TRAINING UP YOUR CHILD:

WHAT TO EXPECT IN EACH STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

WHAT TO EXPECT IN

PRESCHOOL YEARS

DEVELOPMENTALLY

- Growing more in shape than in height or weight.
- Growth happens from the top down! (Note head and face changes, then shoulders, down to the rest of the body.)
- Becoming more coordinated.
- Handedness is well established by age 3.
- Love crafts! - Cutting, painting, coloring.
- Becoming more independent: learning to feed and dress themselves.
- Can do simple chores. (sorting laundry or silverware, sweeping a floor with a small broom, etc.)
- Love music, singing, rhyming, role playing.
- Enjoy being read to and looking at board books independently.
- Love Bible stories and learning Bible verses.
- Enjoy praying and worshipping.
- Can have big emotions, take cues from their environment.
- Imaginary play (sometimes mixes up reality and fantasy)
- Lots of questions! ???

1 year old
2-4 words in vocabulary

1-1/2 years old
10 words in vocabulary

3 years old
1,000 words in vocabulary

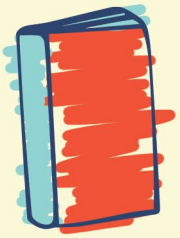
5 years old
10,000 words in vocabulary

IMPORTANT TO...

- Give them a safe environment to explore.
- Let them help you with simple tasks in the kitchen and the garden.
- Encourage physical activity.
- Establish good sleep patterns. ZZZZ
- (Preschoolers need 10 + hours a sleep a night)
- Introduce them to a variety of foods and be sure they are getting nutritious foods.
- (Avoid excess sugars - juices and candy.)
- Read aloud to them as much as you can!
- Encourage a lot of activity: running, jumping, throwing and kicking balls.
- Let them learn by doing. Simple toys or household objects that they can work with their hands.
- Nurture and be patient.
- Emotionally...Be a source of comfort while teaching them to self-soothe.
- Model emotional control (and make sure those they spend time with are setting good examples.)
- Answer their questions. (this is how they learn!)
- Teach manners. (please and thank you!)
- Give them opportunity to play around you, but also give them some alone time.
- LIMIT SCREEN TIME!
- Pray with them.
- Teach them simple Bible verses.

FAVORITE BOOKS TO READ ALOUD

1. *The Greatest Story Bible* storybook
2. *The Jesus Storybook*
3. Anything that rhymes or is silly!
4. Board books they can flip through:
   anything with great pictures, shapes, colors, animals, etc.



BIBLE VERSES TO START WITH

GENESIS 1:1

"In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth."

JOHN 3:16

"For God so loved the world that He gave hisonly begotten son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but will have eternal life."

MATTHEW 4:4

"Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

OTHER RESOURCES

Veggie Tales

Superbook

Seeds Worship music

(https://www.rileychildrens.org/health-info/growth-development-3-5-years)

WHAT TO EXPECT IN

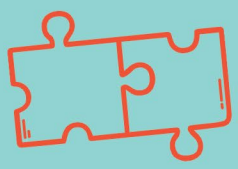
ELEMENTARY KIDS

DEVELOPMENTALLY

- Growing growing...(typically gaining 6-7 pounds and 2+ inches each year!)
- When tired sometimes get more active (don't let it fool you!)
- Developing more a sense of self/beginning to compare self to others.
- Replacing magical thinking with more concrete, logical thinking.
- Learning time, sequencing, order, and how to filter out distractions.
- Understand good and bad, right and wrong.
- Experience guilt over sins and will be able to understand the simple Gospel message.
- Will enjoy learning Bible verses, Bible stories, and church activities.

IMPORTANT TO...

- Be patient with them!
- Limit screentime!
- Offers lots of books, hands-on manipulatives like blocks, legos, and puzzles.
- Read out loud as much as possible!
- Teach them Bible verses and stories.
- Pray with them!
- Teach social skills. Practice.
- Focus them outward. Caring for others.
- Practice good communication with them.
- Surround them with people you want them to be like.
- Establish bedtime rhythms: *6 -12-year-olds need 9-12 hours of sleep a night.
- Continue to teach healthy emotions; that emotions are good, but we are also responsible to steward them well.
- Model healthy emotions.



