

# Your Fifth/Sixth Grader's Growth

*Fifth and sixth graders are enthusiastic, uninhibited, and thrive on new experiences. They begin to challenge previously held assumptions, want to emulate popular role models, and can be both silly and serious. To foster your child's spiritual growth, practice several of the suggested activities every day.*

## Mental (Know)

### Fifth/Sixth Grader's Abilities

- asks why things are done and how things work; is willing to search for answers
- reads more confidently; self-teaches in areas of interest
- begins to challenge assumptions about life; questions adult authority and wisdom
- likes to learn new skills via authentic, hands-on experiences
- prefers to undertake new tasks and experiences instead of revising previous work
- thinks more abstractly and logically; deductive reasoning grows
- values learning about social issues, current events, and pop culture
- needs more in-depth knowledge about God to inform and fuel a love for Him
- loves word plays, double meanings, and witty jokes
- recognizes that: God reigns over a universal kingdom; angels and people are accountable to God; Jesus is central to God's redemption plan; historical evidence supports Bible statements; everyone needs to know God and His Word

### Spiritual Growth Activities

- Maintain your own spiritual disciplines as a parent so you will be filled with God's wisdom and power.
- Assign your child a task or new challenge—without explaining "how" to complete it. Act as a coach—redirect, encourage, and ask key questions to help him/her find solutions.
- Encourage your child to have personal times with God. Stay involved, but increase his/her responsibility for *Daily Blessing Time*.
- Confirm that what the Bible says is true, accurate, and important. Discuss the implications of each truth. Provide books, videos, etc. that affirm a biblical worldview.
- Observe topics that interest your child. Ask questions as he/she seeks to understand more. Show how the Bible addresses his/her interests and concerns.
- Go on a family service trip together. Discuss relevant social or global issues (poverty, culture, serving, missions) as the situation warrants.
- Dramatize examples of non-offensive ways to talk to a friend about God. Then show pushy, unkind evangelism. Discuss why people respond to humility instead of arrogance. Practice and learn a simple Gospel presentation.
- Pray for your child's spiritual receptivity, mental development, and enjoyment of learning.



## Emotional (Feel)

### Fifth/Sixth Grader's Abilities

- notices when other people express needs that differ from his/her own
- experiences a growing range of emotions
- struggles to maintain an appropriate attitude when situations don't match expectations
- is easily embarrassed and values "saving face"
- forms friendship groups based on common interests; may exclude others and form cliques
- talks without fully realizing the impact of his/her tone of voice or choice of words
- vacillates quickly between silly and serious
- desires to "belong" in peer groups: at school, church, sports, and other activities
- experiments with identity and personality; is learning how God made him/her
- fears include: exclusion from friends, separation from family, failure at school
- asks for input on decisions from friends and mentors; is often slow to make decisions

### Spiritual Growth Activities

- Help your child learn to read facial expressions and body language. Make a game of teaching him/her how to understand other people.
- Discuss transitions or challenges that your child will face. Explain how to navigate times of uncertainty and fear by calling upon God's strength and guidance.
- Explore ways to show empathy. As your child encounters situations that require compassion, mercy, or grace, help him/her respond appropriately.
- When his/her moodiness leads to your frustration, go to the Lord first. Address your concern and spend time praising and asking God to replace your frustration with hope.
- Model how to "confess" and "repent." Your child may tend to "save face" before God rather than fully repent. Emphasize God's loving heart in spite of mistakes. Give your son/daughter space to express sins and shortcomings via journaling or prayer.
- Emphasize that God compels people to share His love with others. Your son/daughter will overcome shyness and share the faith with others when passionate about God and his/her relationship with Him.
- Remind your child of his/her God-given talents and Christian identity. Be specific and consistent in reinforcing his/her value in Christ.
- Pray for your child's emotional development, childhood friendships, and family relationships.



