

Parenting Target Zones

Newborn through Pre-School: **Nurturing Zone:** Lavish them with love and warmth and gentleness. Knowing that they are secure with you, their home, and their church family is essential. Teaching them to obey the godly authorities in their lives.

K - 3rd Grade: **Establishing Our Faith Zone:** Passing on the faith, Bible stories & why we have faith. Figuring out their character strengths, weaknesses and tendencies. Training in the Way they should go. Acknowledging shyness, selfishness, and moodiness but not leaving kids to stay where they are - training them and helping them navigate these feelings instead of shutting these feelings down. Passing on our awe and respect of our Father. Constantly point out God's blessings & answered prayers. Help them to have great friendships in the Kingdom. Teach them to obey and respect the authorities in their lives.

4th & 5th Grade: **God Made Me Zone:** They should be given the freedom to make more choices (choosing between two good options). They need to be given the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them. Freedom to spread their wings and spend time with other godly families. Create a safety net with reins, by walking closely, vacationing and enjoying life with Kingdom families. Each child needs to learn to rejoice with each other's accomplishments & invitations.

6th Grade - 8th Grade: **Making their Faith their Own Zone:** Learning to make choices by applying their faith and Scriptures to those choices. Strive for good communication and openness with them by selectively sharing your own daily struggles and even what you struggled with when you were their age. Help them stay positive and prayerful during challenges and see how God is working in their lives and what He is teaching them. Go the extra mile to have them spend time with their Kingdom friends.

9th Grade - 10th Grade: **Stand on their own Faith Zone:** Who am I & what will I stand for. Given the opportunity to make more of their choices with your guidance and council. Learning to speak for themselves. Learning that sin has consequences and that their faith develops one decision at a time. Help them have great big brother/big sister relationships with Christian college students, and other married or single disciples that you respect as great role models. An established connection to spiritual mentors and friends is crucial here as teens transition toward influence from peers. If you're just now trying to build these relationships, you'll be fighting an uphill battle.

11th - 12th Grade: **Release Zone:** Given the reins to live & make choices for their lives. Released to walk on their own with Parental Supervision. By their Senior year, it would be wise for them to maintain their own finances, schedule and daily routines and get a Driver's license, if possible/if they haven't already. They should learn to schedule their own haircuts, dental appointments, laundry etc. and basically figure out how to live life without you in a faithful & responsible fashion...while they are under your roof. Fight the temptation to micro-manage and replace it with trust and respect for them as young men & women, responsible before God for themselves. Through prayer and true love we can set them up for success.