

BIG IDEA

Ground your child's identity in Christ rather than what the media says, friends say, or based on what he or she does or doesn't do.



KEY SCRIPTURES

- *You are fearfully and wonderfully made* (Ps. 139:13-14).
- *You are made in God's image* (Gen. 1:27).
- *God created us as girls and boys/men and women* (Gen. 1:27).
- *You are a child of God* (1 John 3:1).
- *You have a purpose* (Matt. 22:37-39).



KEY QUESTIONS YOUR ELEMENTARY-AGED CHILD IS ASKING

- Who am I?
- What does it mean to be _____ (race, religion, gender)?
- Why are people different?



AT THIS AGE MOST ELEMENTARY CHILDREN WILL ...

- Act out traits associated with their gender through appearance, social behavior, physical behavior, and social relationships.
- Begin to prefer playtime and activities they associate with members of their own gender.



DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

- At this age, your child will begin to absorb messages from media, culture, and friends that shape his identity, so it's incredibly important to reinforce his unique worth, both to you as parents and to God. Model and discuss a moral lifestyle often, and compare what the media says to what the Bible says is true.
- Routines are important to your child, providing a sense of security, happiness, and self-confidence. These attributes can also be attained through healthy activities, like sports, arts, or academics.
- God gave your child a unique purpose, so use every opportunity to capitalize on her individual strengths and characteristics—both verbally and in the activities you encourage.
- Be mindful of your child's unique needs, such as ADHD or perfectionism, and point out healthy ways to manage his impulses or behavior.

- Be careful not to try to change your child's personality to fit a social norm; instead, find a balance between nurturing her natural inclinations and promoting new shaping behaviors.
- Most importantly, always keep the focus on God. Praying out loud for your child where he can hear will set a good example of submitting to God as well as building his self-concept as he learns that God cares for him.



COACHING TIPS

- Always listen to your child's feelings. Help her identify those feelings. Discuss the causes of and solutions to bad feelings.
- Remind your child of God's truths often. Encourage ways for him to remember the difference between his feelings and God's truth.
- Emphasize that differences do not make a person better or worse. Discuss differences she notices in others. Explain that God made everyone unique.
- Maintain an open environment so your child will always feel comfortable to talk to you about himself.



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- **YOU ARE TALENTED AT THIS! WHY DO YOU THINK GOD GAVE YOU THIS TALENT?** Anytime your child accomplishes something, talk about her strengths and the virtues she used to achieve her goal. Bring up how God made her with special talents, and ask her about ways she could use those talents to honor Him.
- **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING WE DO EVERY WEEK TOGETHER AS A FAMILY?** Use any family moment to emphasize the importance of family identity rooted in Christ. Family activities, whether on a drive or at the dinner table, are perfect opportunities to model and discuss the role of different values you observe in your family.
- **TELL ME ONE GOOD THING AND ONE BAD THING THAT HAPPENED TODAY.** Rather than asking how your child's day was, engage in discussion by asking about his "highs and lows" of the day—the best part and the worst part. The high point is an opportunity to talk about having a grateful heart, and the low point could be a chance to explore ways to honor God even when bad things happen or when your child is unhappy.



SAY OR PRAY

- God created you and said everything He made is good.
- God created you as a boy or a girl.
- God created all different kinds of people and each with a special job.
- God loves everyone and sent Jesus to die for all people all over the world.