

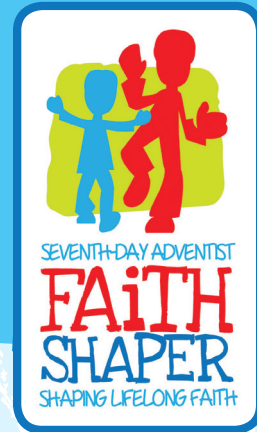
The faith shaper guide to

HOMES EMPOWERED

Shaping Lifelong Faith Through: **Homes Empowered**
children.adventist.org.au/faith-shaper



7 Essential Faith Experiences



For Home,
Church and School

- S** Service and Mission
- H** Homes Empowered
- A** Authentic Relationships
- P** Participation
- I** Intergenerational Connections
- N** Noteworthy Memory Events
- G** God Encounters

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But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord
and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18, NIV)



HOMES EMPOWERED

INTRODUCTION

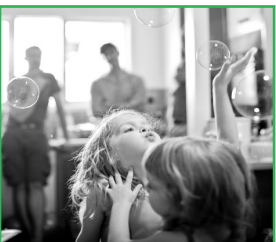
Welcome to these notes on Homes Empowered. Ministry and discipleship that happens at church is extremely important, but it can be made seven times more effective by ensuring that families and homes are empowered and equipped as centres of discipleship, seven days a week.

Homes are places where children need to experience all seven of the faith shaper experiences. They need to be engaged in 'Service' activities and be connected to the mission of the church. Home is the place where 'Authentic Relationships' need to be built, where 'God Encounters' happen and 'Noteworthy Memories' are made. Please read the other faith shaping booklets for more ideas.

Blessings

The Discipleship Ministry Team

South Pacific Division Seventh-day Adventist Church



SHAPING FAITH AT HOME

Julie Weslake

Because parents are primary spiritual mentors of children, it is essential to extend ministry into the home and partner with them. Imagine the eternal impact when we empower the people who have the most influence on the faith development of children and have the potential to ensure a lifelong connection to God and to the church.

“If we want our children to have a faith that influences the way they live their lives - and the critical life decisions they make - then in our homes we need to be modelling faith through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.”

Mark Holman, Faith At Home

“Your child’s faith will likely be a reflection of your faith. If you want your children to have faith that lasts, they need to see that your faith relationship with Christ is a lasting one.”

Mark Holman, Faith at Home

“As the family goes, so goes the future of the church. Religious life in the home is more influential than the church.” Research found that Mum and Dad are two to three times more influential than any church program.”

(Dr Peter Benson, Search Institute)

“For all their specialised training, church professionals realize that if a child is not receiving basic Christian nurture in the home, even the best teachers and curriculum will have minimal impact. Once a week exposure simply cannot compete with daily experience where personal formation is concerned.”

Marjorie Thomson – The Forming Centre

The Valuegenesis study 2 by Barry Gane found that the faith of the family you grew up in, is one of the highest factors (82%) that influences faith development.

“There are two powerful influences on the planet – the church and the home. They both exist because God initiated them. If they work together they can potentially make a greater impact than if they work alone.”

Reggie Joiner, Think Orange p.20

“When a church - intentionally or not – assumes a family’s responsibilities in the arena of spiritually nurturing children, it fosters an unhealthy dependence upon the church to relieve the family of its biblical responsibility.”

George Barna, Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions p.81

“We best serve the next generation when church and parents work together as a team, celebrating the crucial role of parents and the essential role of the faith community.”

Children Matter, p.165

Biblical Mandate:

- “Honour your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” Exodus 20:12
Family is a model of obedience and love – a life centred on God
- “Children’s children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.” Proverbs 17:6
- In the Old Testament the family was the main source of influence on a child. This place where generations lived together was to be a place of mutual respect and love.
- “Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders build in vain. Unless the Lord looks after the city the guards stand watch in vain.” Psalms 127:1
- “Children are a heritage from the Lord, a reward from Him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them” Psalms 127, 3,4,5.
- “We will not hide them from their descendants, we will tell the next generation the praise worthy deeds of the Lord, His power and the wonder he has done. . . He commanded our ancestors to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born and they in turn would tell their children.
So the next generation will put their trust in God. So they’ll not forget and keep His commands. So they would be loyal and faithful to God and not stubborn and rebellious.” Psalm 78:1-8

Parental responsibility is a biblical mandate. Unfortunately parents have abdicated this role to the church and churches have embraced this responsibility without ensuring that they in turn equip and empower parents to be the primary spiritual nurturers.

The Role of Family:

"The family is the place . . . where character is taught and caught." It is where we learn that we are loved and cared for. It is where we learn that we have worth and have something to contribute. It is where family members show one another what God is like and how He relates to us. . . . It is where children learn obedience so that they will understand what it means to obey God. Home is where we learn who God is and learn to love Him. . . . It's where we learn to live unselfishly with other people, taking them into consideration." (Majorie Thompson, Family the Forming Centre)

Factors Which Maximise the Sharing of Values:

- Parents having a strong value system
 - Parents agreeing with each other on important values
 - Parents living by their stated values
 - Parents getting along well together
 - Parents operating a democratic style of family government
 - Parents who are warm, loving, and accepting
 - Discipline which is love oriented – firm control and high support
 - Good relationships between parents and children
 - Parents actively talking about their values
- (Rodger Dudley – Passing on the Torch)

Formed Through Life Together:

"Children learn what they live. They absorb knowledge of the world by what they experience and observe . . . learn more from what adults do than from what adults say." (Majorie Thompson)

- Children are blessed when families enjoy God together
 - Children get to see a real life being refined by God.
 - "Train up a child in the way they should go but make sure you go that way yourself"
- (Charles Spurgeon)

Family Worship:

"The work of parents, which means so much, is greatly neglected. Awake parents from your spiritual slumber and understand that the very first teaching the child receives is to be given to him by you. You are to teach your little ones to know Christ." (E.G. White, Child Guidance, p.23)

"Family worship seems to be a significant factor in helping youth develop a deep, rich, life-changing faith. It is interesting that something as simple to do as regular family devotions could be so helpful. Think what might happen if this family activity were reinstated in each household." (Roger Dudley. Valuegenesis Study about Faith.)

"Fathers and mothers, however pressing your business, do not fail to gather your family around God's altar. Ask for the guardianship of Holy angels in your home."

(E.G. White, Ministry of Healing, p. 393)

Family Worship –D6 Model

Many parents would like to build the faith of their children, but they have given this responsibility to the church because they feel that they are incapable or that they don't have the time.

The D6 model offers hope because faith can be built by just making simple changes to the normal routines of the home. D6 gives a plan that is simple even though it still requires homes to be intentional about making it happen.

Deuteronomy Chapter 6:4-9 was given by God through Moses as a model of discipleship and retention for the children of Israel as they embarked on entering the 'Promised Land'. The model emphasises the families passing on faith through love, daily rituals and storytelling.

*"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children, **talk** about them when you sit at home and when you **walk** along the road, when you **lie down** and when you **get up**. Tie them as symbols on your **hands** and bind them as an emblem on your **forehead**. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."* Deuteronomy 6: 4-9

Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one: Ensure your children know that God is everything to you. That you worship God and your lives are all about Him. Be strategic in focussing on the big picture of a right relationship with God.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your

strength: Love is central to following God. Any time we pass down rules and truth it must be in the context of authentic love. Children need to know and experience God's love which will give them the passion to want to love God – that god can be trusted with your heart.

