Content for Parent Programming

There are three major content areas of a parent and grandparent strategy: 1) promoting spiritual and religious growth, 2) developing faith forming skills, and 3) equipping with the knowledge and skills for parenting today. Use this content in developing and curating programming and resources for parents.

**Adult spiritual and religious growth.** This content needs to be tailored to the four spiritual-religious identities of parents—active, occasional, spiritual/uninvolved, and unaffiliated; and to the traditions, beliefs, and practices of the particular Christian tradition. This content includes the ten characteristics of faith maturing, presented in developmentally appropriate ways for parents.

1. Developing and sustaining a personal relationship and commitment to Jesus Christ
2. Living as a disciple of Jesus Christ and making the Christian faith a way of life
3. Reading and studying the Bible—its message, meaning, and application to life today
4. Learning the Christian story and foundational teachings of the Christian faith (Trinity, Jesus, creed, morality and ethics) and integrating its meaning into ones life
5. Praying—together and by ourselves, and seeking spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines
6. Living with moral integrity guided by Christian ethics and values
7. Living the Christian mission in the world—serving those in need, caring for God’s creation, and acting and advocating for justice and peace.
8. Worshipping God with the community at Sunday worship, ritual celebrations, and the seasons of the church year
9. Being actively engaged in the life, ministries, and activities of the faith community
10. Practicing faith in Jesus Christ by using one’s gifts and talents within the Christian community and in the world

**Faith-forming skills and practices***.* Based on research findings and the wisdom of the Christian tradition we can identify important skills and practices for faith forming. This content includes, but is not limited to:

* having family conversations about religious topics
* reading and discussing the Bible with children and teens
* prayer as a family and encourage children and teens to pray
* participating in Sunday worship as a family
* celebrating family rituals and milestones
* celebrating holidays and seasons as a family
* engaging in actions of service, justice, and care for creation as a family and encouraging children and teens to serve
* talking about faith and the religious tradition, and providing moral instruction and discussing moral issues with children and teens

**Knowledge and skills for parenting**. Based on the Developmental Relationships research from the Search Institute we can identify important practices for effective parenting. This content includes, but is not limited to:

* expressing care to young people by listening to them, being dependable, encouraging them, and make them feel known and valued
* challenging young people by expecting them to do their best and live up to their potential
* providing support for my young people by encouraging their efforts and achievements and guiding them to learn and grow
* treating young people with respect, hearing their voice, and including them in decisions that affect them
* inspiring young people to see possibilities for their future, expose them to new experiences and places, and connect them to people who can help them grow
* demonstrating a warm and affirming parenting approach
* creating a warm, caring supportive family environment.
* practicing effective communication skills
* managing “screen time” and social media use
* learning effective discipline practices
* creating a warm, caring supportive family.

(Vibrant Faith, 2020)