

# LAUNCHING YOUNG ADULTS



Riverside @Home

FAITH | FAMILY | FRIENDS





# LAUNCHING YOUNG ADULTS

Kurt Bruner, The Center for Strong Families  
Adapted by Riverside Church of Christ

In some ways, the goal of parenting is to work yourself out of a job. When your children were born, they needed you for everything. As they've grown older, your role has changed and hopefully they are starting to take responsibility for their own lives. Unfortunately, more and more parents are inadvertently keeping their children from growing up by protecting them from the risks necessary to managing adulthood.

How can you be intentional about successfully launching older children?

## STEP ONE: BE A GOOD COACH

As the parent of a teen on the verge of adulthood, you are in the prime of the coaching years. You can motivate, encourage, challenge, and advise, but you can't force-feed.

By helping your son or daughter articulate what they believe, you can provide a safe environment to wrestle with and even question the values they learned as children. The key to your influence is maintaining a strong relationship and frequent, open dialogue.

## STEP TWO: GIVE PERSPECTIVE AMID THEIR BIG QUESTIONS

Making the transition into adulthood, your son or daughter will face big questions like: What kind of work should I do? Where should I live? What should I do with my life? The most important thing you can do during this season is to direct them back to overarching Biblical principles in a way that keeps the lines of communication open.

The words of King David to his son Solomon (in 1 Chronicles 28:9) provide a model for advising emerging adults: *And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts.*

In the midst of the practical advice parents may offer on setting goals, choosing a job, finding a spouse, and so forth, we must also elevate God's principles, such as...

- *Unless the Lord builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted (Psalm 127:1)*
- *Lose your life to find it (Luke 9:23-24)*
- *Number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:12)*

## STEP THREE: GIVE A VISION FOR COMMUNITY AND MARRIAGE

Parents of teens often help their children get ready for college and the workforce but don't know exactly what they can do when it comes to preparing them for vital community life, marriage, and family. As Christians, we are called to actively participate in our communities, positively influencing the people around us for the Kingdom of God.

We sometimes overlook how much marriage and family serve as the organizing structure of life. You have a vital part to play in helping your children become mature adults. This is a process that begins years before they meet their future mate — in their hearts as well as yours. Actively modeling a Christian family is the foundation; daily prayer for your child's future is an important commitment.

Encourage your older children to find ways to serve the community with other believers. Older teens are transitioning into adulthood in every area of their lives, not just in their relationship with you. If they feel disconnected socially, brainstorm ways they can find connection while "giving back" to the community through service or social events. When they leave for college or enter the workforce for the first time, they must often leave friends, youth groups, and the structure of teen activities. Point out ways they can be involved in bringing God's Kingdom into the world around them.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Recommended Books

*Life on the Edge* (by Dr. James Dobson) offers Biblical principles to help young adults face “crucial questions about identity, education, marriage, career, God’s will, and more.

*Sticky Faith: Everyday Ideas to Build Lasting Faith in Your Kids* (by Dr. Kara Powell and Dr. Chap Clark) shows parents how to actively encourage their children’s spiritual growth so that it will stick to them into adulthood and empower them to develop a living, lasting faith.

*The Jesus Creed: Loving God, Loving Others* (by Scot McKnight) shares Biblical and personal stories of what it means to love God and others.

### Recommended Website

**Boundless.org** webzine provides young adults with a community of mentors and fellow believers throughout the season of transition from high school to starting a family.