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts: Parents need to have a passion to love God themselves. It has to be in their hearts before they can pass it on to their children. Faith needs to be personal and active, as kids get a front row seat to their parent's faith.

Impress them on your children: There will be a lot of things that will distract your children from following God, so parents need to be intentional about building a faith that was relevant to the everyday life. This faith does not just exist on Sabbath, but is lived – influencing your whole life.

Faith nurture happens best when it is connected to the daily rhythms of life. Moses highlighted 4 important family routine times during the day.

Intentional Activities:

Talk about them when you sit at home - Meal Time – focussed discussion as a teacher to establish core values .

- When you walk along the road - Drive Time → incidental informal relational faith talk.
- When you lie down - Bed Time – intimate conversations that connect with the child's heart. Talk about the days highs and lows.
- When you get up - Morning Time – a time to connect with and spiritually encourage your children.

1. **Prayer** – Pray daily with and for your children - Mealtime, Bedtime, Morning time.
2. **Devotional activities** – memorise scripture, read the Sabbath School lesson and do home activities with children. Read scripture together.
3. Give children one-on-one time alone with parent.
4. Have family fun times.
5. Establish and enjoy yearly spiritual rituals such as Christmas, Easter and birthdays.
6. Establish and enjoy weekly/daily rituals such as Sabbath and daily worship.
7. **Talk about faith – listen**

- Talk about what you value and why
- Discuss your family faith story
- Name what you are thankful for
- Talk about people who have made a difference in your lives
- Discuss when you have had doubts
- Talk about what you learnt at church
- Ask:
 - What is one thing that you would like to do to help someone?
 - What is something that happened to you recently that made you pause and thank God?
 - What did you learn at church today?
 - How is this going to change your life?

Family Worship:

Principles:

- **Start Early** - Read Bible stories to children when very young and continue through childhood
- **Start Small** – with 10 mins at breakfast time, or bedtime
- **Be Realistic** - Pick a time that works best for everyone's schedules.
- **Have a Plan** – get the resources together that you need.
- **Make it Simple** – if you make it too difficult you won't want to do it again.
- **Make it Interactive** - Multi sensory. If kids have a hard time sitting down, get him up with some activity – drama – construction.
- **Make it Enjoyable** - If the kids seem bored, don't give up. Find something new.
- **Make it apply to kids life** - Reinforce the application throughout the week after devotion.
- **Be Regular** – ensure you set a routine and try and keep to it.
- **Give it Time** – you may feel like stopping, but persist and soon it will be part of your daily life.
- **Be Age Specific**
- Help older children to develop their own personal habits of prayer and Bible reading
- Morning mealtime can become a sharing of what each family member has read.

Ideas:

- Pray – for each other, for your neighbours, for the sick.
- TSP – Thanks, Sorry, Please. Let everyone have a turn.
- Sing – let everyone choose.

- Read Bible Stories - Have character building story books for child to read for themselves.
- Read Devotionals

Incidental – God Sightings:

As well as intentional and planned God Encounters in the D6 routine moments of the day, there will be many incidental moments where you can talk about and reflect on God's goodness and His character. These are wonderful opportunities to make God real to the children and apply God's word to their everyday lives. Pray for people that you see who are in need and discuss how you can help.

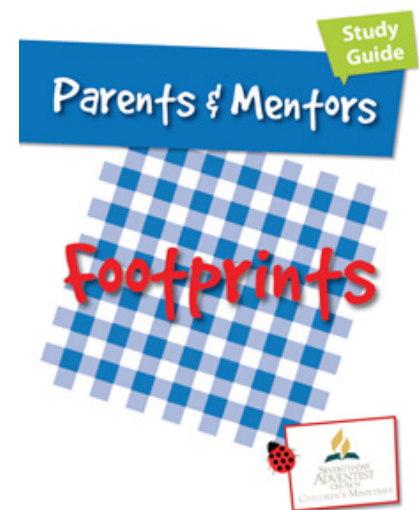
Bedtime Blessings:

"May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you. May the Lord continue to make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord continue to look upon you with favour and give you peace." Numbers 6: 24-26

Bible Study resource to equip parents and mentors

Footprints for Parents: (from Kids in Discipleship)

1. Come to Jesus
2. You Can Know
3. Invite Jesus to Shape Your Life
4. Establish Biblical Priorities
5. Love Others
6. Allow Godly Friends to Help You Grow
7. Bring Others to Jesus
8. Lead Your family In Worship
9. Teach Your Child to Love God's Word
10. Mentor Your Child to Jesus
11. Equip Your Child to Stand For Jesus
12. The Discipleship Adventure.



Bible Study resource for Family Discipleship

Daily Bites: (adapted from K.I.D)

Come to Jesus:

- Lesson 1 - Disciples Wanted for a Lifetime Adventure!
- Lesson 2 - Jesus, a Friend You Can Trust



- Lesson 3 - The Gift of Jesus' Grace
- Lesson 4 - Spend Time Alone with God
- Lesson 5 - Your Time, Talents & Treasure
- Lesson 6 - Honour God with Your Choices

Dig Deeper:

- Lesson 1 - The Bible -- It's the Truth!
- Lesson 2 - Father, Son, & Holy Spirit
- Lesson 3 - Creation, Family and Sabbath
- Lesson 4 - God's Law
- Lesson 5 - The War Between Jesus and Satan
- Lesson 6 - Jesus -- Your High Priest in Heaven
- Lesson 7 - The Gift of Prophecy
- Lesson 8 - God's Faithful People
- Lesson 9 - What Happens When People Die?
- Lesson 10 - Jesus' Second Coming and Your Future!
- Lesson 11 - You and Your Church Family
- Lesson 12 - Follow Jesus in Baptism and Communion



Share Jesus:

- Lesson 1 - Discover Jesus Vision for You
- Lesson 2 - Discover Your Special Design
- Lesson 3 - Make Friends for Jesus
- Lesson 4 - Lead Your Friends to Choose Jesus
- Lesson 5 - Study the Bible with Your Friends
- Lesson 6 - Dare to Stand for Jesus

Daily Bite Worship Week:

- Day 1 - God Sightings
- Day 2 - The Bridge
- Day 3 - Into the Word
- Day 4 - 'D' Day
- Day 5 - My World
- T.A.G. - Time Alone With God



7 Shaping Faith at home

Essential Experiences



Shaping Faith at Home

As you plan to give your children the experiences they need for life-long faith, have a look at the following checklist and tick off how many practices you do. Put a star beside those that you are going to try.

Service and Mission

- ☐ Take your children with you as you build friendships with neighbours.
- ☐ Provide opportunities and resources for your children to serve others with you – home; neighbourhood; church; world.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for your children to respond with compassion and generosity.
- ☐ Encourage your children to share their faith story and Sabbath School Bible learning.

Homes Empowered

- ☐ Spend personal time to have your own God Encounters and develop a strong faith.
- ☐ Invest time and energy into your marriage.
- ☐ Have quality family fun times.
- ☐ Keep a balance between attending church programs and having family time.
- ☐ Celebrate every milestone or life stage of your children.
- ☐ Have regular family devotions, faith conversations and other family rituals and traditions.

Authentic Relationships

- ☐ Provide your children with positive role models and mentors from all generations.
- ☐ Be a good role model and build a trusting relationship.
- ☐ Talk to and play with your children.

- ☐ Ensure your children have safe environments and say No! to sexual, emotional and physical abuse.

Participation

- ☐ Accompany your children to church worship and programs.
- ☐ Ensure they can participate, use their gifts and feel that they belong.
- ☐ Guide and mentor them to participate in meaningful ways in church programs.
- ☐ Allow children to contribute in family worship.

