

BIG IDEA

High schoolers need to love people sincerely and honor God in all their relationships.



KEY SCRIPTURES

- *Love for others is the second greatest commandment* (Matt. 22:36-40).
- *Loving others means being devoted to them and putting them before ourselves* (Rom. 12:10).
- *Our closest relationships need to be with people of same-hearted devotion to Christ* (2 Cor. 6:14-18).
- *We need godly relationships* (Ecc. 4:9-12).



KEY QUESTIONS YOUR HIGH SCHOOLER IS ASKING

- When can I date?
- Why do my parents not get along?
- Why did my boyfriend/girlfriend break up with me?
- Why am I so lonely?



AT THIS AGE MOST HIGH SCHOOLERS WILL ...

- Not be totally confident, but they are more aware of who they are.
- Greatly value the relationships they have with their friends.
- Continue to look to their parents as relationship models.



DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

- High schoolers will move from impulsive and mercurial friendships with peers that are activity-based to stable friendships based on ideas and shared values.
- Their peer friendships become more intimate and supportive. The older high schoolers get, the less drama accompanies their friendships.
- At this age, high schoolers are looking for a more adult-type relationship with their parents. Though this desire can produce conflict over authority and boundaries, it does set the stage for the eventual friendship relationship between parent and child.
- High schoolers are more aware of possible tension and conflict in the home between parents or between parents and other siblings.



COACHING TIPS

- Make sure dating standards are known, discussed, and upheld with your high schooler. Hopefully, you have already had conversations about how and when dating will take place. If not, you're not too far down the road to back up and set up standards that reflect godly wisdom.
- Be aware that your relationship with your spouse is not going unnoticed by your high schooler. He is learning from you what marriage is about and how to treat a spouse.
- Be prepared to walk through romantic and friendship breakups with your high schooler. Be careful not to make light of these relationship difficulties, remembering a broken heart at any age is painful. At the same time, keep pointing her toward the future during these seasons.
- Work to keep your high schooler connected to his grandparents or grandparent-type people in your church. This relationship will be beneficial and rewarding for both parties. Your high schooler can glean godly wisdom and may feel more freedom to talk with his grandparents about a difficult issue than he does with you.



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- **WHAT WOULD BE THE PERFECT DATE?** Have fun with this question, perhaps even sharing some funny experiences from your dating history. However, use this conversation to discuss and reinforce godly standards you have established for dating relationships.
- **DO YOU EVER FEEL LONELY?** This may be a difficult question to ask and answer, but it's one that needs to be discussed. While your high schooler may have many social media friends and followers, she may still deal with loneliness.
- **IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO ASK ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUR MOM (DAD) AND I?** Dare you be this vulnerable? Remember that just because you give this freedom doesn't mean you have to answer every question. There should be things about your relationship that are kept private. Also, remember you don't have to reveal every detail about a subject. However, this question could lead to some tender and teachable moments, even if the relationship with your spouse is broken.



SAY OR PRAY

- Pray that your high schooler will be surrounded by godly people.
- Pray for your high schooler to make wise choices in dating and friendship relationships.
- Pray that you would be a good model for godly relationships.