

GOING FURTHER

VALLEYDALE SUPPORT

Faith Path

This free kit is available for download or pick-up from the campus resource center. It includes special tools to help you launch your young adult as they leave the nest.

Student Ministry

In an effort to come alongside parents, Valleydale Church sponsors a range of ministries for teens. If your student needs a pastor speaking into his or her life, contact the student ministry (jknerim@valleydale.org) for details for getting your child connected.

Podcasts

Valleydale's podcasts are located on our website www.valleydale.org/podcasts or at Apple podcasts. Look for the "How to Be a Man" podcast.

Stephen Ministry

This ministry is intended to match you with someone who has a similar life experience but is a little further along for the purpose of perspective, understanding and hope. You will be matched with a carefully selected church member who is supervised by the church and works in strict confidence. To learn more about this ministry, contact the ministry coordinator for a confidential conversation at 205.991.5282.

For more
resources, visit
valleydale.org/family
OR
visit our resource
center in the
lobby

Launching

YOUNG ADULTS



LAUNCHING YOUNG ADULTS

After years of saying, “When I grow up, I’m gonna be...” there comes a point in which your children start going through the steps of actually making it happen. Dr. James Dobson calls ages 16 to 26 the “critical decade” as young people transition from childhood to an adult. We’ve all heard the phrase “failure to launch” describing young men and women who don’t make that transition for one reason or another. Unfortunately, more and more parents are inadvertently keeping their children from growing up by protecting them from the risks necessary to adulthood.

**How can you be intentional about
successfully launching your 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. You can help your son or daughter articulate what they believe, challenge their thinking, remind them of the “basics” they learned during their earlier years, but the time has come for them to truly own their beliefs. Through that process, you can provide a safe environment to wrestle with and even question the values they learned as children. The key to your influence at this point is in 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. The last words of King David to his son, Solomon, (I Chronicles 28:9) provide a model for parents 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. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.”*

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 the house, its
builders labor in vain (Psalm 127:1)*

Lose your life to find it (Luke 9:23-24)

*Number your days, that we may
gain a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:12)*

Seek first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33)

STEP THREE

Give a Vision for Marriage and Family

Parents today often go to extremes to 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 the more important work of marriage and family. While a small minority will be called to lifelong celibate service, most are called to marriage and family (Genesis 2:18-24). We sometimes overlook how much marriage and family serve as the organizing structure of life and the prime arena for our spiritual development. Even if the culture discourages you from taking an active role in this transition, you have a vital part to play in helping your children “leave and cleave.” Actively modeling a Christian family is the foundation, and daily prayer for your child’s future spouse and children is an important commitment. It is essential that you provide guidance and oversight to help your children form strong families as a key emphasis of their launch into adulthood.

GOING FURTHER

RESOURCES

*Life on the Edge: The Next Generation’s Guide
to a Meaningful Future* by Dr. James Dobson

Letting Them Go by Dave Veerman

*Release My Grip: Hope for a Parent’s Heart as Kids
Leave the Nest and Learn to Fly* by Kami Gilmour

Boundless.org

Webzine that provides young adults with a community of mentors and fellow believers throughout the season of transition from high school to starting a family.