short devotional book like Jesus Calling by Sarah Young or Josh McDowell’s One Year Book of Family Devotions.

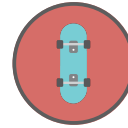
CHURCH INVOLVEMENT: Pray that God would provide a “second voice” for your child throughout this next season - someone who reinforces your faith and values. The youth programs at First Capital aim to connect your child with not only age specific programs, but also a small group leader that works WITH YOU to influence your child for Jesus. Encourage your child to get involved in volunteering. Statistically, kids who serve at church have a much higher rate of staying in the church.

NOTES



A large, empty rectangular area with a red border, intended for taking notes.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



Mood swings, periods, lust, identity issues, peer pressure, sexual purity. The types of conversations we are encouraging you to have this year can be difficult ones to have. Don't feel like you have to do this alone. Below are some resources that you can use to help navigate some uncomfortable discussions. Just don't flake out on your kid – they need you to help them. You can be sure they will be just as weirded out as you, but this is an important time for you as a parent to engage in your child's life. There are many good Christian resources you can use. Don't get overwhelmed by choices. Pray for God to guide you to the just right resource for your child. To talk to someone in person, stop by the Family Resource Center or the Eastview Bookstore.

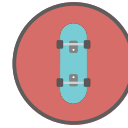
ONLINE RESOURCES:

- Mark Gregston – topics on teens and preteens www.heartlightministries.org
- AXIS – resources for parents on engaging the culture www.axis.org
- Ready for Adolescence Family Night Tool Chest www.heritatgebuilders.com
- Great Articles and Blogs on all things PARENTING AND MARRIAGE: family.org; homeward.org; familylife.com; theparentcue.org

BOOKS:

- Five Conversations You Must Have by Vicki Courtney
- Emergency Response Handbook for Parents by Group
- So You're About to be a Teenager by Dennis & Barbara Rainey
- Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens by Paul David Tripp
- Tough Guys and Drama Queens – by Mark Gregston

PROTECTING YOUR KID: TECHNOLOGY HELP



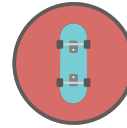
3 Steps to Protecting Your Child Online

1. Talk to your child about using their devices. Discuss how they should never give out personal information or chat with strangers. Have an age-appropriate conversation about pornography. Stress how important it is to let you know if they come across inappropriate content. Make sure they know you are a safe person to talk to about what they've seen. For help in talking with kids about pornography, check out Good Pictures/Bad Pictures and Good Pictures/ Bad Pictures Jr. by Kristen Jensen, M.A. and Gail Poyner, PhD. There are also great resources at family.org and covenanteyes.com.

2. Set boundaries for internet usage. Require that all internet usage be done in a central area of the house where parents and other family members will be. Do not allow surfing while you are not home, including homework which typically requires a lot of need for google images. Do not allow devices in a child's room - they should not need privacy to be on the internet.

3. Protect your devices with a content blocker and report generator. There are several companies that provide these services/software. Focus on the Family partners with Net Nanny and Forcefield. These programs will not only block content, but will also send accountability reports on everyone's usage in the family. You should also go into the settings of each device and determine the restrictions for that device, which is then protected by a 4 digit PIN. Commit yourself to being intentional about being a gatekeeper for your child's heart and mind - no apologies. It will be impossible to protect them entirely, but these simple steps are a good start toward giving them a good shot at never knowing the dark world of a porn addiction.

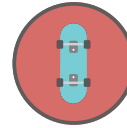
MARRIAGE PLAN



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.

MARRIAGE PLAN



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.**

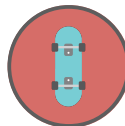
Love and Respect - Write an Annual Letter:

- **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.**

DOWNLOAD THE PARENT CUE APP



itunes



google play

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