"Feelings are much like waves,
we can't stop them from coming,
but we can choose which one to surf."

– Jonathan Martensson

"Your mind is a garden, your
thoughts are the seed...you can grow
flowers, or you can grow weeds."

– Anonymous

Practice Deuteronomy chapter 6: 6-7

"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."

FAVORITE BOOKS FOR ELEMENTARY AGE

READ ALOUD

Missionary stories from the Heroes Then and Now series
Pilgrim's Progress (kids' version.)// Hinds Feet on High Places

FIRST READERS

"I can read it" books (find topics that interest your child.)
Dolphin Adventure Series

BIBLE VERSES

EPHESIANS 6:1-2

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother'—which is the first commandment with a promise."

ISAIAH 53:6

"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."

ROMANS 10:9

"If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

OTHER RESOURCES

Adventures in Odyssey audio drama (also some on video.)
Lamplighters audio.

Foundations Worldview online curriculum
Board games and card games:
Bananagrams, Uno, Scrabble (kids' version)

WHAT TO EXPECT IN

MIDDLE SCHOOL

DEVELOPMENTALLY

- ✔ Puberty begins. (starts between ages 9-11 typically, earlier for girls than boys and varies among kids.)
- ✔ Becoming very self-aware/self-conscious.
- ✔ Becoming more independent from family.
- ✔ Begin to see others' point of view more.
- ✔ Increased attention span.
- ✔ Friendships and social life become more important than before.
- ✔ Emotions may swing between highs and lows.
- ✔ Middle School kids will be developing a more mature understanding of spiritual principles.
- ✔ More questions come up, esp. about heaven and hell, salvation, and other religions.
- ✔ Kids can understand a personal relationship with Jesus.

THINGS TO BE AWARE OF

Peer pressure and bullying may be an issue.

Internet safety is key!

Body image issues may begin.

IMPORTANT TO...

COOL

- Make sure they get plenty of nutritionally- packed food (not just junk)
- Make sure they get enough sleep. (Keep screens out of bedrooms)
- *6-12 year-olds need 9-12 hours of sleep a night and 13-18 year-olds need 8-10 hours.
- Keep them physically active.
- Make sure they keep reading. And keep reading aloud to them as long as they let you!
- Minimize screen time.
- Have conversations about emotions; affirm changing emotions but set expectation for how to handle.
- Model healthy emotional regulation.
- Surround middle schoolers with healthy people.
- Have lots of conversations about issues before they learn about them elsewhere.
- Help them choose good friends and social circles.
- Set boundaries around social situations that are not healthy for your child.
- Explore spiritual questions together.
- Make church and spiritual disciplines a normal part of family life.
- Protect all devices with internet filters and have a game plan for online safety. This article should help: 7 Things that Might Save Your Kid

BIBLE VERSES

PROVERBS 3:5-6
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight."

COLOSSIANS 3:23
"Whatever you do work at it with all your heart
as if working for the Lord not for men."

ROMANS: 3:23
"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

ROMANS 6:23
"For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus."

BOOKS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

***KEEP READING ALOUD!** – Consider series like the Chronicles of Narnia by CS Lewis *The Hobbit*, *Pilgrims Progress*, and missionary stories.

CREATED FOR WORK: *Practical Insights for Young Men* (Bob Schultz)

Adventure stories are great for boys

READERS FOR GIRLS: Christy Miller series by Robin Jones Gunn

OTHER RESOURCES

For Girls Like You
(online magazine,
by Jonathan Pitts and family)

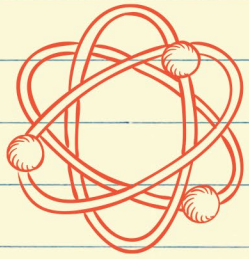
Board games
and card games

Building legos and learning to cook, sew, create or build things, and do harder chores and outside work.

