



PARENTING

Participant Guide

Welcome to Parenting.

Kids are unique and their challenges are often equally unique. One moment we are thinking, "Wow, I'm a good parent," and a minute later we feel like total failures. This group will address some important strategies all parents can utilize. Your greatest impact in the world might not be what you do, but WHO you raise. When we gather for each of the six-weeks, we will use this resource as we learn from parents who are experiencing similar challenges and parents who have already been through it.

Each week, we will spend some time getting to know each other in the group. We will also watch a video to better understand some best practices as parents as well as hear parents share their experiences living out these concepts with real-life stories. We will then spend time discussing these practices as a group. Outside of your weekly group meeting, this resource contains an Action Item. The weekly Action Item is to be completed at home. It will help you go deeper with the content each week as well as prepare you for the next meeting.



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Week One: Losing Your Marbles



Conversation Starters (20 Minutes)

- Please share with the group your name, how long you've been married, and about your kids.
- What are you most proud of about your family?



Watch The Video (Click Here - 15 Minutes)

One of the greatest ways to _____ as parents is to learn from our _____ and others.

We have approximately _____ weeks with our kids.

The number one _____ in your kid's life is _____.

You can't totally _____ your kids, but you can control your _____.

If you are feeling _____, that is totally _____.



Group Discussion (45 Minutes)

1. What is the one thing you hope to learn through this parenting experience?
2. Robert stated we are the number one influence in our kids' lives. In what ways are you positively and negatively influencing your kids? What should or could you do to influence your kids differently?
3. How can you set your kids up for success?
4. What are some mistakes you have seen other parents make that you have been able to avoid?
5. What mistakes have you made as a parent and what did you learn?
6. Read aloud **Proverbs 15:22 & 24:6**. While you hopefully haven't waged war in your parenting, these scriptures emphasize the importance of wise counsel. Who are you putting in the lives of your kids to help support them, influence them, and support you in your parenting?
7. While you can't control your kids, what are some areas you need to gain some control in as a parent?
8. What is one change you can make this week to improve your parenting?



Prayer (10 Minutes)

How can we pray for you in your parenting this week? After everyone has time to answer this question, spend some time praying for each other as a group.



Action Items (Complete on your own)

1. The final question of the Group Discussion this week was “What is one change you can make this week to improve your parenting.” Write your answer to that question below.

2. When and how are you going to make that change this week?

3. Write the names of your kids that change would impact.

4. What is the impact that would result from this change?

5. Who are you going to share this plan with to hold you accountable to make this change?



Week Two: Raising Adults



Conversation Starters (20 Minutes)

- How well did the change you made this past week work to improve your parenting?
- What is the best memory you have of your parents?



Watch The Video (Click Here - 15 Minutes)

As parents, we are not raising _____.
We are raising _____.

Sometimes I don't follow through on _____ because I don't want my kids to experience _____.

I have to allow my kids to experience the _____ of _____.

Four Stages of Parenting:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Parent with the _____ in _____.

Our kids are a _____ of us. Our kids will make _____ on their own regardless of how well we did in them.

_____ can keep us from raising _____.

Your kids don't belong to _____. They belong to _____.

What does it take for us to love and trust God? _____



Group Discussion (45 Minutes)

1. If the goal is to raise future adults, what specifically should you be doing now to accomplish that goal?
2. Read aloud **Proverbs 22:6**. What are you doing to help your kids meet, know, and follow Jesus?
3. What stage of parenting are you currently in? When do you see yourself transitioning to the next stage with each of your kids?
4. Did your parents stay too long or get stuck at any of these four stages?
5. How do we get to the stage of Consultant where our adult kids would come to us for advice and guidance?
6. How does knowing your kids are God's, not yours, make you feel? Does knowing this change anything in your parenting?
7. Chad discusses how eagles teach their eaglets to fly by pushing them out of the nest. What "flying" lessons have or are you teaching your kids in which they feel they are "dying?"
8. What kind of adults are you raising based on your current boundaries and methods of discipline?



Prayer (10 Minutes)

How can we pray for you in your parenting this week? After everyone has time to answer this question, spend some time praying for each other as a group.



Action Items (Complete on your own)

1. In the table below, write your kids' names in the top row of each column. Then think about each of your kids. For each of the four stages, write an age range (i.e. 5-7) in which each kid was or will be in that parenting stage. Keep in mind different kids progress at different rates and may need more or less time in each parenting stage.

