



Building faith in the everyday

GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

**kitchen
table
project**



Inspire a faith that lasts

Introduction

Thank you for choosing to run an *Inspire Online* session. Our prayer at Care for the Family is that this session will help mums, dads and carers to start talking about why and how they want to inspire their children's faith. We want parents to know that we don't need to be experts and that inspiring our children's faith doesn't have to be complicated.

Ultimately we know that God loves our children even more than we do and wants a relationship with them. But while they are in our care we have an opportunity to point them towards him in every aspect of life.

What is an *Inspire Online* session?

The *Inspire Online* session is a one-hour small group resource designed to be run online.

We recognise that it's not always easy for parents to gather together in person, especially during a global pandemic. But, this season has created new opportunities for us to gather together online and support one another through the new challenges we are facing as parents.

We wanted to make the *Inspire* session material more accessible for virtual group gatherings and so we have adapted the original material to be more suitable for online use.

The aim of the session is to start a conversation between Christian parents about the influence they have in their children's lives and encourage them that they are in the best position to share their own faith with their children. It will also provide some ideas of how that can happen in their everyday lives.

Who is it for?

It is suitable for all mums, dads and carers, whether they are parenting together, alone or as a stepfamily, with birth children or those who are adopted or fostered.

The session is primarily aimed at parents of children under 11, but can also be successfully used for parents with older children as well. You may well find that others wish to attend too! That could include grandparents or other members of the wider family, godparents or children's leaders.

Parents with similar aged children are likely to be experiencing similar issues or concerns. However, they may also value learning from parents at a different stage of parenting.

If your session includes parents of older children, it is important to show sensitivity and honesty during the discussions. Some parents may feel that they have missed opportunities in the past. It is important to give space for such feelings to be expressed and it can help to acknowledge that these are 'normal' feelings experienced by most parents at one time or another.

Reassure them that it is never too early or too late to start inspiring faith in our children.



Who can run an *Inspire Online* session?

Anyone! The *Inspire Online* session encourages parents to share ideas and support each other. So, whether you are a parent or not, everyone is learning together. You are not expected to be an expert or have all the answers, but simply to be the person to help start this conversation.

Who presents the *Inspire* video?

Andy Frost

Andy is the Director of Share Jesus International, and a speaker for Care for the Family. He is an author who has written books including *Raising Faith*, *Long Story Short* and *Losing Faith – Those Who Have Walked Away*. He heads up the London Mission Collective and is a Methodist local preacher and a member of the Evangelical Alliance Council. He has an MA in Applied Theology. Andy is married to Jo and they have two young daughters.

Becky Denharder

Becky is the Faith in the Family Project Manager at Care for the Family. She primarily focuses on the Kitchen Table Project, which aims to inspire a faith that lasts in children, through equipping and encouraging parents to nurture faith at home. Becky is married to Chris and they have two adventurous young boys.



Preparation

The session outline below gives you the timings for a 60 minute stand-alone session. However, some groups may prefer to allow extra time for a relaxed pace with more room for discussion.

Running *Inspire Online* as a one-off session has the advantage that parents may be more willing to come along if they are not being asked to commit to a series of sessions. If they enjoy meeting together, they may then want to explore our *Raising Faith* resource, which is a six-session video-based resource that has been designed to follow on from the *Inspire* session. This is available to download for FREE [here](#).

It can be useful to have someone to help you run the session, so one person can focus on hosting the discussion while the other person can concentrate on the technical elements. This will also help if you plan to split into smaller groups for the discussion time. Try to have a conversation beforehand with your helper, and share the Group Leader's Guide and *Inspire* Discussion Questions with them, so you can both familiarise yourselves with the structure and content of the session.

Parents may find it useful to note down ideas that have impacted them, so encourage them to have a pen and paper nearby.

Running a group online

If this is your first time running a small group online, we have some top tips and helpful guidance that may be useful as you prepare for your session. You can find our 'Running an online course' PDF guide [here](#).