Intergenerational Connections

- ☐ Plan for and engage your children in shared experiences with all generations and build authentic relationship with them.
- ☐ Worship in a church where there is a mix of all generations.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for generations to celebrate faith milestones and spiritual anchors together.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for your children to learn and serve alongside other generations.

Noteworthy Memory Events

- ☐ Create special daily, weekly and yearly rituals and traditions.
- ☐ Support your children as they participate in Conference wide memory events such as Camps.
- ☐ Allow your children to respond to God's call on their lives.
- ☐ Accompany them to events that allow them to be inspired by people with a vibrant faith.

God Encounters

- ☐ Provide experiences that allow children to encounter Jesus intimately, personally and regularly through prayer and reflection.
- ☐ Use worship activities that are experiential, multisensory and engaging.
- ☐ Tell awesome Bible stories and faith stories that reach the heart and mind.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for your children to experience and imagine how their personal story is intertwined with the big picture of the Bible.
- ☐ Help your children to enter into the wonder and mystery of the Bible through discussion and questioning and to respond using their individual gifts such as art, music, construction or drama.

**"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
(2 Peter 3:18, NIV)**

For more ideas visit children.adventist.org.au/faith-shaper

Written by Julie Weslake



GRACELINK@HOME

Kindergarten Year B, Quarter 3, Week 1



Big Community Idea
In God's family, we
love and protect
each other.

Big Story:
The Little Prince
(2 Kings 11)

Big Question:
Who can we
love and protect
today?

Big Verse:

Love (Cross arms over chest) each other (point to others) like
brothers (point to a boy) and sisters (point to a girl)
Romans 12:10 (palms together, then open).



Breakfast Time:

- Discuss what it means to love each other like brothers and sisters.
- Brainstorm with your family ways that we can love and protect each other.
- Pray thanking God for His love and protection, help us to love and protect each other.



Drive Time:

- As you drive along, talk about people and things that protect us. Police, Fire, Ambulance, road rules etc.
- Talk about how you love and protect your child and then talk about how we can love others.



Play Time:

- Build or else draw a church together. Talk about some of the people you know at church. Talk about how the people at church love and protect each other. Give examples.
- Help your children cut out a paper people chain, and then draw faces of people from church on it. Help your child to share the chain with someone.



Bed Time:

- Read or tell your child a story from the Bible or GraceLink lesson.
- Ask, Ask why was Joash hidden in the temple? Who hid him? How many years was he hidden for? How old was he when he became king? Who protects us? How can we love and protect others in our home and church?



Prayer Time:

- Hug your child and encourage them to say a short prayer.
- Pray thanking Jesus for loving us and giving us a family who care for us too and help us to love and care for others.

Let's talk about A-Z

Building Authentic Relationships

Shaping Faith

About:

Building authentic, meaningful relationships with your kids is one of the 7 keys to building lifelong faith in your children. One of the most common barriers to this is time. But have you ever stopped to think about how much time you spend in the car with your kids? Between school, running errands and all the little stops along the way, time in the car takes a serious chunk of your family's day.

With life getting busier and busier we want to share a way that you can turn the often mundane car time into meaningful building authentic relationships time.

So be it a short trip to school or the supermarket, or a long multi hour road trip. The aim is to get you and your kids talking about what really matters. This simple DIY travel game that will have the entire car discovering, talking, reading and engaging with each other (instead of looking at your iPhone).

What you will need:

- A to Z: Let's talk about... printable pattern
- Printer
- A4 paper or card
- Party ice cream cup
- Scissors
- Glue stick

Getting Started:

Download and print the 'A to Z: Let's Talk About...' printable pattern from www.children.adventist.org.au. One day while at home instruct your kids to cut out and assemble their A to Z cups with the scissors and glue stick. They can decorate them if they want to.

The Game:

Before you go pick one of the topic cards for the game (Thank God for, I think, I wonder, God created, Today...) or make up your own topic. Begin the game by pulling a letter from the stack and passing it around to everyone in the car. Whoever has an answer for that first gets to put that token in their cup.

With some topics at the end of the car ride, everyone counts their tokens and the player with the most wins! (Optional). This game is great for short and long car rides.

Modified from 'The Great Alphabet Race' By Rachel Faucett (<http://www.handmadecharlotte.com/race-alphabet-diy-travel-game/>)

Download from children.adventist.org.au



'10' things I love about you...

Building Authentic Relationships

Shaping Faith

About:

We believe that we were created by a loving God, so it is only natural that children need to feel loved in order to best develop and succeed.

The power of words is an unbelievable thing. They cultivate a range of emotions. Words can inspire, encourage, devastate, uplift, tear down and ultimately change the direction of a child or spouse's day, week, and in some rare instances, their life.

Be purposely intentional by taking just ten minutes each day to make a profound difference for one you love by communicating 'I love you'

How to start:

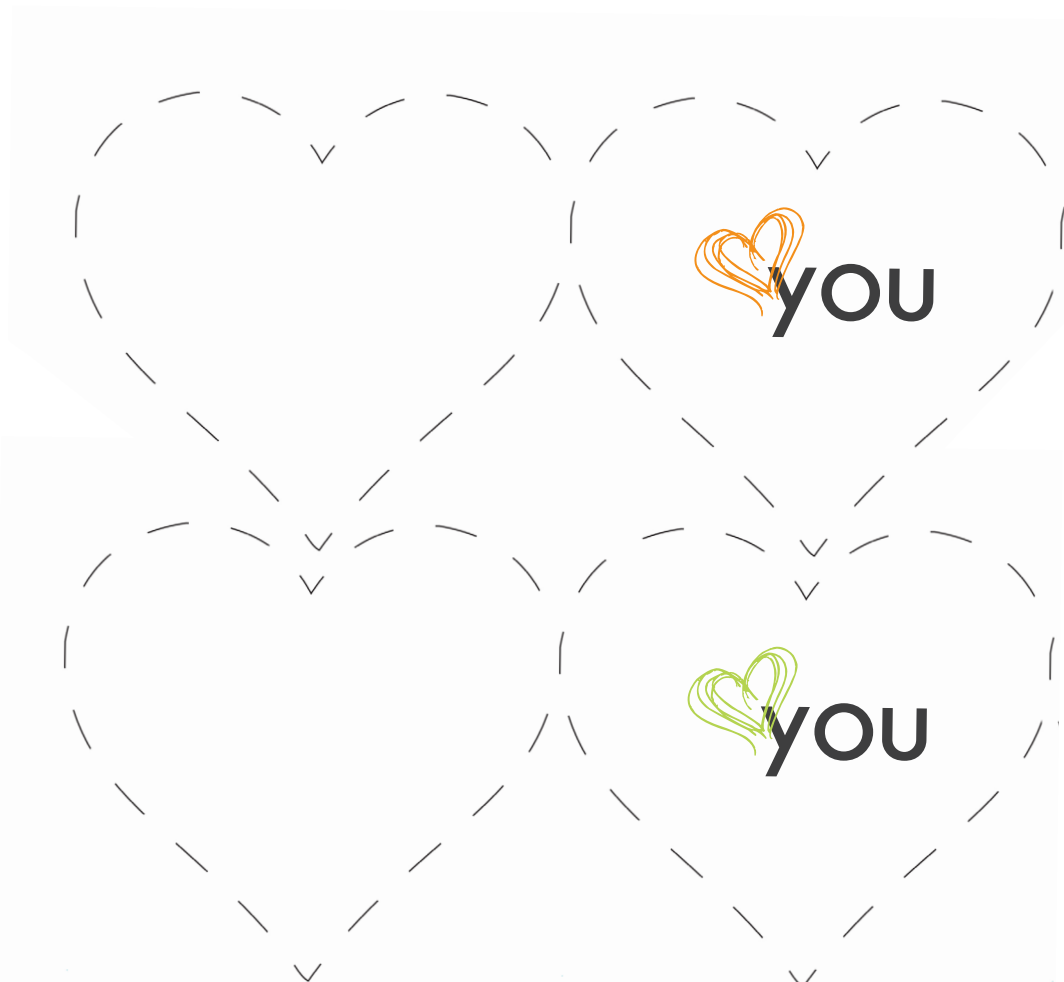
Print out or make some "I Love You" note cards on white paper/card and write 1-10 things that you love about the recipient.

