

Equipping Parents for Family Formation

Sarah Cowan Johnson



The Bad News

64% of "youth group kids" walk away from their faith after graduation

How did we get here?

How did we get here?

Professionalization of the priesthood

How did we get here?

Professionalization of the priesthood

Parental outsourcing to experts

How did we get here?

Professionalization of the priesthood

Parental outsourcing to experts

Same plays, different game

We can't out-program
post-Christian culture.

Information transfer \neq transformation

Information transfer \neq transformation
Knowledge about God \neq knowing God

The Good News

Parents are the most influential factor on a child's spirituality throughout their lifetime

The Even Better News

82% of kids whose parents talk about and practice their faith at home go on to follow Jesus as adults

82% > 36%

Parents, not programs, are the key
to cultivating lasting faith in children.

Barriers

Barriers

Time

Barriers

Time

“I don't know where to start.”

Time

Aim at the right target

Time

Aim at the right target

Habit stack

I don't know where to start

Simple tools

I don't know where to start

Simple tools

Menus

Vision

How effective is your church at casting vision for the significant role that parents play in the discipleship of children?

Vision

Does your church have theological and ecclesiological conviction, and a deliberate plan, for equipping ordinary saints for ministry?

Support

Support

To what degree do parents experience a relationally, emotionally, and spiritually supportive ecosystem within the church community?

Family Retreat



Equipping

Equipping

To what degree do parents feel equipped with specific tools, resources, and training in the area of family discipleship?

Parent Tables



Parent Cohort

VIDEO COURSE



Teach Your Children Well

Sarah Cowan Johnson

Family Sunday



Family Sunday Template

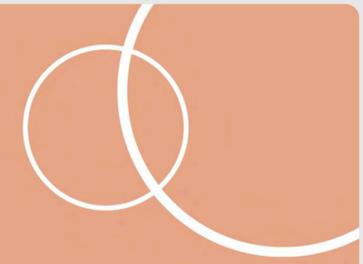


Practice of the Month



JANUARY

GOD HUNT



SARAHCOWANJOHNSON.COM

SUPPLIES

None.

INSTRUCTIONS

- » Choose a time when distractions are limited. Consider stacking this practice on top of a family routine that already works well, such as dinnertime or bedtime.
- » Explain: We are going on a God Hunt. God can be found in so many places if we learn to look for him.
- » Invite family members to share anywhere they may have seen God today. Maybe it was a moment of joy, peace, love, beauty, or kindness. Or even a challenge made bearable by his love.
- » If anyone struggles to locate God in their day, other family members can "hunt" with them. Rest assured, he was there.
- » Close the time by thanking God that he is always present with us.

A PRACTICE TO RECOGNIZE
GOD'S PRESENCE IN THE
MIDST OF EVERYDAY LIFE.

TIPS FOR

BABIES

Do the practice yourself alongside your baby, sharing your reflections out loud.

LITTLES

Help them find God in his creation and in reflections of his character.

MIDDLES

Help them recognize God's presence even in difficult situations.

TEENS

Engage their questions about how to sense, or trust, God's presence.

ADULTS

Cultivate this practice into a regular habit and look for patterns.

Baton Pass



KidCity
@HOME

9.21

**BIBLE
STORY**

GENESIS 25-27

WONDER TRUTH: No Matter What, God Keeps His Promises

When Jacob tricks his father Isaac into giving him the family blessing, God still continues His covenant promises through Jacob, for no matter what, God keeps His promises.

**TABLE
QUESTIONS**

1. Have you ever made a promise to someone? What was it?
2. Is there ever a time it is OK to break your promise? Why or why not?
3. What promise did God make to Abraham? What is special about the promise God made?
4. God kept His promise to bless the world through Abraham's family even though Abraham's family didn't always do what was right. What does that tell us about God?

wonderink.org

Sanctuary Church: Hey Families! We're passing you the baton! Keep the conversations from KidCity rolling at home!

Parent / Church Assessment



FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP ASSESSMENT

Results by Category



61%

Conviction

Fruitful family discipleship requires deep, personal conviction. Parents with strong conviction are fully convinced that following Jesus is the best possible way to live. They also believe that raising their children to love and follow Jesus is part of their God-given calling. Rather than outsourcing this task to "experts," these parents recognize that discipleship is first and foremost their responsibility.



44%

Prioritization

Family discipleship takes time, energy, and often personal sacrifice. Parents who prioritize this work are intentional about making space for discipleship in the busyness of everyday life. This includes adjusting family schedules or saying no to other commitments when needed. Prioritizing family discipleship is about channeling conviction into consistent, intentional practice.



72%

Experimentation

Parents who effectively disciple their children are like scientists in a lab - constantly testing, experimenting, and adjusting. They aren't afraid to try new things, and also recognize that not all experiments will be successful. Fruitful family discipleship is less about finding the perfect formula and more about ongoing discovery, flexibility, and creativity.



17%

Support

You've heard the phrase "it takes a village" and that absolutely applies here. Parents who build a web of support through friendship, mentorship, and intentional community gain the strength and perspective needed to lead their children well for the long haul. Family discipleship is most fruitful when parents are part of a supportive ecosystem.



61%

Resources

Parents whose family discipleship toolkit is fully stocked tend to lead their children with greater confidence. Some of the most essential resources include a solid understanding of the Bible, a clear vision for discipleship and what it involves, and practical tools to integrate family discipleship naturally into everyday life.

Parent / Church Assessment

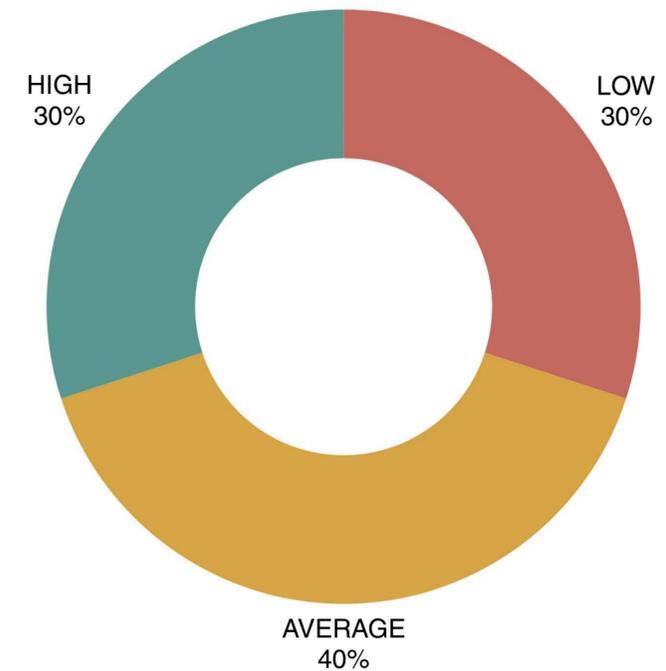


Church Results

How to interpret Church Results

This section reflects how parents perceive the church's effectiveness as a partner in family discipleship. The church-related questions were distributed randomly throughout the broader assessment to avoid response bias. These insights are designed to identify strengths to build on and areas where the church may need to refine its approach.

Overall Score Distribution



Next Steps

Next Steps

Pray + Dream

Next Steps

Pray + Dream

Build a Team

Next Steps

Pray + Dream

Build a Team

Host 1 Parent Gathering in 2026

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Pray + Dream

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Consider Free Assessment