Here's a few suggestions to get you started:

- Decide which video conferencing platform works best for you. You will need to be able to 'share your screen' to show the video elements of the session, and it may be helpful to have the ability to use 'breakout rooms' to make your discussion groups smaller.
- Do a test call with your helper or someone you know beforehand, where you can practice sharing your screen and navigating the various controls. Most video conference platforms use a similar set up, but they will also have instruction videos and guides on their websites, which can help you to learn how things work.
- Most of us have been using video calling facilities regularly throughout the pandemic, but you may have a few parents who are still unsure. It may be helpful to ask how familiar each parent is with video calls when you invite them to join the session, so you can give them additional help and peace of mind before they join online.



Using 'breakout rooms' for discussion sessions

If you're likely to have more than 7 or 8 parents joining your session, you may wish to utilise 'breakout rooms' to make the discussion time more engaging. Many of the video conferencing facilities offer the ability to break out into smaller groups – we would suggest looking at the platform's website for further details if you're unsure how to use them.

We would recommend asking someone to help you host these breakout rooms by appointing a 'discussion time host' for each group. Alongside this Group Leader's Guide, there is a PDF document with all the main discussion questions, which will help the 'hosts' to direct the discussions. Share these documents with your additional helpers before the day of the session, so they can familiarise themselves with the content.

Equipment

To lead the *Inspire Online* session you will need:

1. A laptop, tablet or computer with a web-camera (it may also be useful to have a pair of headphones or earphones with a built-in microphone as this can help give a clearer sound while you're hosting).
2. The Group Leader's Guide and Discussion Question PDF available. You may wish to print these materials at home to enable you to refer to them without taking up space on your screen.
3. Notebook and pen – to make notes throughout the session - this may be helpful when the parents are giving discussion time feedback.
4. Bible.
5. Useful links guide – have this Word document open throughout the session so you, or ideally your helper, can copy and paste the focus questions, teaching points and useful links and resources in the chat function.

Set time aside

Everything that you need to run this session is available to download for free at kitchentable.org.uk/inspire. Give yourself enough time to prepare by watching the video, reading the information supplied and looking at the discussion questions. Think about how you will introduce the different sections of the session. There is a suggested script to help you, but you may be more comfortable expressing the ideas in your own words. Pray for the session and the people who will be coming!



Running the session

It will help the group to know that the *Inspire Online* session is not intended to leave them feeling that they have more things to add to their already busy to-do list! This is especially important during this pandemic season, when normal routines and activities have changed and new pressures on family life have emerged.

The session is not designed to provide parents with a set list of ideas and activities, but for them to think about what might work for their own family. At the end of the session, you can encourage them to connect with the Kitchen Table Project on our social media channels for daily inspiration and encouragement.

Search: **@ktpcampaign**

As you share ideas during the session, parents will be encouraged that there are practical things they can do, which will fit their particular family and help build faith as a part of normal everyday life. It will help them seize simple opportunities to point their children to God and help them realise he is part of everything they do. The discussions will also provide space to explore new opportunities that may have emerged during this season, when normal life has been restricted.

Key learning points for parents:

- Realise the influence they have on their children to inspire a faith that lasts
- Think about what motivates them to want to share their faith with their children
- Recognise that they're already doing things to nurture their children's faith
- Identify any hurdles they face on a day-to-day basis
- Recognise they're not alone in experiencing different hurdles as a result of the pandemic
- Share ideas of how to help their children meet with God
- Appreciate that journeying with other parents will provide encouragement and support

Take the time to get familiar with the material before the session and start the video call early to get everything set up.



3 min Welcome and introductions

As people start arriving, you may wish to do the following:

- Introduce yourself and anyone else who may be helping you to facilitate the session.
- Encourage participants to have a notebook and pen with them throughout the session.
- Set participants at ease by explaining a bit about what the *Inspire Online* session is and how it will run.

When everyone has arrived, it may be helpful to let everyone know what will happen during the session:

- Reassure the group that they don't have to say anything if they don't want to.
- It would be helpful to show everyone how to use the chat function as it will help them to interact with each other throughout the session. They can use the chat function to ask questions and share ideas. The chat can be saved at the end of the session if the group want to remember the ideas or resources shared.
- Emphasise that it's not about being shown the 'right' way to do things, but an opportunity for them to share their experiences and ideas and to learn from one another.
- Ask everyone to be respectful of the different ideas and opinions that may be shared in the group. We're here to learn and support one another.
- Remind the group to use the video call respectfully. Encourage participants to wear headphones if they're sat in a public place, so the conversation is kept within the group and to mute themselves if they're not speaking, which will help to eliminate background noise.