Once you have written on your "I Love You" note card place your note in a lunch-box, on a pillow, in a school bag or spouses briefcase for your child or spouse to discover. Make sure to do this on a regular basis.

Don't save it for another day:

Don't save it for another day because you can't think of anything fancy to say. You do not have to share Shakespearean verses, just write what it is you love and appreciate about that person.

To find out more ways to say 'I Love You' download our '5 ways to say I love you' resource from our website:
children.adventist.org.au
 or visit www.5lovelanguages.com



40 Developmental Assets® for Early Childhood (ages 3 to 5)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets®**—that help young children grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



External Assets	Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family support—Parent(s) and/or primary caregiver(s) provide the child with high levels of consistent and predictable love, physical care, and positive attention in ways that are responsive to the child's individuality. Positive family communication—Parent(s) and/or primary caregiver(s) express themselves positively and respectfully, engaging young children in conversations that invite their input. Other adult relationships—With the family's support, the child experiences consistent, caring relationships with adults outside the family. Caring neighbors—The child's network of relationships includes neighbors who provide emotional support and a sense of belonging. Caring climate in child-care and educational settings—Caregivers and teachers create environments that are nurturing, accepting, encouraging, and secure. Parent involvement in child care and education—Parent(s), caregivers, and teachers together create a consistent and supportive approach to fostering the child's successful growth.
	Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community cherishes and values young children—Children are welcomed and included throughout community life. Children seen as resources—The community demonstrates that children are valuable resources by investing in a child-rearing system of family support and high-quality activities and resources to meet children's physical, social, and emotional needs. Service to others—The child has opportunities to perform simple but meaningful and caring actions for others. Safety—Parent(s), caregivers, teachers, neighbors, and the community take action to ensure children's health and safety.
	Boundaries & Expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family boundaries—The family provides consistent supervision for the child and maintains reasonable guidelines for behavior that the child can understand and achieve. Boundaries in child-care and educational settings—Caregivers and educators use positive approaches to discipline and natural consequences to encourage self-regulation and acceptable behaviors. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors encourage the child in positive, acceptable behavior, as well as intervene in negative behavior, in a supportive, nonthreatening way. Adult role models—Parent(s), caregivers, and other adults model self-control, social skills, engagement in learning, and healthy lifestyles. Positive peer relationships—Parent(s) and caregivers seek to provide opportunities for the child to interact positively with other children. Positive expectations—Parent(s), caregivers, and teachers encourage and support the child in behaving appropriately, undertaking challenging tasks, and performing activities to the best of her or his abilities.
	Constructive Use of Time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Play and creative activities—The child has daily opportunities to play in ways that allow self-expression, physical activity, and interaction with others. Out-of-home and community programs—The child experiences well-designed programs led by competent, caring adults in well-maintained settings. Religious community—The child participates in age-appropriate religious activities and caring relationships that nurture her or his spiritual development. Time at home—The child spends most of her or his time at home participating in family activities and playing constructively, with parent(s) guiding TV and electronic game use.
Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Motivation to mastery—The child responds to new experiences with curiosity and energy, resulting in the pleasure of mastering new learning and skills. Engagement in learning experiences—The child fully participates in a variety of activities that offer opportunities for learning. Home-program connection—The child experiences security, consistency, and connections between home and out-of-home care programs and learning activities. Bonding to programs—The child forms meaningful connections with out-of-home care and educational programs. Early literacy—The child enjoys a variety of pre-reading activities, including adults reading to her or him daily, looking at and handling books, playing with a variety of media, and showing interest in pictures, letters, and numbers.
	Positive Values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Caring—The child begins to show empathy, understanding, and awareness of others' feelings. Equality and social justice—The child begins to show concern for people who are excluded from play and other activities or not treated fairly because they are different. Honesty—The child begins to express her or his views appropriately and to stand up for a growing sense of what is fair and right. Integrity—The child begins to understand the difference between truth and lies, and is truthful to the extent of her or his understanding. Responsibility—The child begins to follow through on simple tasks to take care of her- or himself and to help others. Self-regulation—The child increasingly can identify, regulate, and control her or his behaviors in healthy ways, using adult support constructively in particularly stressful situations.
	Social Competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and decision making—The child begins to plan for the immediate future, choosing from among several options and trying to solve problems. Interpersonal skills—The child cooperates, shares, plays harmoniously, and comforts others in distress. Cultural awareness and sensitivity—The child begins to learn about her or his own cultural identity and to show acceptance of people who are racially, physically, culturally, or ethnically different from her or him. Resistance skills—The child begins to sense danger accurately, to seek help from trusted adults, and to resist pressure from peers to participate in unacceptable or risky behavior. Peaceful conflict resolution—The child begins to compromise and resolve conflicts without using physical aggression or hurtful language.
	Positive Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Personal power—The child can make choices that give a sense of having some influence over things that happen in her or his life. Self-esteem—The child likes her- or himself and has a growing sense of being valued by others. Sense of purpose—The child anticipates new opportunities, experiences, and milestones in growing up. Positive view of personal future—The child finds the world interesting and enjoyable, and feels that he or she has a positive place in it.

40 Developmental Assets® for Middle Childhood (ages 8-12)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets®**—that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



External Assets

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Support | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive family communication—Parent(s) and child communicate positively. Child feels comfortable seeking advice and counsel from parent(s). 3. Other adult relationships—Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s). 4. Caring neighborhood—Child experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring school climate—Relationships with teachers and peers provide a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school. |
| Empowerment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community values youth—Child feels valued and appreciated by adults in the community. 8. Children as resources—Child is included in decisions at home and in the community. 9. Service to others—Child has opportunities to help others in the community. 10. Safety—Child feels safe at home, at school, and in his or her neighborhood. |
| Boundaries & Expectations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family boundaries—Family has clear and consistent rules and consequences and monitors the child's whereabouts. 12. School boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring the child's behavior. 14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults in the child's family, as well as nonfamily adults, model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive peer influence—Child's closest friends model positive, responsible behavior. 16. High expectations—Parent(s) and teachers expect the child to do her or his best at school and in other activities. |
| Constructive Use of Time | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative activities—Child participates in music, art, drama, or creative writing two or more times per week. 18. Child programs—Child participates two or more times per week in cocurricular school activities or structured community programs for children.. 19. Religious community—Child attends religious programs or services one or more times per week. 20. Time at home—Child spends some time most days both in high-quality interaction with parents and doing things at home other than watching TV or playing video games. |

