



PREPARING YOUR STUDENT'S HEART FOR HIGH SCHOOL

An eight-week parent-student study for your
Seventh-day Adventist Rising Academy Student

pisgah.us

THE NEXT MILESTONE



Starting high school is an exciting time for teenagers.

As a parent, you've been there for each milestone your child has reached so far, but this time may seem different. It's normal to feel a little unsure about the next stage of parenting. Big changes are coming, but it's also an opportunity for personal and spiritual growth as well.

We've helped countless teenagers make the transition to high school at Mount Pisgah Academy. While some adjust faster or more easily than others, the students who are strong in their faith and spiritually prepared have a more positive and enjoyable high school experience overall.

It's important to engage your child in ongoing conversations about starting high school and what they can expect. Set aside time for them. Talk through their worries and fears, ask questions, and offer encouragement. Remind them that they are a child of God and that their heavenly Father will be with them as they enter this next phase of life.

To help you get started, we've outlined discussion topics with conversation starters and suggested activities for you and your teen to do together. The sooner you get started, the sooner they'll be ready.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



- Activities are intended to be ice breakers. Teenagers are more likely to open up to you and talk while they're engaged in something fun and interesting.
- The activities listed are just suggestions. Feel free to customize them based on your teenager's likes and interests.
- Be patient. It may take time for your teen to warm to the idea of talking every week and some weeks will be more productive than others.

Making yourself available is just as important as the conversations. Let your teen set the pace and adjust to his or her cues.



WEEK ONE

Introduction



ACTIVITY

Ask your teen to choose a favorite hobby or activity you can do together.

CONVERSATION STARTER

Conversation in week one should be light and focused on setting expectations for the study over the next several weeks together.

DISCUSSION POINTS

- I'm excited to spend one-on-one time together over the next few weeks.
- I'd like to talk through some subjects that will help you when you get to high school.
- Is there anything you're worried about that we can figure out together?

Bible Verses

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

(Philippians 4:13)

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.

(Jeremiah 29:11)



WEEK TWO

Your Identity



ACTIVITY

Create a self-portrait (paint, draw, or make a paper collage).

CONVERSATION STARTERS

How would you describe yourself in three words?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Your identity doesn't come from your talents or accomplishments.
- As a Christian, your real identity comes from Jesus Christ.
- To understand who you are as a follower of Jesus, you need to understand how He sees you.

Bible Verses

I praise you because I am
fearfully and wonderfully
made; your works are
wonderful,

I know that full well.

(Psalm 139:14)

For we are God's handiwork,
created in Christ Jesus to do
good works, which God
prepared in advance for us to
do. (Ephesians 2:10)



WEEK THREE

Taking Responsibility

ACTIVITY

Prepare a favorite family recipe together for dinner. Start by shopping for the ingredients.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some things you wish you could make decisions on by yourself? What house rules would you change?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Taking responsibility for ourselves gives us a sense of purpose.
- When we take responsibility for our actions and strive to do what is right, we are honoring God.
- We are responsible for how we treat other people, how we study in school, and how we handle money.

Bible Verses

For each will have to bear
his own load.
(Galatians 6:5)

Whatever you do, work
heartily, as for the Lord and
not for men.
(Colossians 3:23)

Arise, for it is your task, and
we are with you; be strong
and do it.
(Ezra 10:4)



WEEK FOUR

Making Friends

ACTIVITY

Play a game or watch your teen's favorite family movie together.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What do you look for in a friend? How do your current friends make you feel?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Good friends listen, encourage, and talk to you.
- It's important to choose friends who are like-minded (they share your belief in God).
- Don't feel pressured to have a lot of friends. It's better to have a close group of friends who really care about you.

Bible Verses

If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls and
has no one to help them up.

(Ecclesiastes 4:10)

One who has unreliable
friends soon comes to ruin,
but there is a friend who
sticks closer than a brother.

(Proverbs 18:24)



WEEK FIVE

Observing the Sabbath

ACTIVITY

Go for a bike ride with your teen. Find a place with a nice view to stop and talk.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What comes to mind when you hear the word Sabbath? Do you treat the Sabbath differently than the other weekdays?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- God created the world in six days and on the seventh day, He rested.
- The best way to keep the Sabbath holy is to devote time to worship God.
- Plan to get your homework and errands done during the week so you can rest on the Sabbath.

