

Seventh Grade



The phase when nothing you do is cool, what they feel right now matters most, and one suddenly social kid wants to know, **“Who’s going?”**

WELCOME

Now—you're embarrassing.

Figuring out the new rules for your social behavior can be intimidating. When is it acceptable to walk over and say hello? Why do all your comments elicit an eye roll? Don't be caught off guard—you're transitioning to parenting an adolescent. This may be an awkward phase for you.

Now—everything happens in a crowd.

It may be hard to recognize your seventh grader amid all the other seventh graders. They walk the hall in pairs. They go to the mall in a herd. They build unfathomably large social media platforms. In seventh grade, the best place to be is wherever "everyone" goes.

Now—is really all that matters.

It's not that what you said this morning doesn't matter, it's just that they don't remember it. And it's not that they don't care about their future, it's just that the present is so much closer. Most seventh graders are hyper-aware of their present reality. That means there isn't anything quite so motivating as right now. Look for ways to use right now to your advantage, and appeal to their present circumstances.

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



OVERVIEW

In the Seventh Grade phase, your role is to affirm their personal journey.

Your seventh grader is in a season of personal discovery. Not everyone makes the team. Interests and abilities change. Long-accepted values can come into question. On top of all that, this phase is a time of heightened self-awareness. When you consistently affirm their journey through this sometimes-turbulent season, you help them gain ability.



**Middle schoolers
think like an engineer.**

You help them learn
when you...
connect the dots.



**Middle schoolers
want to know, “Who
am I?”**

You capture their heart
when you...
discover uniqueness.



**Middle schoolers
are motivated by
acceptance.**

You coach them
when you...
affirm their value.

DISCOVER

Your seventh grader is changing.

Physically	Mentally	Socially	Emotionally
Needs 9-11 hours of sleep each night and may easily fatigue or develop headaches	Able to see two sides of an argument	Often characterized as happy, silly, and loud	Enjoys silly and sometimes crude humor
Girls outpace guys in development	Enjoys forming and sharing their opinion	Interested in pop culture and new slang	Benefits from talking about what they are feeling and why
Guys experience changes in height and body shape, and may develop body odor, body hair, and increased muscle mass	Solves multi-step, complex problems	Needs non-parental adult influences	May be restless and need physical activity
	Has a hard time with organization and time management	Places a significant emphasis on peer opinions	Tends to overschedule their time
Girls may develop body odor, body hair, and breasts; and menstruation is likely (10-16 years)	Sudden brain growth may lead to forgetfulness	Girls (in particular) frequently display excessive meanness, increased attention to self-image, and a lack of confidence	

RHYTHMS & RESPONSES

Authentic Faith

This year you will **provoke discovery** so your seventh grader will own their faith and value a faith community.

In this phase, your seventh grader may be asking some hard questions. Don't be shocked (at least not visibly). Doubt isn't toxic to your middle schooler's faith; it's part of the process of personalizing what they believe.

Make your home a safe place for them to ask questions, and show interest in what they are learning.

Say things like...

When do you feel closest to God?

How can I pray for you today/this week?

What would be a fun way we could serve others together?

Consider serving at your church or local ministry that appeals to your seventh grader's interests.

Parent Cue Times



Morning Time

Instill purpose when you start the day with encouraging words.



Drive Time

Interpret life during informal conversation as you travel.



Meal Time

Establish values with intentional conversations while you eat together.



Bed Time

Listen to their heart by staying available—just in case.

*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
312 weeks and
counting...

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