

### The 12 and 13 year-Old:

- High energy, but much rest needed
- eating patterns change, may have over concern for dieting
- Feels awkward and may worry about body issues
- Increased need for personal hygiene
- Struggle with sense of identity
- Moodiness
- Can be enthusiastic at some times; lethargic at other times
- Friendships with both sexes are important
- More likely to express feelings by actions than words
- Peer vocabulary (slang) important
- Less overt affection and attention shown to parents, with occasional rudeness; test limits
- Impulsive, unaware
- Experience extremes of emotions
- Inclusion/exclusion; height of cliques, seek to belong, discovery of telephone
- Experimenting with behavior, roles, appearance, self-image
- Difficulty with decisions but need to be able to make some choices for themselves
- Demand privileges, but may avoid responsibilities
- Feel unique; believe that no one else has ever felt the way they do; suffered so much, or been so misunderstood

## Loving for Life Family Connection



### Seventh Grade

*“These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup>You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. <sup>9</sup>You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” Deuteronomy 6:6-9*

### Seventh Grade Essentials:

- Hormonal and physical demands of puberty may cause slowing of rate of cognitive development during early adolescence
- Increased ability to think abstract in intellectual pursuits
- Learn best when involved in activities that are active, hands-on, and related to real life
- Concerned with rules, standards of behavior and fairness, especially for themselves
- Lack of understanding of cause and effect as well as feelings of omnipotence and invulnerability (“It can’t happen to me.”) can lead to dangerous risk-taking behaviors - - smoking, drugs, drinking, etc.
- Mostly interested in present, limited thoughts of future
- May show emerging ability in a particular skill or content area (encourage but don’t take over here)
- Show improved abilities to use speech for self-expression
- High interest in current events, politics, social justice; also pop culture, materialism
- More consistent evidence of conscience
- Idealistic; may offer “ideal” solutions to complex problems
- Development of ideals and selection of role models

***"So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may live long on the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time." Deuteronomy 4:4***

To consider and communicate:

- Seventh grade students continue to require parental interaction and intervention even though at times they may appear to resist both.
- Enjoy one another's company, play games, play little jokes, have inside jokes together.
- What are the advantages of rules?
- Draw up a list of family rules and regulations, with the whole family participating. Try to condense them into 10 family commandments.
- Consider the virtues of honesty, trustworthiness, kindness, sexual purity, how does practicing these virtues make your life better?
- How do you feel if someone is dishonest with you?
- Is it easy to tell the truth?
- Consider the problem of dishonesty, jealousy, lack of faithfulness. How do these problems make your life more difficult?
- Make a list of the 5 most important traits in a successful relationship (friendship or romance)
- Pay careful attention to how your 7<sup>th</sup> grader is entertaining him/her self. Try to stick to the ratings of movies, TV, video games
- Limit screen time
- Increase outdoor activities, family walks, bike rides, races, soccer in the yard, shooting hoops. Make it fun.
- Spend time together, try one on one with each child if possible
- Make a bedtime visit each night, they won't often feel like chatting but you want to be there when they do.
- Sleep is important-10 hours per night.
- No TV or game systems in the bedroom
- Plug in all electronics in the parents room at night-cell phones, ipads, game systems, laptops.
- Pray together as a family; say grace at dinner, bedtime prayers together, pray in the car before traveling.
- Talk about God, show gratitude to Him for the good things in your life
- Let your children hear you call on God for help
- Pay attention to magazines and music, what is the message? Is it one you want your child to receive?
- Say I love you every day
- Attend Mass together weekly
- Correct undesirable behavior such as talking back, not doing chores, disrespect
- Talk about the difference between good and poor decisions. How do you know the difference? What can you do to make better decisions?
- One generation after the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they lost their faith. What steps can your family take to prevent this from happening in your own lives?
- Eat dinner together as often as possible, chat at the table.
- Manners increase self confidence, make manners a game, practice at the table.
- Chores are essential for gratitude, divide chores up between children, and teach them how to do each job. Laundry, setting the table, cleaning the kitchen, mopping the kitchen floor, feeding the dog, walking the dog, organizing the recycling,
- Talk about current events
- Talk about high risk behaviors and the consequences in a casual, friendly manner.
- Talk about meanness, bullying, how to stand up to unkindness
- Volunteer together
- Be a part of your church community

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