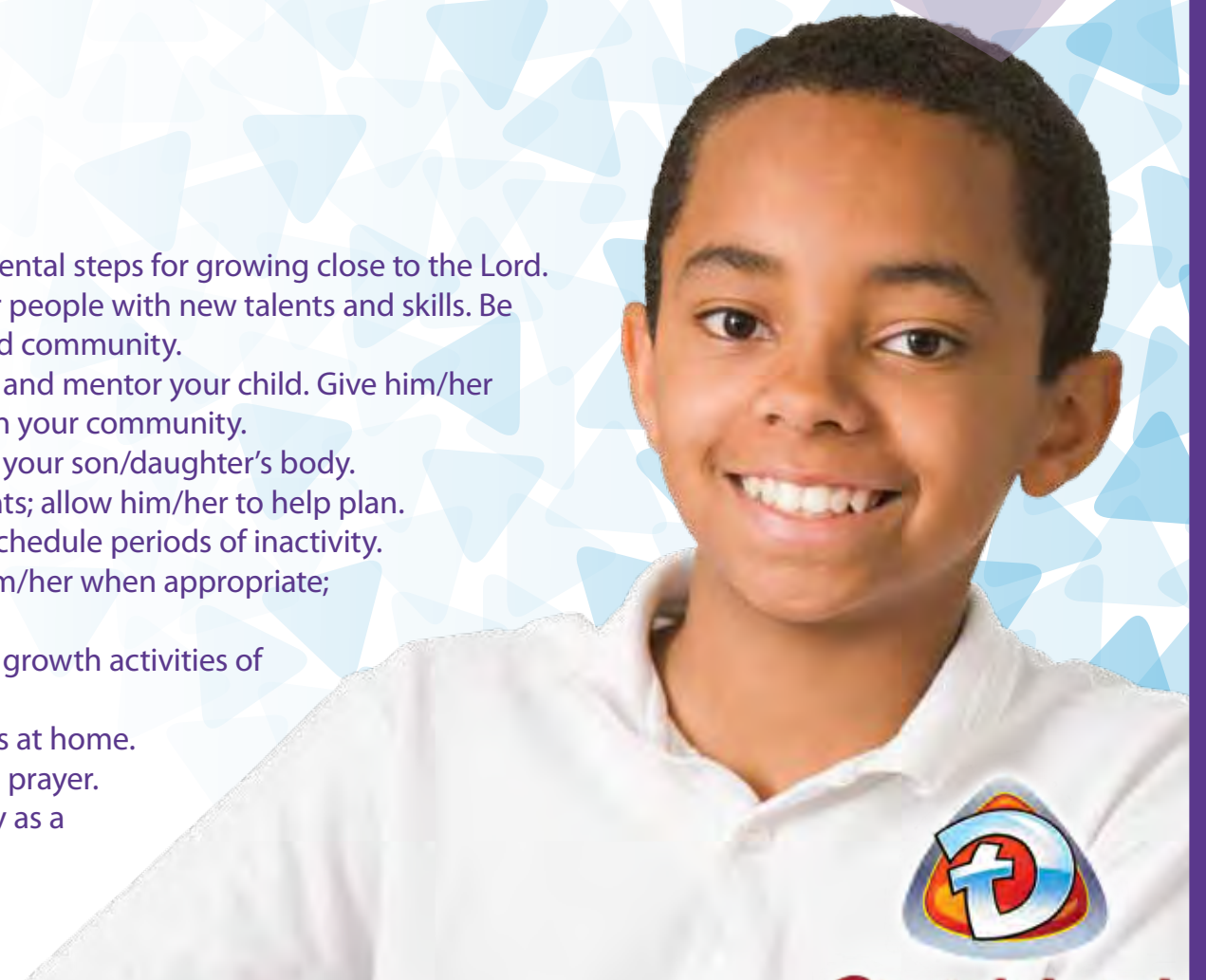
## Physical (Do)

### Fifth/Sixth Grader's Abilities

- learns to make good choices based on personal values instead of authority alone
- waits to gratify a desire when he/she understands why it is important to do so
- undergoes pre-adolescent body changes; recognizes physical and emotional differences between genders
- experiences aches and pains when his/her body grows rapidly; muscles often don't keep up with bones
- needs plenty of sleep, food, and exercise
- initiates activities based on his/her preferences
- serves effectively as a mentor or one-on-one tutor for younger children
- needs help managing time and being diligent with details
- likes to be with friends; readily invites them to your home, church, etc.
- enjoys communicating via technology and social media

### Spiritual Growth Activities

- Create daily and weekly goals that include incremental steps for growing close to the Lord.
- Provide opportunities for your child to bless other people with new talents and skills. Be generous with time and service in your church and community.
- Invite young adults and other parents to befriend and mentor your child. Give him/her opportunities to be around positive role models in your community.
- Discuss physical changes and the rapid growth of your son/daughter's body.
- Celebrate your child's milestones and achievements; allow him/her to help plan.
- Observe times of rest and solitude. Intentionally schedule periods of inactivity.
- Give your child responsibilities at home. Affirm him/her when appropriate; redirect and coach when diligence wanes.
- Recruit your child to assist at church with spiritual growth activities of younger children.
- Prompt your child to plan personal devotion times at home. Show him/her how to include music, reading, and prayer.
- Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of technology as a communication method.
- Pray for your child's safety, health, and for his/her continued physical development.