Internal Assets

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Commitment to Learning | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation—Child is motivated and strives to do well in school. 22. Learning Engagement—Child is responsive, attentive, and actively engaged in learning at school and enjoys participating in learning activities outside of school. 23. Homework—Child usually hands in homework on time. 24. Bonding to school—Child cares about teachers and other adults at school. 25. Reading for Pleasure—Child enjoys and engages in reading for fun most days of the week. |
| Positive Values | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to help other people. 27. Equality and social justice—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to speak up for equal rights for all people. 28. Integrity—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to stand up for one's beliefs. 29. Honesty—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to tell the truth. 30. Responsibility—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to accept personal responsibility for behavior. 31. Healthy Lifestyle—Parent(s) tell the child it is important to have good health habits and an understanding of healthy sexuality. |
| Social Competencies | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and decision making—Child thinks about decisions and is usually happy with results of her or his decisions. 33. Interpersonal Competence—Child cares about and is affected by other people's feelings, enjoys making friends, and, when frustrated or angry, tries to calm her- or himself. 34. Cultural Competence—Child knows and is comfortable with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and with her or his own cultural identity. 35. Resistance skills—Child can stay away from people who are likely to get her or him in trouble and is able to say no to doing wrong or dangerous things. 36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Child seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently. |
| Positive Identity | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal power—Child feels he or she has some influence over things that happen in her or his life. 38. Self-esteem—Child likes and is proud to be the person that he or she is. 39. Sense of purpose—Child sometimes thinks about what life means and whether there is a purpose for her or his life. 40. Positive view of personal future—Child is optimistic about her or his personal future. |

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5 ways to say 'I Love You'

Building Authentic Relationships

Shaping Faith

About:

We believe that we were created by a loving God, so it is only natural that children need to feel loved in order to best develop and succeed. But if you and your child speak different love languages, your display of love might get lost in translation – affecting your child's attitude, behaviour, and development.

In order to help you communicate "I Love You" effectively with your child we have developed this simple activity, based on Gary Chapman's 5 love languages, as a way to empower your home through building authentic relationships. The idea is that once you have discovered your child's love language (see below) you can cut out the hearts that relate to your child. Sit down on your own or with your child and on the back of each heart write down specific actions, communication methods and things you will aim to avoid as you communicate to your child "I Love You." Keep these hearts in a safe place that will remind you daily how to best communicate "I Love You" in your child's love language.

Discover the languages

This activity has been based on Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell's book 'The 5 love languages of children'. To learn more you can purchase this book from any christian book store. Or, alternatively you can visit www.5lovelanguages.com to find out what your child's specific love language is by playing the love languages mystery game with your child or read through the free love language profiles.



Love Language

Words
of affirmation

- Communication -

Encouraging words
Compliments
Affirming spirit

- Avoid -

Emotionally harsh words
Undue criticism

- Actions -

Spoken words
Written cards and letters

Download from Children.adventist.org.au

Faith @ Home

The Daily 5:
Essential Relational
Moments

Shaping Faith

Big Verse:

"Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away on a journey, when you are lying down and when you are getting up again. Tie them to your hands as a reminder, and wear them on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Deuteronomy 6:7-9

1. When they first wake up:

How do you greet your child when they first wake up or as they are getting ready for the day?

- Remember to say "I love you and I'm glad that you are my son/daughter!" Go beyond the routine of just "Good Morning".
- Compliment: Praise is the act of expressing approval, admiration or complimenting your child. Doing this in the morning not only helps your child start out the day feeling positive and confident, it also provides them with the reassurance that you as a parent are proud of them and love them.

2. When they leave in the

How do you leave your child in the morning? If you have only one smile in you, give it to the people you love.

- Speaking "life" into your child through "**Words of Encouragement.**" The word "encourage" means "to make courageous." When you speak words of encouragement you are giving your child that extra energy—extra courage—to take into the day.
- **Affection:** do you offer any kind of affection? A hug, high-five, kiss on the cheek, hand on their shoulder.

3. When they are gone for the day:

How do you connect with your child when they are gone during the day? Do you put notes in their lunch box, pocket or school bag for them to find. It is important to let your child know that you love and are thinking about them even when you are not there.

4. When they arrive home:

How do you greet your child when they arrive home? Whenever your child comes home greet them with the "big 4" affection, excitement, appreciation and empathy. This says to your child they are more important to you than anything else you might be doing when they walk in the door.

5. When they go to bed:

How do you say goodnight to your child right before they go to bed?

- **Gratitude & Appreciation:** By noticing and expressing what you value about your child you not only build their confidence but when you appreciate something you are putting extra value into it. The key is to notice and thank your child for something specific.
- **Prayer:** Should be the final words your child hears from you.

A meaningful "good night" can allow your child to fall asleep peacefully. It also reinforces the fact that you love, appreciate and care for them no matter what has happened during the day.





CULTIVATING FAITH IN FAMILIES

Thom Schultz

Growing up on a farm, Joani learned early the meaning of faith. Each year her dad, Bud, would begin the process: preparing the soil, planting the seeds, cultivating the crops, and harvesting the grain. But life on the farm wasn't always that smooth.

Every week the family would watch the sky and give thanks for receiving just the right amount of rain and sunshine to grow the crops. Other times they'd struggle, for nature didn't always deliver prosperity. Sometimes ominous tornado clouds loomed. Other times hail shredded fledgling greenery. And occasionally life -- giving rain overdosed into torrents of devastating flood water.

Growing up on the farm involved more than agriculture. Joani saw how her parents dealt with success and failure. She learned how faith in God put life in perspective. By watching her dad work unceasingly from dawn to dark -- but always making Sunday a day of rest -- she learned the importance of worship and remembering the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. She watched her mom live with a heart of love and compassion, serving wherever anyone was needed. Visits to the nursing home with her mom taught that caring for the needy was a way of life. Whenever a neighbor had a special need, Joani's parents were there (and still are today!). Her family was fertile soil where the roots of faith grew deep.

Parents indeed are God's design for passing along the faith for generations. In *The Family-Friendly Church*, Ben Freudenburg and Rick Lawrence write:

“Parents are the primary Christian educators in the church, and the family is the God-ordained institution for building faith in young people and for passing faith on from one generation to the next.”

Search Institute produced a landmark study called Effective Christian Education: A National Study of Protestant Congregations. Within the study lies a profound message for church educators. Search discovered what factors were involved in producing people who now profess a mature faith. Here’s what they found:

- **Talk with mother.** Analyses of the results of this study reveal that certain personal experiences have a measurable positive impact on the maturity of faith of the believer. The most powerful of these experiences is conversation about God with one’s mother during the ages of 5 through 12. But among the five mainline denominations 16- to 18-year-olds, almost 40 percent say that event rarely or never occurred for them. Among adults, 26 percent did not have that experience in childhood.
- **Talk with father, relatives, friends.** Talking with one’s father about faith or about God at the ages of 13 to 15 is another powerful correlate with maturity of faith, but 56 percent say this has occurred rarely or never for them. Other powerful experiences as a child or youth are such things as talking with other relatives about faith, the experience of having family devotions, engaging in family projects to help others, and, at the current moment, the number of friends who have strong religious interests.

The Church’s Role:

One could think all this “family impact” information diminishes the church’s role in Christian education. To the contrary! The church, more than ever, is called to equip families to become havens where Christ’s love shines. It just means that we in the church need to behave differently to capitalize on these hands-on faith laboratories. And life won’t always look neat and tidy.

It’s this kind of thinking that is changing the church. Many age-specific ministers are transforming their jobs into some form of family ministry. Weary and frustrated by their short-term impact on kids, they’re realizing it’s time to partner with parents in the learning process. Plus, it means looking carefully at how they relate to parents and their role. Cutting-edge family ministers are passionate about redirecting the church’s energies to families.

