



FSM

Our Fellowship Student Ministries (FSM) team values partnering well with families because we know that families are the greatest spiritual influence on the life of a child. We also know that it can be difficult to know how to connect with your child as they enter into their teen years. With that, we wanted to provide a resource for you to engage with your children confidently amidst changing relationships in a changing culture. We hope and pray this book will be a resource that deepens relationships with your children and with the Lord.

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Fellowship Student Ministry

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Introduction

One of the greatest gifts that a parent has is the opportunity to connect with the heart of their child as they grow up. It's also one of the most challenging parts of parenting. Children long to be loved and cared for, but the pressures of our world often push them to look for that love and affirmation outside of their parents.

We want to do everything we can to equip parents to have spiritual influence in their children's lives! We want to see students "Know Jesus and Make Jesus Known," and we know that the greatest influencers in their lives are you: their parents. As our team prayed and processed how we can do our jobs better, the idea of this book began to take shape.

As you go through these last few years with your kids in your home, we hope that this resource makes connecting with them and pointing them to Jesus that much richer. Remember that their salvation is not in your hands; it's in God's. At the same time, He's given you the privilege and responsibility to shepherd them for the most formative years of their lives. We are praying diligently for kids throughout Northwest Arkansas to seek the Lord, find community, feel loved, and experience the life that comes in a relationship with Jesus!

How to Use This Book

The goal of this book is to give you an avenue and content to connect with your son/daughter. We provide questions and a few key verses, but the rest is up to you. You'll find a wide range of questions including those regarding theology, friendships, finances, relationships, family, and many more topics. Think of this as a menu more than a manual. Don't worry about going page by page through this until you're done; pick and choose questions as needed for your child in their situation.

Use these questions in the car, at the dinner table, or whenever you have time. Ideally, a weekly or bi-weekly “breakfast date” would provide consistency and intentionality that children crave (whether they realize it or not). We understand that may be a lot for you to commit to with schedules and other activities, but it’s worth it to carve out time with them!

Here are a few reminders as you meet with your child:

1. Don’t just ask questions. Always share and answer the questions yourself.
2. This is not a time to rebuke, correct, or corral. Just listen and give them a safe place to share/process.
3. It may take them a long time to feel comfortable opening up. That’s okay!
4. Follow through and follow up. If you decide to do something, then do it.
5. Use Scripture, talk about Scripture, emphasize Scripture, but don’t over spiritualize everything.
6. Peel back the layers, and don’t rush through it. These questions are tools to go deeper. You are here to be together, not to finish.
7. Have fun!

Are you ready? Let’s be honest, you’ll never be fully “ready” to lead and develop your child. None of us will, but you just have to start and trust the Lord through the process. Make the effort, think of this as a marathon rather than a sprint, and pray daily! Ready... Set... Go.