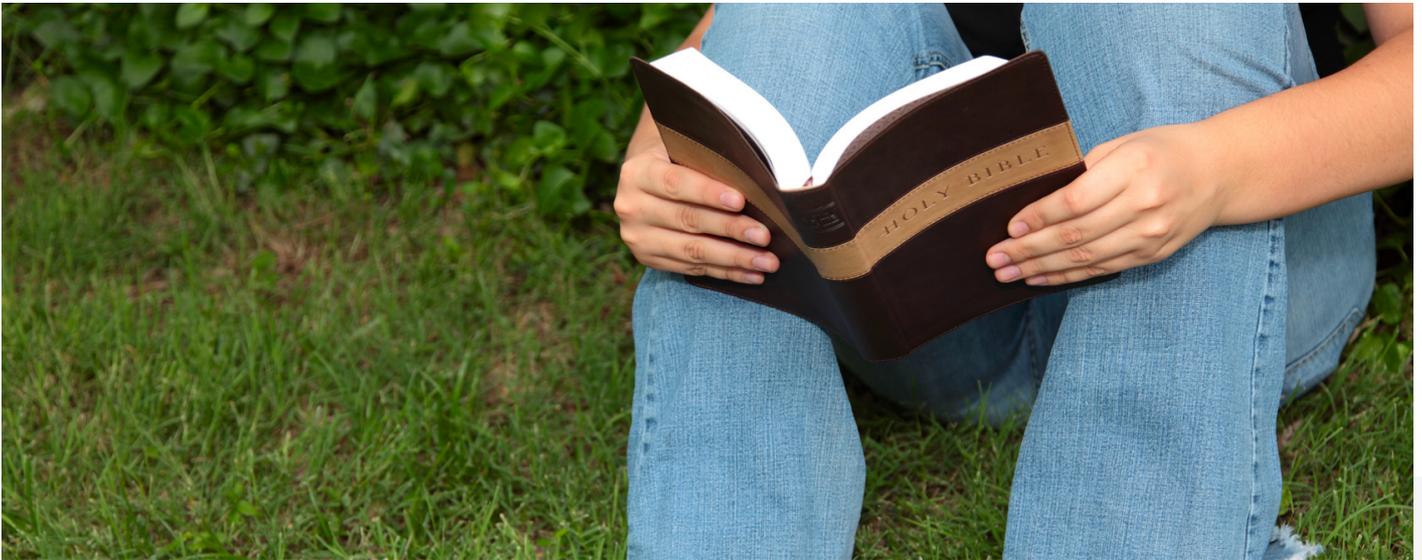
Bible Verses

Remember the Sabbath day,
to keep it holy. Six days shalt
thou labour, and do all thy
work: But the seventh day
is the Sabbath of the Lord
thy God.

(Exodus 20:8-11)

Observe the Sabbath day, to
keep it holy, as the Lord your
God commanded you.

(Deuteronomy 5:12)



WEEK SIX

Your Relationship With Christ

ACTIVITY

Discover a new hiking trail and enjoy some time in nature.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Do you feel like you know Jesus personally?
How would you describe your relationship with Him?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- You were created to know God and have a close personal relationship with Him.
- Knowing Jesus is different from knowing "of" Him.
- Jesus calls you "friend" and wants to bring you joy, hope, and purpose through your relationship.

Bible Verses

May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully.

Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

(Ephesians 3:19)

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

(John 15:7)



WEEK SEVEN

Clean Living - Making Good Choices



ACTIVITY

Go bowling or enjoy a game of miniature golf.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

How can you know if you're making the right decision? Have you ever wanted to do something that you knew wasn't right for you?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Following your heart can lead you down the wrong path.
- Don't put yourself in dangerous or risky situations.
- The Bible is the perfect manual for how to live a good life.
- Ask God to give you discernment (wisdom) to make good decisions.

Bible Verses

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.

(Proverbs 12:15)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

(Proverbs 3:5-6)



WEEK EIGHT

Serving Others



ACTIVITY

Make mini care packages (shampoo, toothbrush, soap) and donate to a homeless shelter.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Have you ever noticed how good it feels to help someone else? Do you go out of your way to help other people?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- True happiness comes from serving others.
- It isn't always easy to serve other people.
- The Bible tells us to use our gifts and talents to show God's love to people.
- God uses small acts of service too - nothing is too small for God to use.

Bible Verses

As each has received a gift,
use it to serve one another,
as good stewards of God's
varied grace.

(1 Peter 4:10)

For even the Son of Man did
not come to be served, but to
serve, and to give his life as a
ransom for many.

(Mark 10:45)

WHAT'S NEXT?



You made it through the discussion guide, now what?

We trust that you enjoyed spending extra time with your teenager over the past eight weeks. Don't stop now. Even though they're becoming more independent, your kids still crave emotional connection with you. Spend one-on-one time with your teen every day if you can, and do something fun. The quality time will strengthen your relationship and help your child see you as a trusted confidant as well as "Mom" or "Dad."

The biggest benefit you'll realize from the ongoing communication is that you'll learn how to best pray for your child. Use a prayer journal to help you stay on track. As your teen navigates the ups and downs of high school you'll be able to look back and see how God answered your prayers and guided their path.

Most students see high school as a fresh start. It's a time for them to discover who they are and explore their passions. Try not to worry and enjoy watching your teen as he or she grows. By helping them prepare in advance, you're setting them up for success, and you're off to a great start.

About Mount Pisgah Academy

Mount Pisgah Academy (MPA) is a Seventh-day Adventist boarding school for grades 9-12, located in Candler, North Carolina, about eight miles west of Asheville. At MPA, we focus on the whole health of the student – physical, intellectual, and spiritual – enabling every student to reach their full potential.