(https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/bam/child-development/middle-childhood.htm)

WHAT TO EXPECT IN

HIGH SCHOOL



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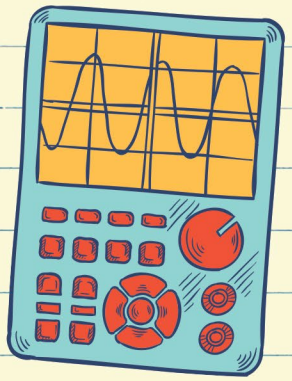
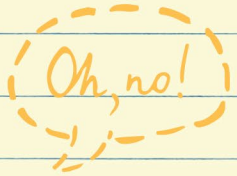


$E=mc^2$

DEVELOPMENTALLY

- Continuing to grow (girls typically slow down in early teenage years, boys keep growing.)
- Still need lots of sleep (8-10 +) hours.
- Puberty is wrapping up.
- Acne can become an issue.
- Becoming more sexually aware.
- Body image can become a big focus.
- More independence from parents.
- Influenced by opinions and values of those around them.
- Many teens identify as anxious or stressed.
- Affected by nutrition, sleep, and environment.
- Pressure to fit in is behind many choices at this age.



IMPORTANT TO...

- Keep talking to high schoolers about all these things!
- Normalize the changes but continue to set standards for Godly living.
- Keep up on medical checkups and seek a dermatologist help if acne is an issue.
- Point them to helpful resources on balanced health and body image.
- Talk to them about all these things. Be an available resource (and a good listener!)
- Set boundaries around the people and situations that are not healthy for their emotional health. (You are still the parent.)
- Keep screens out of bedrooms at night and help them prioritize good sleep.

THINGS TO KNOW

Melatonin production shifts during teenage years, releasing later, which means even if they go to bed early, teens may struggle to fall asleep at night, and struggle to wake up early in the morning. Often the deepest sleep will come in the early morning hours.

Be sure to keep giving them healthy physical touch. Back rubs or scratches, and a hug a day is a good starting place. Physical touch is still important in the teenage years. Try a "hug a day" rule... Holding a hug for a few seconds releases oxytocin, a chemical which combats stress and brings feelings of comfort and security. I like to hug my teen and count backwards slowly from 10 and you can just feel their bodies relax as you count back!

Social media can be used in positive ways, building community, and finding inspiration through positive role models. Yet, research shows that social media use is also associated with anxiety, depression, attention and sleep problems, and more. The key is setting boundaries, following positive accounts, and staying in conversation with your teens. *ALSO let's be good role models with our own use of technology and social media!

*source: https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/social-media-teen-mental-health-a-parents-guide

Protecting our teen's online is essential! Most teens report having seen pornography online and cyberbullying and other dangers are important to be aware of. While nothing is foolproof, having internet filters on all devices your child has access to is an important first line of defense. Then, keep the lines of communication open and do your best to stay up to date on the online world. *I recommend parents sign up for the Culture Translator weekly newsletter on the Axis website: https://axis.org

My list of 7 Things that Might Save Your Kid

BIBLE VERSES

PSALM 119:9

"How can a young man keep his way pure?
By living according to your word."

PSALM 119:11

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

JAMES 1:5

"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."

good

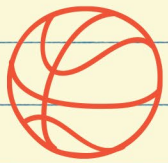
PSALM 1: 1-2

"Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night."

love

BOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS

1. The Bible! YES
2. Anything by CS Lewis and other classics
3. Books and other resources by Tim Tebow and Sadie Robertson Huff
4. *How to Win Friends and Influence People*
5. *What I Wish I Knew at 18* (by Dennis Trittin)

OTHER RESOURCES

1. Christian Podcasts (sermons or other encouraging podcasts)
2. Involvement in Youth group and other ministries (Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Young Life, Campus Life ministries)
3. Staying busy with sports, jobs, pursuing hobbies and passions
4. Serving others!
5. Card and board games