If this is true, what are we doing to help? How can we get families talking about their faith? Can we prompt conversations to take place between moms, dads, and kids?

Helping Roots Go Deeper:

Reaching families and supporting them in Christian educational efforts doesn't have to be overwhelming -- it just involves a new way of thinking. We believe you'll find parents welcoming the church's overtures to create family time together. George Barna, president of Barna Research Group, Ltd., reported in a news release that "One of the greatest needs expressed by adults is to have a healthy, happy, and successful family. Millions of adults, however, do not believe that they are as successful in this effort as they wish to be. And despite the fact that four out of five Protestant churches (80 percent) offer specific family-oriented ministry, most adults indicate that those programs and ministry efforts achieve only a marginal positive impact among their families."

But here's the good news: "Nearly two-third of parents (63 percent) said that their church should take on an increased role in assisting parents; among parents who are born again Christians, the opportunity is even greater: more than eight out of 10 (81 percent) claimed that their church should be more involved in helping them be better parents." Interestingly, parents weren't as keen about looking to public schools or government for help.

Parents do want help from the church. These ideas help parents see homes as fertile soil for God's Word to grow:

1. **Help families reclaim mealtime.** Maybe that means providing a time for families to eat together at church. Or maybe that means encouraging families to set aside certain meals that are off-limits for any scheduling conflicts. Jacquelyn Strickland, a licensed professional counselor, has developed a program for parents and adolescents called "Building Family Bridges." All families meet and share a meal at the beginning of each of the nine weekly sessions. During this mealtime together, participants are presented a mealtime discussion starter. This activity models how healthy families make time to eat together and demonstrates that this can be an excellent time for meaningful discussion. Jacquelyn also structures this activity into her own family to find out what is going on with her sons, ages 15 and 18.

Discussion starters may range from "Share what you are most grateful for this week" to "One difficulty I am having that I would like support for is..." It's also a good idea to let

family members take turns creating discussion starters.

And do you know what's amazing? Chatting and chewing becomes some of the most important time spent together during the session! Jacquelyn reports that before this, many families never ate together, much less had conversations of any significance during those times.

Your church could provide opportunities like that too!

2. **Make interactions with parents and kids nonthreatening.** Dave McClellan, former director of student ministries at The Chapel in Akron, Ohio, maps out an easy process for kids and parents to build relationships:
 - Get families in the same room.
 - Get parents interacting with kids other than their own.
 - Get parents interacting with their own kids.
3. **Provide training and resources.** More and more companies are publishing helps for families. In addition to the book for parents, Joani produced a four-session, church-led discussion guide. Families come together at church to learn how to conduct family devotions in an unforgettable way. (The sessions make for great family time at church, but can be done with parents only.) Families can experiment during the week and bring back questions, ideas, and support for one another. The books use all the educational techniques that we believe make a long-lasting faith impact.
4. **Help parents be alert to teachable moments.** When families put up their "God antennae," it's amazing what they can teach! For example, empower parents to use the media as a teaching tool. If someone on television uses foul language, engages in violence to solve a problem, or gets involved sexually with someone other than his or her spouse -- use these examples to teach Christian values. Say, "That's not the kind of language we use in our family." Or "Our family doesn't resort to violence to solve problems -- we talk it out." Or "We believe God invented marriage as a special relationship." Instead of letting the media run rampant without discussion, turn it around to open up topic discussions.
5. **Help parents just "be" with their kids.** Royce Frazier, a marriage and family therapist, says he helps parents "let go" and simply be present with their children without an agenda. Now doesn't that sound freeing? He's found that when parents stop trying so hard, they

actually are more successful in relating to each other and to their children!

- 6. Help parents realize their families don't have to be perfect.** Often there's a false perception that "Christian" families don't have problems -- they're perfect. Not true. Just page through Scripture and see for yourself. We can help families see that God's grace is sufficient for families today as it was in the Bible.

Tim Smith, family minister at Calvary Community Church in Westlake Village, California, recently taught a ten-week series called, "So You Thought Your Family Was Messed Up!" Every week the group explored Bible families who dealt with ten timeless issues. For instance, "Abraham's Move to the West Coast" dealt with a mobile society; "Lot's Last Night in Sodom" covered sexual identity, homosexuality, and same-sex marriage; "Ishmael's Single Mom" talked about single parenting; "Joseph's Wild Dreams" explored rivalries and jealousies; and "Joseph's Family Recovery" dealt with family healing. You get the idea. Making the Bible relevant for families makes roots go deep.

- 7. Help families see the sacred in the ordinary.** David Thomas points out that families are living "holy moments" all the time -- they just don't recognize it. What would happen if families would attach "God thoughts" to their day-to-day activities. What if bathing a child reminded the family of his or her baptism? What if eating a meal together could connect with the Lord's Supper? What if communicating with each other were a reminder of the gift of prayer?

Royce Frazier tells about a favorite tradition his family celebrates near Easter. They share a Passover meal. As they remember the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt, they too recall "near death" experiences that happened in the past. They celebrate the times the Angel of Death passed over their family. Miraculously, each child in the family has lived through a dangerous event that they retell each Passover. It's an incredible way for the Frazier family to give thanks for God's abundant grace and goodness.

10 STEPS TO SCREEN-PROOF OUR HOMES

Screen-Free Week is a great way to start making changes towards a healthier lifestyle. But why wait? Here are 10 steps that will help you create less screen-centric homes:

1. Rearrange the furniture! Turn your living room and family room into places for interaction, games, and conversation, not mini-theaters. Put the screens away, cover them, or at least make them less central to the room and your life. Make sure that the furniture is facing away from the screen, so if you want to watch, you have to make an effort.
2. Make children's bedrooms—and your own—screen-free.
3. Involve children in household chores, projects, and meal preparation.
4. Keep the remote in a drawer.
5. Before and after Screen-Free Week, set consistent limits about children's screen-time. Here are some categories of commitment that have worked for lots of other people:
 - No more than 2 hours per day of recreational screens 7 days per week. This includes ALL screens, so use of television, computer, and video games has to be planned beforehand, since time can pass very quickly.
 - No more than 2 hours per day on weekends of recreational screens and only an hour per day during the work/school week.
 - No more than 2 hours per day on weekends and NO recreational screens during the school/work week.

The above categories are not set in stone; the key thing is to find the balance that works for you and your family. **And remember, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for babies and toddlers under age 2.**

6. Set limits on your own screen time. The example you set is as important as your rules.
7. Institute screen-free (and phone-free) meals. Talk, laugh, tell stories, and enjoy your food. (For more, see [Family Meals: Let's Bring Them Back.](#))
8. Try not to rely on screens as a babysitter.
9. Carve out a block of screen-free time for the whole family every day.
10. Designate at least one day each week as Family Screen-Free Day.



www.screenfree.org

FAMILY MEALS: LET'S BRING THEM BACK

We can't overstate the importance of screen-free family meals. Eating together and engaging in conversation builds strong family bonds. It's an opportunity to help kids get in the habit of reflecting on their day, sharing stories, telling jokes, and talking about what's going on in the world. It's often during family meal conversations that family stories and family history get passed down from generation to generation.

