

Twelfth Grade



The phase when your emerging adult pulls away, gets closer, does things for the last time, and you both start asking, **“What’s next?”**

WELCOME

If sixteen is “sweet,” eighteen is “legal.”

Your kid is no longer a kid. Technically speaking, they are responsible for themselves. (Of course, you may still have to pick up the pieces from time to time.) You will feel them pull away as they drive to a first job, deposit a paycheck, or register to vote.

The countdown clock is running fast.

You will probably feel urgency in these last 52 weeks. As a senior takes on more responsibility, they may also lean in relationally. They discover—especially late in the year—they need you a little bit more than they thought. All of a sudden, the decisions they face have very high stakes, like, “Will I date long-distance?”

Everyone is wondering, “What’s next?”

In fact, it can drive you both a little crazy. Your twelfth grader may mentally check out of high school long before they feel certain about what they want to do with their future. Even the most accomplished twelfth graders will take a few years (and maybe some counseling) to figure this adult thing out. For now, just remember to focus on the next few months more than the next “rest-of-your-life.”

It's just a phase,
so don't miss it.



OVERVIEW

In the Twelfth Grade phase, your role is to mobilize their potential.

Graduation is a crisis—for both of you. Sure, it's exciting. It's a huge accomplishment. But something is about to change, and there's a good chance you aren't convinced they're ready. They might not be. And whether they seem to show it or not, your twelfth grader is probably just as concerned about that as you. You mobilize their potential when you help them prepare, as best as possible, for what's coming.



**High schoolers think
like a philosopher.**

You help them learn
when you...
ask questions.



**High schoolers want
to know, “What will
I do?”**

You capture their heart
when you...
create vision.



**High schoolers
are motivated by
freedom.**

You coach them
when you...
focus their options.

DISCOVER

Your twelfth grader is changing.

Physically	Mentally	Socially	Emotionally
Wisdom teeth may begin to "come in" (17-21 years)	May overly romanticize or catastrophize	Increased interest in sexual expression (64% of twelfth graders report being sexually active)	Becoming more emotionally stable, but needs support and grace
Has difficulty falling asleep before 11pm (it's biological)	Open to discussing current affairs and social issues	Less available for family time	Often thrives in a particular area of interest
Needs nine hours of sleep and one hour of exercise per day	Capable of complex, multi-step problem solving	Wants to feel ownership in personal decisions	Values being true to themselves
Girls have likely reached adult height and body development	Still struggles with long-term planning	Shows respect for others' opinions and is able to compromise	Frequently demonstrates initiative for personal interests
Guys may continue to grow in height, and develop muscle mass, body and facial hair		More at ease around adults	

RHYTHMS & RESPONSES

Authentic Faith

This year you will fuel passion, so they will keep pursuing authentic faith and discover a personal mission.

Your twelfth grader may be preparing to transition—not only out of their school and your home, but also potentially out of your church. When you talk with your senior about what's next for them, include conversations about how they will find and serve in a faith community.

Say things like...

What do you think about church / youth group?

What's something you feel like God is teaching you right now?

How can I pray for you today / this week?

Lately, I'm finding I connect best to God when I'm...

Parent Cue Times



Morning Time

Instill purpose by starting the day with encouraging words.



Meal Time

Connect regularly by scheduling time to eat together (even once a week).



Bed Time

Interpret life when they occasionally open up at the end of the day.



Their Time

Strengthen your relationship by adjusting your plans to show up when they need you.

*EVERY PHASE IS A
TIMEFRAME IN A
KID OR TEENAGER'S
LIFE WHEN YOU
CAN LEVERAGE
DISTINCTIVE
OPPORTUNITIES
TO INFLUENCE
THEIR FUTURE.*

*
You have
approximately
52 weeks and
counting...

 PARENT CUE IT'S JUST A PHASE

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