NAMES				
CAREGIVER	-	-	-	-
COP	-	-	-	-
COACH	-	-	-	-
CONSULTANT	-	-	-	-



***Week Three: How Our Kids
Spell "LOVE"***



Conversation Starters (20 Minutes)

- Share with your group what age ranges you wrote for each of your kids for the four stages of parenting (Caregiver, Cop, Coach, & Consultant).
- Describe one of the best memories you have with your kids. Where were you? What did you do? Why was it so special?



Watch The Video (Click Here - 15 Minutes)

Kids spell love: _____ .

_____ time is just a myth. It is just _____ .

If you can win the _____ , you can win the _____ .

The most important _____ is the _____ .

When _____ your kid, the most important thing to do is _____ .



Group Discussion (45 Minutes)

1. How do you spend time with your kids? Describe your successes and challenges.
2. Describe a time when you tried to spend “quality time” together as a family and it didn’t quite live up to what you or your kids expected?
3. Robert said, “If you win the dinner table, you can win the family.” What does the average dinner time look like at your house?
4. What practical steps could you take to ensure family dinners happen regularly?
5. What questions do you ask your kids at dinner, on dates, or during an uninterrupted time? What questions or topics inspire conversation?
6. Are you dating your kids? If so, what does that look like? If not, how can you make that happen?
7. Read aloud **Matthew 6:21**. While this scripture is usually thought of in reference to money, what can it teach us about parenting? How do you build patterns into your schedule so you use your most valuable resource (time) to the fullest?



Prayer (10 Minutes)

How can we pray for you in your parenting this week? After everyone has time to answer this question, spend some time praying for each other as a group.



Action Items (Complete on your own)

1. Based on today's conversation on time, what changes do you want to make? Provide specific details about these changes.

2. Our lives are busy. In order to fight against busyness, we must take something out of our lives or schedules when we add something new. In light of what changes you want to make, what other changes do you need to make in your current life or schedule to make your desired changes possible? (Think about all the possible distractions and reasons that would prevent this change or changes from becoming a regular habit.)

3. What would the impact of these changes mean for your family?

4. What might happen if you don't make these changes?



Week Four: Words Build Worlds



Conversation Starters (20 Minutes)

- What changes did you list and make last week?
- What do you appreciate most about your childhood?
- If you could change anything about your childhood, what would it be?



Watch The Video (Click Here - 15 Minutes)

_____ build _____ .

There is _____ and _____ in our words.

_____ creates _____ .

If you freak out and use discouraging words when your kid tells the _____ , you have just taught your kid to _____ to you in the future.

What gets _____ or _____ gets repeated.



Group Discussion (45 Minutes)

1. Can you think of a time a parent, coach, or teacher said something to you as a kid that still encourages or hurts you to think about today? If so, please share it with the group.
2. Read aloud **Genesis 1:1-3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 29**. After reading these verses, what does this tell us about the power of words?



Group Discussion (Continued...)

- 3. Proverbs 18:21** says the tongue has the power of life and death. Also referring to the power of words, **James 3:8** states the tongue is untamable by our own willpower. In other words, our words are powerful and often out of control. As a parent, what do you do to help control your tongue? What do we need to be teaching our kids about words?
- 4.** It is inevitable we are going to say things, not say things, or use a tone that will crush our kids. Discuss a time you have apologized to your kid and how that impacted your relationship?
- 5.** How are you encouraging telling the truth in your home?
- 6.** Read aloud **Ephesians 6:4**. What are some ways we can be spiritual leaders for our kids to “raise them up in the training and instruction of God?”
- 7.** Read aloud **Mark 1:11**. Words build up our kids. Kids thrive when they know they are loved, belong, and are special. What specifically do you need to routinely say to your kids to communicate they are loved, belong, and are special?
- 8.** What gets encouraged and celebrated gets repeated. What do you need to be encouraging and celebrating more?



Prayer (10 Minutes)

How can we pray for you in your parenting this week? After everyone has time to answer this question, spend some time praying for each other as a group.



Action Items (Complete on your own)

1. In question 7 of the Group Discussion, you discussed what specifically you need to routinely say to your kids to communicate they are loved, belong, and are special. Write a few sentences below you could begin routinely saying to your kids to build them up.

2. The Bible has several blessings written in scripture. We also find stories in the Bible of parents blessing their kids. It is a powerful habit to pray or speak a blessing to your kids. Below are several blessings found in scripture. Read each one.

- May the Lord bless you and keep you; may He smile on you and be gracious to you; may He look your way and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)
- May God give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. (Psalm 20:4)
- May God be gracious to you and bless you and make His face shine upon you. (Psalm 67:1)
- May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it, and may you be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God. (Ephesians 3:16)



Action Items (Continued...)