What the research says:

- Family meals can ensure healthier eating,ⁱ especially when they are screen-free.ⁱⁱ
- Eating together is linked to healthier behavior and closer child-parent bonds, particularly among adolescents.ⁱⁱⁱ
- The more family meals teenagers have, the less likely it is that they will engage in substance abuse and other anti-social behaviors.^{iv}
- The meals also contribute to a closer, more honest, and more authentic bond between parents and kids. Three out of four teenagers report that they talk to their parents about what's going on in their life during family meals.^v And eight out of ten parents report that they find out more about what's going on in their children's lives when they eat together.^{vi}

What you can do:

- It's easier to maintain family meals throughout adolescence when they are an enjoyable tradition early on. If, however, you've drifted away from family meals and want to embrace them again, try to plan ahead so that eating together is not overly stressful for anyone.
- For single parent families, or when two parents are in the workplace, meal preparation, and cleaning up afterwards, can feel burdensome. It makes a big difference if everyone—even the youngest members—has a role to play. Distribute tasks like meal preparation, serving, setting and clearing the table, and washing dishes among all members of the family. Or work together—it's more fun that way.
- Try to agree on the menu beforehand, so that there's no tension about likes and dislikes of the food being served.
- For many families these days, work and school schedules make it impossible to eat together every day. If you can only manage to do it one, two, or three nights per week, aim for the same day(s) of the week and at the same times. Creating a regular schedule will make it easier to turn family meals into a lasting tradition.
- And remember—concentrate on the food and each other. Avoid electronic distractions!

ⁱ Woodruff, S. J., et al. (2010), Healthy eating index-C is positively associated with family dinner frequency among students in grades 6-8 from Southern Ontario, Canada. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 64(5), pp. 454-460.

ⁱⁱ Fitzpatrick, E. et al., (2007). Positive effects of family dinner are undone by television viewing *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 107, pp. 666-671.

ⁱⁱⁱ Survey from the Center for Alcohol and Substance Abuse (2010). The Importance of Family Dinners IV. New York: Columbia University; Sen, B. (2010). The relationship between frequency of family dinner and adolescent problem behaviors after adjusting for other family characteristics. *Journal of Adolescence*, 33(1), pp. 187-196.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v Sen, B. (2010). The relationship between frequency of family dinner and adolescent problem behaviors after adjusting for other family characteristics. *Journal of Adolescence*, 33(1), pp. 187-196.

^{vi} Ibid.

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101 SCREEN-FREE ACTIVITIES

At Home

1. Listen to the radio.
2. Write an article or story.
3. Paint a picture, a mural or a room.
4. Write to the President, your Representative, or Senators.
5. Read a book. Read to someone else.
6. Learn to change the oil or tire on a car. Fix something.
7. Write a letter to a friend or relative.
8. Make cookies, bread or jam and share with a neighbor.
9. Read magazines or newspapers. Swap them with friends.
10. Go through your closets and donate items to Goodwill, the Salvation Army, or a local rummage sale. Have a garage sale.
11. Start a diary/journal.
12. Play cards.
13. Make crafts to give as gifts. Try a new craft.
14. Do a crossword puzzle or play Sudoku.
15. Save money: cancel your cable TV!
16. Learn about a different culture. Have an international dinner.
17. Teach a child some of your favorite childhood games.
18. Study sign language.
19. Write a letter to your favorite author.
20. Cook dinner with friends or family.
21. Make cards for holidays or birthdays.
22. Play chess, bridge, or checkers.
23. Play charades.
24. Have a cup of coffee and a conversation.
25. Repair or refinish a piece of furniture.
26. Make a wooden flower box.
27. Wake up early and make pancakes.
28. Read a favorite poem. Read poems by poets new to you

Outdoors

29. Learn about native trees and flowers in your area.
30. Plan a picnic or barbecue.
31. Go bird watching. Learn the names of local birds.
32. Walk the dog. Wash the dog.

33. Plant a garden. Work in your garden.
34. Take a nature hike.
35. Feed fish or birds.
36. Watch the night sky through binoculars and identify different constellations. Observe the moon.
37. Learn to use a compass.
38. Take photographs and then organize them into an album.
39. Do yard work.
40. Go camping.
41. Take an early morning walk.
42. Climb a tree.
43. Watch a sunset; watch the sunrise with a friend.

Around Town

44. Attend a community concert. Listen to a local band.
45. Visit the library. Borrow some books.
46. Visit a local bookstore.
47. Visit the zoo.
48. Visit the countryside or town. Travel by bus or train.
49. Attend a religious service.
50. Go to a museum.

51. Walk to work or school.
52. Attend a live sports event.
53. Look for treasures at a yard sale.
54. Try out for a play. Attend a play.
55. Collect recycling and drop it off at a recycling center.
56. Learn to play a musical instrument.

On the Move

57. Go roller skating or ice skating.
58. Go swimming. Join a community swim team.
59. Start a community group that walks, runs or bikes.
60. Organize a game of touch football, baseball, or softball in the local park.
61. Go for a bicycle ride.
62. Learn yoga.
63. Play soccer, softball or volleyball.
64. Play Frisbee.
65. Workout.
66. Go dancing. Take a dance class.

In Your Community

67. Organize a community clean-up or volunteer for charity.
68. Become a tutor.

69. Join a choir. Sing!
70. Start a bowling team.
71. Visit and get to know your neighbors.
72. Start a fiction or public policy book group.

With the Kids

73. Make paper bag costumes and have a parade.
74. Design a poster for Screen- Free Week.
75. Discover your community center or local park activities.
76. Blow bubbles.
77. Draw family portraits.
78. Build a fort in the living room and camp out.
79. Research your family history. Make a family tree.
80. Invent a new game and teach it to your friends.
81. Make a sign to tape across the TV during Screen-Free Week.
82. Play hopscotch, hide & seek, or freeze-tag.
83. Organize a neighborhood scavenger hunt.
84. Play board games with family and friends.
85. Clean up or redecorate your room.

86. Make puppets out of old socks and have a puppet show.
87. Write a play with friends. Perform it at a nursing home.
88. Construct a kite. Fly it.
89. Go on a family trip or historical excursion.
90. If it's snowing, go sledding or make a snowman.
91. Create a collage out of old magazine pictures.
92. Shoot hoops with friends. Play a round of H.O.R.S.E.
93. Make a friendship bracelet.
94. Create a cookbook with all your favorite recipes.
95. Tell stories around a campfire.
96. Plan a slumber party.
97. Bake cakes or cookies and invite friends for a tea party.
98. Construct a miniature boat and float it on water.
99. Write a letter to your grandparents. Make a special card.
100. Create sidewalk art with chalk.
101. Everyone! Have a huge party to celebrate a Screen-Free Week!

www.screenfree.org





WHAT IS THE CONTEXT OF CHILD DISCIPLESHIP?

Aim Lower Journal Extract

Oikos was the context of Jesus' life:

In biblical culture, as in most cultures still today, people did not live primarily as individuals, but as families, especially extended families. How might this influence our understanding of discipleship?

For most of my Christian life I read the Gospels and assumed Jesus called his disciples to leave their families and go off by themselves with him. While it is true they did travel extensively and this took them away from their families for periods of time, I completely missed the context of Jesus' call to discipleship. Jesus didn't call them away from their extended family, he moved into their extended family!

No longer did the oikos exist primarily to provide for and protect the members of the family. As Jesus told them, no longer was the family business going to be catching and selling fish, now they were going to fish for people (Mark 1:17). The door of the house was thrown wide open and everyone was invited in—tax collectors, prostitutes, even the demon-possessed! (Mark 1:32) Jesus was showing them what it looks like to become a family on mission.

