

middle school



TOPIC

Faith at
home

Cultivating a Prayer Habit

The following content is written by Nina Schmidgall with Parent Cue, adapted by The Heights Youth Ministry with Faith at Home

When my son was about three or four years old, we started to prompt him to contribute his own prayer requests as we were getting him settled into bed at night. “Buddy, why don’t you go ahead and talk to God? You can give Him thanks for something or ask him for something or just share with him.”

In his little voice, he would say, “Thank you God for my sister. Thank you for my fish... and my dresser... and my bed. Oh, and thank you for my pillow.”

We quickly caught on that he was simply looking around the room, calling out anything that he could see. Night after night, we would giggle as he would list off each item around the bedroom. It was a small room so the list didn’t fluctuate a whole lot.

Even if the prayers were simple, my husband and I were committed to cultivating a prayer habit with and for our kids. As our children have grown, their prayers become much more complicated. We joined the heavy hearted prayers of our daughter when she started a new school across town and navigated the heartache of missing her old friends.

We echoed the frightened prayers of our son before he was wheeled into surgery. We invited both of our kids into desperate prayers as begged God to heal the infant baby girl of a family close to us. It is our hope to join with our children in prayer. When we pray with and for our children, we place a foundation of prayer in their lives that will be answered for generations to come.

Here are few ways to help your children develop a prayer habit in your family.

1. Model It

It takes intentionality to model a prayer life for your kids. Going into this new year, commit to a personal rhythm of prayer that will communicate its priority to your children. Consider setting your alarm thirty minutes earlier so you have time in prayer before starting your day. Tell your family about your plan and keep them informed about how it is going. Share the way God is answering your prayers and leading you through your prayer time.

2. Pray Consistently

Turn prayer into a habit by making it a part of your routine. Kneel together with your child each night

middle school



before bed and ask them to share what is on their heart. Consider writing prayers in a journal with your child so you can see how God answers. Write a schedule of prayer, assigning different people or situations to be lifted up each day of the week. Invite the Lord into your day by praying together in the car as you drive your child to school in the morning..

3. Pray Specifically and Boldly

I love it when people encourage others to pray bold and specific prayers. One writer said “God honors bold prayers because bold prayers honor God.” God likes answering bold and specific prayers because it is clear that He is the one that moved. Commit to a specific and bold prayer as a family and pray for it together daily. Maybe you will pray for a need in your community or something your church is believing God for. Consider using a journal or notebook to write prayers together.

