

Building faith in your 9 to 11-year-old

At this stage, children will be beginning to experience physical and emotional changes. Although advice from their friends will become increasingly important in the years ahead, they are still looking to you for guidance. As you give them greater responsibility, you are showing that you trust them. It builds their confidence and your relationship.

There are some significant elements that help children to grow strong foundations in their faith. Here are some ideas for this particular stage of your child's development.



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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Home

Give them opportunities to help at home. You are helping to develop both their abilities and their character. As they approach secondary school, they may be pushing previously set boundaries as they look for greater independence. They are more self-aware and it's respectful to talk through rules and consequences and bring correction when they are on their own with you, rather than in front of others.



Prayer

You can help your children to find their place in the bigger picture of God's plan by praying for wider issues and things they are interested in. This may tie in with an organisation or family your church supports elsewhere in the world.



Be real

As your children transition to secondary school we can feel that we're not needed. But that's not true! Providing a safe place for them to talk, ask questions and find themselves is more valuable now than ever.

Responsibility

Children are becoming more responsible and co-operative. As they find a part to play and are trusted to serve, they're developing character traits that will stand them in good stead for the teenage years ahead. You're helping them learn that even though there are ups and down, it's important they continue to play their part.



Be intentional

Your children may have difficult questions and even questions that challenge your views. Try not to feel threatened or be defensive, but instead explore these questions together, listen to their opinions, look for answers in the Bible and encourage them to talk to other people at church. Encourage them to find their own ways of connecting with God – maybe through worship music, reading an age-appropriate Bible or exploring creation.



Inspire a faith that lasts



Belong

Your role as a parent may be changing but your relationship is as important as ever and it's good to find ways to serve together in areas that interest them and help them connect with God, perhaps on a project supporting vulnerable people or on the church welcome team. Doing things on a team with others will help them build relationships and this can help them stay connected even if they become bored or uninterested in church services or meetings.

The Kitchen Table Project is a faith-based initiative for Christian parents, carers, church leaders and children's workers from Care for the Family.

Check out our website to find out more about the elements that build faith, as well as a variety of books, videos, resources and blog posts. kitchentable.org.uk