The next panel explains more!

You probably realize that those three elements are essential for your spiritual progress, too. Your own growth is pivotal to doing what's very best for your child! Every Christian parent who genuinely endeavors to grow in these three ways is on God's path toward raising godly children.

### Your Parenting

How can you raise your five-year-old to follow in Jesus' footsteps? Effective parenting interweaves three components: knowledge + character + conduct.

### Twenty-First Century Parenting

Connect your child to your family "roots"—ancestors who have endured trials and experienced triumphs. Share family history faith stories to give your son or daughter a sense of legacy. Read Hebrews 11 together, revisit Bible hero stories, or find missionary biographies. Affirm heroic traits in your child. God can empower you to train a son or daughter to walk in radical faith and become God's champion.

### First Century Parenting

## Your Faithfulness—God's Reward

Do you want your child to grow into a fully-devoted follower of Jesus Christ?



This parenting series, **Raising Godly Children**, will assist parents and teachers in the disciple-making process. Each brochure is packed with proven activities that will assist you, along with your local church, in nurturing your child's faith.

Also available:



### DiscipleLand Core Bible Curriculum

Challenge children in grades 1-6 to become victorious disciples. Kids are equipped for Christian service through 24 quarters of sequential Bible curriculum. Each lesson is packed with rock-solid Bible content and engaging graphics.



**DiscipleLand**  
Disciples for Life

DiscipleLand.com  
800.284.0158

Your child is drawn to heroes and champions. Encourage him or her to emulate men and women who embody godly character. Introduce your son or daughter to believers who live out God's values with courage and conviction. Raise a champion for the Lord!

(Hebrews 11:33-35, NLT)

Women received their loved ones back again from death, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free.

But others were tortured, and put whole armies to flight.

They became strong in battle and escaped death by the edge of the sword, quenched the flames of fire, they shut the mouths of lions, and received what God had promised them.

By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them.

God invites you to raise a hero in the faith—a faithful, courageous son or daughter. Through the centuries, God has used a wide variety of ordinary people to champion His purposes. In spite of daunting circumstances, these faithful few trusted God's promises.

## Your Fifth/Sixth Grader—God's Champion!

## Your P-O-W-E-R Walk

Parents who embrace the responsibility to raise godly children must assess their own spiritual condition. First and foremost, Jesus Christ calls every believer to follow Him. Walking in Jesus' steps and being His disciple is the Christian's highest privilege and priority!

God invites you to walk with Him every moment of every day. As you practice these five disciplines, the Lord will live His life in and through you! God gladly supplies His incredible P-O-W-E-R as He directs your steps as a parent. (See Isaiah 40:31; Acts 1:8; and Galatians 2:20.)



## Raising Godly Children

# What Your Fifth/Sixth Grader Really Needs



## Fifth/Sixth Graders Need Godly Heroes

Kids wonder, "When I grow up, can I be like him (or her)?" Television and other media exalt sports stars, super-models, and Hollywood celebrities. Nearly every child today idolizes these heroes and wants to emulate the rich and famous.

Jesus could have established a cult-following. He could have basked in His popularity and His power. But Christ's mission transcended the lures of wealth or status. The greatest people in God's kingdom are those who serve others. In fact, God detests what the world values! Ensure that your child sets his/her eyes on eternal ends, not on earthly idols.

**What You Can Do:** Know who your child's heroes are. Identify the values that he or she esteems. Carefully filter your child's experiences. Surround him or her with people who mirror godly traits and Christ like attitudes. Kids will look up to the people you admire and respect. Choose role-models who will contribute to your child's spiritual growth and support your Christian values.



## Fifth/Sixth Graders Need Motivation

Some children are discouraged about trying to please God. They have lost interest in spiritual matters and are not motivated to be involved. Instead, they focus on their own interests and let the world guide them.

Throughout the Bible, God uses a variety of cause-effect techniques to motivate His people. Some are positive and some are punitive; some are earthly and some are eternal. Sometimes children need to be reminded that every human being will someday meet the Creator face-to-face—and give an account to Him.

**What You Can Do:** Every child can be motivated—though not every child responds to the same stimulus. Find ways to lift your child's eyes from self to God. Help him or her realize daily that God is alive and personal. Establish an appropriate system of rewards and penalties. Reinforce and motivate attitudes and behaviors that honor God. Show how faith is relevant to life. Encourage; affirm; model; pray.



This poster tells how to boost your child's spiritual growth!