

LIFE in the Middle Years

This course continues the Parenting from the Tree of Life series that has gained national and international recognition for its practical nature and common sense advice for today's parents. Middle Years children go through a number of transitions as they move away from childhood structures and move towards those all-important adolescent years. Your children will no longer communicate the same way as they did previously. Relationships with peers will begin to change. What the group thinks becomes important and members of the opposite sex will start to become attractive. In short, your child is changing and maturing. How prepared are you for this critical period of life?

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About the Ezzos

GARY and ANNE MARIE EZZO have authored more than twenty books on parenting and produced eight educational video series on child-rearing that have been utilized by millions of parents around the world. The Ezzo's values-based parenting philosophy has been utilized by thousands of churches and their various curriculums have been translated into many different languages.

Gary Ezzo holds a Master of Arts degree from Biola University, Talbot Theological Seminary and School of Theology and serves as the Executive Director of Growing Families International. Anne Marie Ezzo, in addition to ministering alongside her husband, is the International Director of Christian Family Heritage, which oversees the Contact Mom ministry and is co-author of *On Becoming Birthwise* and *Birth by Design*. The Ezzo's have two married daughters, eight grandchildren, and reside in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

To find out more about the Growing Families courses and books, download parenting resources, and place orders on-line, visit the website at growingfamilies.life



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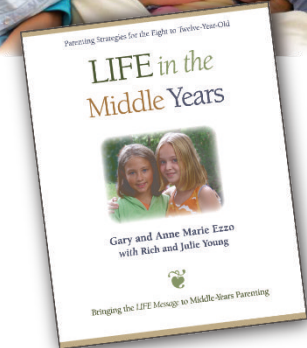


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LIFE in the Middle Years



Parenting Strategies for the Eight to Twelve Year Old

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Reaching the Nations One Family at a Time

The middle-years is one of the most amazing phases of childhood and unsuspecting time for parents. It is a season in which that son or daughter in your home is too old to be called a child, but too young to be labelled an adolescent. From a growth and developmental standpoint, the middle years is a period in which children begin the long process of metamorphosis—moving away from childhood dependencies, associations, and interests, and moving toward a self-reliance directed more and more by the beliefs and values of their home life.



One of the subtle challenges of middle-years parenting (comparatively speaking) is the deceptive appearance of calm. For most parents, having just come out of the busy training years associated with early childhood, and having not yet stepped into the fast-paced adolescence phase, the middle years almost seem like a rest stop. However, such appearances are deceiving.

We equate the middle childhood years with the flow of a deep water stream. The surface will often look calm, but lying just below the calm is unharnessed energy waiting to be released. It is the smooth and calm of the water's surface that can cause parents to accept the middle-years as a seemingly uneventful period of time in the journey of childhood—a time when Mum and Dad can relax and put things on cruise control. However, that would be a mistake! It is the energy of the unseen, lying just below the surface, which parents must be mindful of. Life in the Middle Years brings the needed knowledge and understanding that can help any parent make wise training decisions.



Session 1: This visit explains the nine major middle-years transitions including:

- a. Transitioning away from Childhood Structures
- b. Transitioning to Getting the Facts Right
- c. Transitioning from Assumed Trust to a Reasoned Trust
- d. Transitioning to Peer Influence
- e. Transitioning from Imagination to Reason
- f. Transitioning to Adoptive Emotions
- g. Transitioning to Hormone-Activated Bodies
- h. Transitioning from being Reminded to being Responsible
- i. Transitioning from Authority to Influence

This session also teaches the steps to teach children how to appeal to authority.

Session 2: Perhaps you have heard the old saying: “You are what you eat.” This session builds on a slightly different premise: “You are what you think.” Today we know with certainty that what you put into your mind affects the chemistry of your brain; and, as parents, what you put into your children’s mind affects the chemistry and construction of their brain, which will shape their thought-life and emotional responses for life. Session Two explains the neuro-science behind speaking words or life and death to middle-years children.

Session 3: The middle-years period is a time when a child moves from an awakening to a full awareness of the significance of the group’s opinion. That is what brings about age-related peer pressure. The child from a distance wants to know, “What does the group think?” Now, your son or daughter wants to know, “What does the group think of me?” Session Three takes up the influence of peers and the power of family identity, and factors that influence both.

Session 4: Here we take up the training to educating transition. One major variable influencing the training of children is the child’s capacity to absorb a lesson and understand its purpose. This is usually tied to age. In the middle-years parents must begin transitioning from training outward behaviour to educating the child with knowledge that leads to understanding and wise decision-making. Learning to educate a child through correction takes up the first half of Session Four. The second half looks at the preventative side of correction. There are many excellent methods of correction available to parents; but ultimately, the best form of parental correction is prevention, which requires plenty of parental interaction. In this section we take up a number of practical things parents can do to help encourage behaviour that needs no correction.

Session 5: This session covers effective communication, how to get middle-years children ready for the many “what if?” moments that will soon invade their moral world, and a comprehensive discussion on parenting in the digital age. Included here is how to introduce technology to children, establish workable and safe boundaries, and how to keep children safe in a very aggressive cyber world. This section also includes the middle-years topic pool. Here, parents learn how to effectively deal with “poor attitudes,” how to manage early affections from the opposite gender, and most importantly, how to prepare a son or daughter for the physical changes that come during the middle-years, without giving too much or too little information, but enough to keep them safe and prepared.

