

Healthy Marriages and Families

1. God's Plan for Marriage

Husbands and wives share a truly unique relationship that was designed by the Creator Himself for the good of mankind. However, a look at married couples around us quickly reveals that not all who have taken the vows are happy, contented, or even fully committed to the relationship. This interactive session gives couples the opportunity to retreat from the busyness of daily life to focus on one another and their relationship. Couples in all stages of marriage, from newlyweds to those who've celebrated the diamond anniversary, will find this session to be fun, affirming and time well-spent as we take a fresh look at the simple and not-so-simple truths of the marriage relationship, as designed by God.

2. Communication Within the Family – The Power of Your Words and Your Actions

Most people readily state that communication is a key ingredient for a healthy relationship. Yet, too often couples find it difficult to engage in the type of ongoing communication that works. This session asserts that healthy marriages have two individuals who are committed to communicate with a commitment to resolution. Unmarried heads of households can also benefit from this session as key elements of genuine communication will be discussed, regardless of marital status. Session participants will observe and practice the dynamics of healthy, respectful, and impactful communication.

3. My Money, Your Money, Our Money

If two can live cheaper than one, why is it that money becomes such a source of conflict in many marriages? This session will explore practical aspects of the impact of money management practices on the health of one's marriage. Couples will have the opportunity to reflect on the priorities of their marriage, the goals each individual aspires to achieve, as well as the couple's goals for the family. Practical tools will be provided to help couples evaluate their current status and determine next steps.

4. Keep the Fire Burning – God’s Great Idea

The sexual act has been so degraded in today’s culture that some have forgotten that the sexual act is God’s idea. Knowing that everything God created is good, this session is designed to take a wholesome look at gender differences with regards to emotional and physical needs of one’s mate. Participants will hear the subtle ways that Satan attacks couples in the area of intimacy and how to combat those attacks. Additionally, some participants may be challenged to rethink their attitudes relative to physical and emotional intimacy.

5. The Impact of Your Marriage on Your Children and Your World

Too frequently, parents fail to realize the ministry of their marriage. This session is designed to help parents, in particular, evaluate the messages heard and lessons learned by their children through daily family interactions. Attending this session will support married couples as they facilitate their child’s (children’s) spiritual and emotional development.

6. Modeling Expectations – How Adults are Always Teaching

Do you wonder about the poor choices that you see some children make? Or, are you in awe of young people who seem to have it all together with clear, achievable goals? This session will explore how children learn what they live, recognizing that “living” isn’t limited to home; it includes school, church, social settings, and extracurricular events. Powerful, insightful information will be shared concerning the lessons that adults may be unknowingly teaching children. This session is appropriate for all adults, but may be especially helpful for youth leaders.

7. Connecting Emotional Health to Success in the Workplace

High expectations and endless to-do lists can overwhelm even the most competent worker. This session focuses on the core factors that must be in place for individuals to experience success in the workplace. Participants will be encouraged to review personal habits and processes that impact performance on the job. This session is appropriate for church leaders as well as employees in secular settings.

8. Shaping Behavior – Discipline vs. Punishment

Are you frustrated as you try to address misbehavior with little success? While a core function of supervising children is to ensure appropriate behavior, the actual implementation can be challenging for even the best. This session clearly identifies the differences between discipline and punishment and when to use each. Also included are the types of consequences that are appropriate based on the misbehavior and the child's age and ability to comprehend cause and effect. Participants will receive key principles for implementing strategies that shape behavior as desired.

9. Developing Healthy, Fruitful Relationships

Are you surrounded by family members, co-workers or others who add undue stress to your life? Do you ever wonder why you maintain relationships that aren't really working? This session will: 1) establish the characteristics of healthy, fruitful relationships; 2) help individuals reflect on their role in the establishment of boundaries within relationships; and 3) examine how one's personal behavior impacts relationships. This session is appropriate for all adults.

10. When the Tables are Turned - Caring for Aging Parents

As parents age, children often find themselves noticing changes in their parents' life skills that demand a closer look. But, when and how does a child actually step in? This session focuses on the role reversal that may become necessary as parents age. Information will be provided to help with decision making, finding community resources for specific needs, and enlisting the support of other family members. Additionally, the critical role of self-care will be included in the session.

11. Know Your Worth – Do I Still Matter?

Have you ever felt that the world is moving so fast that you are no longer relevant? This session sets aside the iPhones, iPads, tablets, and other devices to look at your relevance to God and others, regardless of your age. The wisdom and rich experiences of senior citizens will be highlighted as we interactively evaluate the various methods to minister to others.

12. Know Your Worth – Does Anyone Take Me Seriously?

Growing up in this fast-paced society can take its toll on even the most confident young person. Trying to keep up with the latest trends on social media, stay popular at school and plan one's future can all seem to be just too much. This session can be presented for teens or young adults. Participants will engage in large group discussions and small group activities as they determine how they should appropriately assess their worth.

13. So You Want to Get Married – As You Wait

Got the ring or hoping to walk down the aisle before the next decade? This session is for engaged couples as well as those who'd like to be, regardless of age. What should you do while you wait for marriage? Becoming the right mate is a much more important aspect of marriage than the often focused on task of finding the right mate. This session will help all participants look introspectively at what is required if one is to be the spouse that God intended.

14. Leading with Heart and Integrity

Do you long to influence and inspire young people to fully commit themselves to Jesus? This session is for youth leaders, youth teachers, and other adults with a desire to impact God's kingdom by working with youth. This topic can be presented as a keynote or seminar, but is most impactful as a four-part series workshop. The series format will go in depth in the areas of 1) communication, 2) modeling expectations, 3) encouragement, and 4) forgiveness.