- I pray that Christ may live in your hearts by faith. I pray that you will be filled with love. (Ephesians 3:17)
- May your love abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9-11)
- May you be strengthened with all power, according to God’s glorious might. May you be filled with joy. (Colossians 1:11)
- May the Lord make you grow in love for each other and for everyone. We have this kind of love for you. (1 Thessalonians 3:12)
- May the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way. (2 Thessalonians 3:16)

a) Which blessing would you choose to routinely say to or pray for your kids?

b) Why did you choose that blessing?



Week Five: The Power of Example



Conversation Starters (20 Minutes)

- Last week, your action step was to write out what you could routinely say to your kids to help them feel they are loved, belong, and are special. Share with the group what you wrote.
- What did you learn from your parents? Pick 2 or 3 words that describe the characteristics you've learned from your parents. (i.e. respect, love, fun)
- Hypocrites: We've all known some and we've all been guilty of being one at some point. Describe a time in your parenting when you felt like a hypocrite.



Watch The Video (15 Minutes)

More is _____ than _____ .

One of the most powerful things you can do is _____ to them.

Humility is the fuel behind all _____ and _____ improvement.

You are _____ your kid day in and day out, whether you _____ it or not.



Group Discussion (45 Minutes)

1. What are you modeling well for your children?
2. In your parenting, what are you modeling poorly or not modeling at all?
3. How are you modeling a healthy marriage for your kids? If you aren't married, in what ways are you modeling healthy relationships?
4. Since our marriage and relationships impact our kids so much, what do you need to do to improve your marriage or relationships?
5. Is how you are spending your time modeling a healthy way of life for your kids? (Think about how much time you are spending at work, at church, doing activities, with your kids, with your spouse, with your friends, etc.)
6. Read aloud **Luke 10:27**. At Sun Valley, we often say, in the end, all that matters is God and People. We are called to "Love God, Love People."
 - Do your children know you love God? If so, how do they know?
 - In what ways does your family "love people?" What other ways could your family love others?
7. Prayer is a powerful spiritual practice to model for your kids.
 - What are your family's prayer habits?
 - When do you pray?
 - How do you pray?
 - Where do you pray?
 - What do you pray about?



Prayer (10 Minutes)

How can we pray for you in your parenting this week? After everyone has time to answer this question, spend some time praying for each other as a group.



Action Items (Complete on your own)

1. Complete the T-chart below. On the left, write things you want to continue to model well. Be specific. For example, don't just write "prayer", write "praying at dinner every night." On the right, write specific things you'd like to model better or start modeling.

CONTINUE MODELING	MODEL BETTER/START MODELING

2. Question 4 during the Group Discussion time asked "What do you need to do to improve your marriage?" Have an in-depth and honest conversation with your spouse about how you both could improve your marriage.



Week Six: The Power of the Other



Conversation Starters (20 Minutes)

- After reflecting on last week's Action Item, what did you decide to model better or start modeling?
- Besides a parent, describe an important mentor in your life.
- Describe a time when you mentored or coached someone? (Maybe it was while growing up or maybe it was recently.) How did your mentorship or coaching impact their life?



Watch The Video (Click here - 15 Minutes)

We are not meant to do life _____ .

Your kids need to be _____ by other _____ adults.

Younger kids try to discover how they are _____ to their parents and older kids form their identity on how they are _____ .

Raising kids is a _____ endeavor.



Group Discussion (45 Minutes)

- 1.** Besides you and your spouse, who else directly influences your kids?
- 2.** What's the next step you can take to help your kids connect with another Godly adult who can have a positive influence on them?
- 3.** What are the most important things you would like another adult to model for or reinforce in your child's life?
- 4.** Who do you go to when you need parenting advice? If you don't have someone, who could you reach out to?
- 5.** What is a word of encouragement you would want to share with other parents?
- 6.** What have been your biggest takeaways from all 6 weeks?
- 7.** If you have a kid infant-Grade 6, are they involved in Kids at Sun Valley? If your kid is in Grade 7-12, are they in a student small group? If so, what benefits have they experienced?
- 8.** Are you currently in a group? If not, could this group stay together? If so, what date, time, and location will you meet next?



Prayer (10 Minutes)

How can we pray for you in your parenting this week? After everyone has time to answer this question, spend some time praying for each other as a group.



Action Items (Complete on your own)

Other parents can be an invaluable resource to you in your parenting as well as to your kids. Watch this video which contains dads from Sun Valley sharing some parenting wisdom. [CLICK HERE](#)

1. What wisdom did you take away from this video?

2. If you would have been a part of this panel, what additional wisdom would you have shared?