Oikos is the context of biblical discipleship:

Jesus trained the twelve disciples in the context of an extended family. Repeatedly the Gospel writers describe Jesus being in his oikos with the twelve disciples surrounded by a houseful of disciples (Mark 2:15; 3:30). Even as he most intentionally discipled the twelve, there was a large extended family who were benefiting from Jesus' teaching and modeling. More importantly, the

twelve primary disciples were spending time with a wider group of disciples into whom they could begin to pour their lives.

It is interesting that Jesus ended up sending 72 out on mission, which would be the exact number if each of the twelve disciples were to begin discipling five others from the oikos in Capernaum.

Read full article by Bob Rognline at: <http://www.aimlowerjournal.com/what-is-the-context-of-child-discipleship/>



GOD'S PLAN FOR GENERATIONAL BLESSING THROUGH THE CHURCH

Aim Lower Journal Extract

On the frontline of grace:

Another major thread in the faith and life tapestry is the role of the parent. The church fathers have been very clear on this. The parent or influential adult is a key 'means of grace' for the child. Martin Luther said 'Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the gospel.'

Karl Barth encourages parents to 'joyfully invite children to "rejoice" with them in God.' The parent has the potential to interact with the child in several ways. Here is a brief summary.

- **Facts** – the parent shares the facts of the faith.
- **Example** – the parent offers the child an example of Christ.
- **Revelation** – the parent equips the child for revelation by introducing them to the Scripture and prayer.
- **Doing** – the parent helps the child 'learn by doing'.
- **Parable** – the parent shares their own faith and that of others via story telling.

- **Tradition**- the parent promotes everyday rituals and traditions that provide both order, structure and faith content for the child.
- **Reference** – the parent is an anchor and a reference point for the child as they learn the lessons of life.

This ideal is not always the reality. In *Passing on the Faith* the authors tell us that their research indicates that the average church going family is not talking about faith to their children (65% reported no family devotional life).

Walter Brueggemann, theologian and writer notes that:

“One major function of intergenerational life is to transmit the stories and promises which identify the family, so that each new generation has an inheritance that gives both identity and roots, purpose and vocation.”

Much of this happens in the mundane things of life. The National Merit Scholars organisation found that the one thing that most of the high achieving students had in common was that they ate dinner with their family almost every day. The key factor in their growth was domestic. Christian thinkers from across the traditions and from around the world, are calling the church to rediscover the primacy of the ‘domestic church’. In the face of societal breakdown and the spiritually thin Christian household it may seem like a new message, but it’s timeless, echoing through the Scripture and church history.

The influential thinker and theologian Jonathan Edwards reminds us: ‘Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church consecrated to Christ... family education and order are some of the chief means of grace. If these fail all other means are likely to prove ineffectual.’ This positive influence is not solely the prerogative of the traditional two-parent family, with positive adults and circles of adult acquaintance also being crucial for a child’s growth and maturity. A University of California study into why some teens from difficult situations were more resilient than others discovered that: ‘They all experienced the non-exploitative interest, care and support of at least one adult during their childhood years – a parent or grandparent, aunt or uncle, older brother or sister, coach or teacher, pastor or youth leader.’

Read full article at: <http://www.aimlowerjournal.com/gods-plan-for-generational-blessing-through-the-church/>



GREAT RESOURCES

Books:

- 100 Creative Prayer Activities – Karen Holford (Pacific Press)
- 100 Quick and Easy Worship Ideas – Karen Holford (Pacific Press)
- 100 Creative Ways to Learn Memory Verses – Karen Holford (R & H)
- 100 Creative Activities for Sabbath- Karen Holford (Pacific Press)
- God loves Me 28 Ways – Charles Mills and Linda Koh.
- Learn About God's Love – Activities book, - (GC Children's Ministries)
- Sing About God's Love – Song book and CD - (GC Children's Ministries)
- God's Ten Promises – Kimberley Tagert-Paul (Pacific Press)
- We Can Trust the Bible – Tim Hale (Pacific Press)
- Pocket Guide to Discipline (group.com)
- Pocket Guide to Special Needs (group.com)
- Celebrate Children – David Goodwin, Editor (KidsReach)
- The Kingdom Scroll, Lamb Scroll, Serpent Scroll - David Edgren (Pacific Press)
- Maggie Asks Why? Laura Winn (Review and Herald)
- Michael Asks Why? Sally Pierce Dillon (Pacific Press)
- Kids Preach Book 1 and 2 (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries www.playfulmusic.org)
- Playful Worship Book 1 - Kylie Stacey (Signs Publishing Company)
- My Quiet Time With Jesus Prayer Calendar and Journal (GC Children's Ministries)

Resources:

- 28 Adventure Bible Studies (GC Children's Ministries)
- Beginner and Kindergarten GraceLink Flip Charts (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)
- Daily Bites (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)

- Foot Prints for Parents and Mentors (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)
- Table Talk (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)
- SHINE - Serve Him IN Everything Journal (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)
- Faith Shaper Introduction Booklet (children.adventist.org.au/faith-shaper)
- Faith Shaper SHAPING Booklets (children.adventist.org.au/faith-shaper)
- Faith Shaper Poster (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)
- Faith Shaper Church Board Guide (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)
- Child Commitment Ceremony (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)
- Bible Timeline (SPD Adventist Children's Ministries)

Adventist Websites:

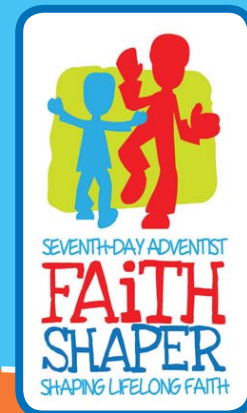
- SPD Adventist Children's Ministries - children.adventist.org.au
- GC Adventist Children's Ministries - www.gcchildmin.org
- Faith Shaper - children.adventist.org.au/faith-shaper
- GraceLink - www.gracelink.net
- GraceLink Scope and Sequence (children.adventist.org.au/south-pacific-division-resources)
- GraceLink @ Home (children.adventist.org.au/south-pacific-division-resources)
- GraceLink App (iTunes and Android Store)
- Children's Quarterly Mission Stories - www.adventistmission.org
- NAD Adventist Children's Ministries - www.childmin.org
- Safe Place Policies and Child Abuse - www.safeplaceservices.org.au
- It Is Written Interactive Children's Bible Studies - www.myplacewithJesus.com
- Kid Zone Interactive Children's Bible Studies - www.kidzvop.com
- Kids View Magazine - www.kidsviewmagazine.org
- Parkers Puzzle - www.parkerspuzzle.com
- NAD Book Centre - www.adventsource.org
- Australian Adventist Book Centre - www.adventistbookcentre.com.au
- AUC Resource Centre - www.resources.adventist.org.au
- Discovery Centre Bible Studies for Kids - www.adventistmedia.com.au
- Playful Music - www.playfulmusic.com

Other Leadership Websites:

- Group Publishing VBS programs etc.- www.grouppublishing.com
- Children's Ministry Resources - www.kidsreach.org.au
- Practical Resources for Parents and Leaders - www.stickyfaith.org
- Newsletter for Parents and Leaders - www.lifetreefamily.com

7 Essential Faith Experiences

Homes Empowered



“The single most important social influence on the religious and spiritual lives of adolescents is their parents.” (Vern L Bengtson, Religion and Faith, 2013)

- Synergise church, home and school strategies so that all have the same vision and purpose.
- Partner with and support families — help them build strong marriages and quality family relationships by not overscheduling too many church programs.
- Equip and resource them for every Milestone or life stage of their children.
- Demonstrate family faith practices and traditions and provide at home resources.
- Resource and equip parents to become authentic disciples of Jesus.



“These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” (Deuteronomy 6: 6-9)

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