Introduce the session

Welcome to the Inspire session where we will be sharing ideas about how we inspire our children's faith by bringing God into the everyday.

We believe that as parents we have an amazing opportunity to nurture our children's faith, but we also know it's not always easy. It's important that we do not feel guilty about what we have or haven't done because we're not always going to get it right. Each day is a new opportunity, especially as our lives have been altered so much by the current restrictions to our normal way of life.

God loves our children even more than we do, and we need his help, guidance and grace to go on this journey together. Let's start by praying.

Open in prayer.





Icebreaker question

Invite parents to use the chat function to introduce themselves by sharing their name, how many children they have, their children's ages and their answer to an icebreaker question, e.g. What is your dream holiday destination? You might want to mention one or two of the holiday destinations to help people relax and create an informal, comfortable atmosphere.

1 min

Focus question

Ask the group to take a minute to write what they hope to get out of today in their notebook.



Q: What do you hope to get out of today?

5 min

Video – Part 1: Parents are the greatest influence

Introduce the video

We're going to hear from Andy Frost and Becky Denharder as they look at the important role that we as parents play in our children's faith development.



Play the video. It will tell you when to pause.

2 min

Recap

It's so encouraging to realise that we are already doing so much as parents to establish strong foundations for our children's faith to grow.

Andy shared a key scripture from Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (NIV), you could either take a few minutes to read it together or encourage parents to read it themselves after the session.

'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 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. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.'

This passage is such an encouragement and offers simple steps we can take to weave faith into the everyday moments of our lives. It reminds us how using these ordinary moments will provide opportunities for our children to discover and develop a faith that lasts.



3 min **Activity: Why does it matter to you?**

Encourage parents to take a few minutes to answer the following questions in their notebook.



Q: Why is your faith important to you?

Q: Why is it important to you that your child develops a faith that lasts?

The questions can be displayed on a holding slide using the screen share function, if this is available on your chosen platform. If not you can copy the questions into the chat function.



You can let the group know that if one or two would like to share their responses, there will be an opportunity to do that when they come back together – either verbally or using the chat function.

Bring it to a close by acknowledging that our faith is personal and important to all of us, and we are here today because we are eager for our children to experience a relationship with God for themselves.

10 min **Discussion: Hurdles we face**

But let's be real. Even though we have identified how important our faith is to us and why we want our children to develop their own faith, this is not always easy to achieve in the midst of everyday life!

Time for discussion (approx. 8 mins)

Explain to the group that we are going to spend a few minutes thinking about some of the things that get in the way of us sharing our faith with our children. In order to start the discussion, you might want to encourage someone to share one of the hurdles they face or encourage everyone to write the hurdles they face in the chat. This is an encouraging way to help parents see they're not the only one, as many of the things they list will be the same.



Q. What are some of the hurdles you face when it comes to nurturing your children's faith at home?

Some of the themes listed below are likely to come up in your discussion. Becky and Andy refer to them in the next part of the video and offer some simple ways that we can overcome these hurdles.

- Not enough time to spend with my child
- Family time devoted to other activities
- Needing help with knowing what to do
- Being worried about doing it wrong
- Not a good enough example as a Christian



As the video was produced prior to the pandemic, we recognise that many parents will be facing some additional hurdles. Maybe they are suffering with 'zoom fatigue', are feeling disconnected from their church community, or are worrying that their children are not engaging with online or restricted 'in person' church services.

Take time to encourage parents and let them know that they're doing an amazing job. Remind them that whatever hurdles they're facing, finding simple ways to bring faith into everyday, chaotic family life (even in this season) will help their children's faith to grow. Encourage parents to support one another in this challenging season. Taking the time to check in with a friend and share these fears, challenges and concerns can make such a difference.

