

FIFTH & SIXTH

THE PHASE
WHEN →

AND A DRAMATIC KID
THAT SOMEONE NEEDS

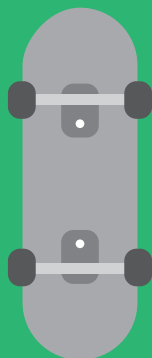


TO PROVE,

THERE'S NEVER ENOUGH
GROCERIES,

← TOO MANY HORMONES

"WHO CARES."





NO PHASE HAS LESS CONSISTENCY.

Your fifth and sixth grader may still want to sleep with their stuffed animal—and also their new cell phone. They may appear sloppy and unkempt one moment and preppy and overdressed the next. This makes every day a new day to discover who this growing person really is.

IN THESE 52 WEEKS, YOUR KID MAY GROW THREE INCHES AND GAIN TEN POUNDS.

But the place you're most likely to notice the growth is in your grocery bill. Buy in bulk. Keep carbs handy. Now's not the time to switch to organic.

THERE WILL BE TEARS (BOTH YOURS AND THEIRS).

Doors will slam. Drama will happen. Hormones will soar. Friends will break up. Abnormal has become the norm. But amid all the ups and downs, in the changing tides of emotions, now is the time to lean in even more closely. When they push, prove you can't be pushed away. When they change, prove you will love them consistently. When they break your trust, prove you are someone who can be trusted. It may be challenging, but keep showing up so there's never any reason to wonder, "Who cares?"

IT'S JUST A
PHASE

**SO DON'T
MISS IT**



YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOLER IS CHANGING...

PHYSICALLY

- » Girls begin outpacing guys in development
- » Guys experience changes in height and weight, an increase in hormones, and possible acne
- » Girls experience changes in height and body shape; may begin menstruation (10-16 years)

MENTALLY

- » Enjoys learning new skills and being challenged
- » Increasingly able to grasp abstract concepts like "justice"
- » Growing ability to see the world from different perspectives
- » Sudden brain growth may lead to forgetfulness

RELATIONALLY

- » Debates often, but argues more from emotion than logic
- » Often displays worst behavior at home
- » Values non-parental adult influences
- » May have romantic interests and experiment with physical affection

EMOTIONALLY

- » Often masks emotions in order to fit in
- » Benefits from talking about feelings
- » Struggles with decision-making
- » Lies more than at any other phase
- » May become preoccupied with perceived abilities and undervalue persistence, effort, and practice



YOUR ROLE IS TO
AFFIRM
THEIR PERSONAL JOURNEY

Middle school is a crisis. Your no-longer-a-child has arrived in a new phase just in time for their body to outgrow their coordination, for hormones to kick in, and for their brain to become a tangle of new synapses. But, when you consistently affirm their journey through this sometimes-turbulent season, you help them gain stability.

**THINKS LIKE
AN ENGINEER**

You help them learn when you...
CONNECT THE DOTS.

**WANTS TO KNOW,
“WHO DO I LIKE?”**

You capture their heart when you...
PROVIDE STABILITY.

**IS MOTIVATED
BY ACCEPTANCE**

You coach their moral abilities when you...
AFFIRM THEIR VALUE.



YOU CAN HELP YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOLER...

LOVE
GOD.

LOVE
OTHERS.

LOVE
LIFE.

When you **AFFIRM** your middle schooler's personal journey,
you help them...

**OWN THEIR OWN FAITH.
VALUE A FAITH COMMUNITY.**

Practically speaking, that means every week
you have an opportunity to...

PRIORITIZE A WEEKLY SMALL GROUP.

SHARE STORIES ABOUT YOUR FAITH.

PRAY FOR THEM.

CHOOSE NOT TO BE SHOCKED BY HARD QUESTIONS.





HOW TO WIN...

PHYSICAL

Communicate and celebrate the changes that are coming.

MENTAL

Meet them with what they like.

EMOTIONAL

Family dinner at least once a week.

SPIRITUAL

Talk about God and make Him relevant in everyday life.

You can do these things by taking advantage of the time you already spend together.

MORNING TIME

BE A COACH.

You instill purpose when you start the day with encouraging words.

DRIVE TIME

BE A FRIEND.

You interpret life during informal conversation as you travel.

MEAL TIME

BE A TEACHER.

You establish values with intentional conversation while you eat together.

BED TIME

BE A COUNSELOR..

You strengthen your relationship through heart conversations at the end of the day.

PHASE:

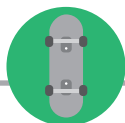
A TIMEFRAME

IN A KID'S LIFE WHEN YOU CAN

LEVERAGE

DISTINCTIVE OPPORTUNITIES TO INFLUENCE

THEIR FUTURE



YOU HAVE 416 WEEKS AND COUNTING...

IT'S JUST A
PHASE
SO DON'T MISS IT



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