Bring the conversation to a close by reminding parents that we all experience these hurdles at different points throughout our week. Let them know that later in the session, we'll talk through some questions together, which will allow us to share simple ways we can bring faith into everyday life in this season.

5 min Video – Part 2: Hurdles

Explain that we will now watch Andy talking about some of the ways we can overcome these hurdles.



Play the second part of the video

It can be encouraging to understand that inspiring faith in the everyday is not about carving out large quantities of time, or having all the answers to difficult questions, but finding simple ways to show faith in everyday life!

3 min Recap – Elements that build faith

Go through the four elements with the group and emphasise how we need the fifth element of prayer to underpin all we do. You can download the elements slide to share on the screen as you speak, or type these definitions into the chat function.

Home – A warm, affirming family where children feel safe, loved and accepted gives a secure foundation for their faith to grow.

Be real – It's not about expertise. We are not perfect, but living out our faith in a genuine way inspires children to want this for themselves.

Be intentional – Finding simple ways to involve God naturally in everyday life encourages our children to know and love him.

Belong – Involving children at church and building relationships with others helps our children to feel they belong in God's family.

Prayer – Praying for our children and asking God to guide us as we parent is so important. We can look for opportunities to help them connect with God, but ultimately, they are his children and he wants that relationship with them.



25 min Discussion: Elements that build faith



Time for discussion (approx. 20 mins)

We're now going to explore these elements in more detail using the *Inspire* discussion questions. It will be an opportunity to share from your own experiences, learn from one another and talk about some ideas together.

Use the *Inspire* discussion questions PDF document for this section. Try to pick a variety of questions that cover the different elements that build faith. We have included some questions that specifically relate to the pandemic, which may be helpful as you support parents with challenges arising from this particular season.

As you bring the conversation to a close, encourage parents that they don't need to try and change everything at once. The online *Inspire* session is a starting point to explore how we can journey with our children on this faith adventure. Remind parents that they know their own family best and that they are already doing so many things that are developing their children's faith.

3 min Conclusion

As the session ends:



- Using the chat function, invite the group to share one thing they will take away from the session or one thing they are going to start doing at home.
- Let everyone know that you will send them the *Inspire* discussion PDF document, which includes: helpful thoughts and ideas, the 'Elements that build faith' and ways they can continue the journey with the Kitchen Table Project. You could also post this in the chat function.
- Encourage them to sign up to receive daily ideas and inspiration on social media by searching for **@ktpcampaign**, and our monthly email for parents at kitchentable.org.uk/join

Thank them for participating and use this opportunity to pray as you bring the session to a close. Pray that our children might grow up to know and love God. Pray for each other as parents – that God would help us to model our faith and give us practical ways in which we can signpost our children to him.



What comes next?

Thank everyone for coming. You can ask the group what, if anything, they would like to do next.

Some parents may like to continue to support one another by setting up a Facebook or WhatsApp group where they can share ideas and encourage one another. Or they may like to continue to meet together online, or in person (when appropriate) to explore the *Inspire* discussion questions further, look at the short video content and discussion questions from our [YouTube channel](#) or pray for their children. They may also want to follow on with a more in-depth course, like our [Raising Faith](#) sessions or the Bible Reading Fellowship [Parenting for Faith course](#).

It would also be good to encourage mums and dads to follow the Kitchen Table Project on social media for regular ideas and encouragement and to keep up to date with all our new resources.

We also have monthly emails for church leaders and parents, which are full of ideas, tips and encouragement from other parents and leaders on this journey. Join the community [here](#).

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Finally, we would love to hear your feedback. This really helps us to know how many parents are being reached, and to learn how we can improve this *Inspire* session for the future. We would love to send you a free copy of our book *Raising Faith* as a thank you for [completing this short survey](#). Just leave your delivery details at the bottom of the survey page.

There is also a quick survey for the group participants to share their feedback from the session. Please do encourage them to complete this [participant's survey](#), which can also be found on the last page of the *Inspire* discussion PDF document.



Care for the Family is a Christian initiative to strengthen family life.
A registered charity (England and Wales: 1066905; Scotland: SC038497).
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