Parenting Topics

1. Child Development – Your Child at Different Ages and Stages

Children develop at rates that don't always match their chronological age. To complicate matters more, children develop in various aspects at different rates. Physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development will be included in the presentation. This session identifies appropriate behaviors and expectations of children according to the child's age and developmental stage. Attending this session will support parents as they facilitate each child's growth toward independent living.

2. Communication – The Power of Your Words and Your Actions

This session identifies the multiple methods in which communication occurs. Participants will explore ways in which their behaviors may negate or validate the words they speak. Parents and other influential adults will be encouraged to assess the level of influence their words and actions have on the children in their lives.

3. Building Self-Esteem – Helping Your Child to Feel Good About Self

Are you concerned that negative experiences or bullying are deflating the way your child feels about self? This session is designed to help parents support their child's realization of his/her value and to deflect the negativity that may occur in social interactions.

4. Multiple Intelligences – How Your Child IS Smart

Not every child is a math whiz or a bookworm, but that doesn't mean that every child isn't smart. This session affirms that each child has intelligence and areas of strength. Participants will learn the various types of intelligence and how to help their children identify their specific "intelligence" and strength. Parents will receive guidance as to how to support each child according to his/her natural intelligence.

5. Respectful Behavior – How to Get Along with Others

Is your child having difficulty making and maintaining friendships? Do you see your child repeatedly doing the opposite of what you tell him/her? This session explores the foundations of respectful behavior – common courtesies, manners, and positive regard for others.

6. Modeling Expectations – How Parents are Always Teaching

Do you wonder about the choices that your child makes? Do you want your child to be more assertive or more committed to do his/her best? This session will explore how children learn what they live. Powerful, insightful information will be shared concerning the lessons that adults may be unknowingly and unintentionally teaching children.

7. Understanding How School Works

Do you find yourself baffled or unsure of how the school day, school year, or actual classes work when it comes to your child's school? This session provides clear information about how school works. It also breaks down the educational jargon and demystifies the various plans and processes that occur in schools. Attending this session will help you relate to your child better regarding his/her responsibilities and understand the invaluable role you play in your child's academic success.

8. Discovering Gifts and Talents – The Importance of Exploration

Are you certain that the path you've planned for your child is a good match for his/her skills and abilities? Or, do you have a child who seems to have no strong or lasting interest in anything? Perhaps, greater opportunities for exploration are the key. This session addresses the unequalled power of exploration and discovery when determining one's strengths and best paths for vocations and avocations.

9. Shaping Your Child's Behavior – Discipline vs. Punishment

Are you frustrated as you try to address your child's misbehavior, while having little success? Although a core function of parenting is to teach and train children how to behave appropriately, the actual implementation can be challenging for the best of parents. This session identifies the differences between discipline and punishment and when to use each. Also included are the types of consequences that are appropriate based on the misbehavior and the child's age.

10. Partnering with Your Child's School – Strategies that Start at Home

Do you want to help your child succeed in school, but are not quite sure how to help? This session will give parents concrete ways to partner with their child's school immediately. Specific strategies will be highlighted that involve children as well as activities that parents can engage in without their children to support the school.

11. Developing Healthy, Fruitful Relationships

Are you surrounded by family members, co-workers or others who add undue stress to your life? Do you ever wonder why you maintain relationships that aren't really working?

This session will: 1) establish the characteristics of healthy, fruitful relationships; 2) help individuals reflect on their role in the establishment of boundaries within relationships; and 3) examine how one's personal behavior impacts relationships.

12. Finding and Using Support for Parenting

Have you ever felt overwhelmed or unequipped for the challenges you face as a parent? You're not alone! The job of parenting is one of the most daunting jobs on the planet. No one should try to parent without help. This session explores the various places from which a parent can enlist support – from the immediate and extended family to the faith community, to the school, and finally to professional organizations. Parents will learn how, when, and where to seek help.

13. Help! I'm a Single Parent!

The job of parenting alone is tough, regardless of the circumstances that led to that status. Whether the result of the death of the other parent, divorce, parents who never married, incarceration of a parent, single parents need help. This session examines safeguards that can be established to address the voids that exist due to the absent parent. Additionally, participants will hear strategies for determining when and where to seek support from others.

14. Dealing with Difficult Children

Addressing the behavior of defiant, oppositional, and strong-willed children is tough. This session gives insights into some of the reasons children defy authority, as well as what parents and other adults can do to respond appropriately to the undesired behavior. It is especially helpful if all adults in the parenting role of a difficult child attend this session together in order to develop strategies to support the child and family.

15. Creating a Learning Environment at Home

You may think that a learning environment must look like a school or a classroom, but it doesn't! The most important components of a learning environment are the expressed expectations and support for the learner. Parents are among the most important resources for children's academic development. This session will provide strategies that can be implemented immediately to create a learning environment at home, along with some that can be implemented over a period of time.

16. Making Great Celebrations at Home

Affirmation is a key component of encouraging positive actions. When children do well by reaching a milestone or accomplishing a task, it is important for them to receive recognition, especially from their parents and other loved ones. This session provides tools for parents to create meaningful celebrations without spending a lot of money. Some celebrations actually cost nothing but will be long remembered and appreciated by the children.

17. Game Night and Other Family Traditions

Too often, families spend the majority of their time doing chores, running errands, completing homework and preparing meals. This session focuses on implementing fun activities to build strong family bonds, increase children's self-esteem, and reduce stress in the home. The basics of establishing a game night and other family traditions will be shared. Implementation of such family traditions helps children with cooperative learning, critical thinking, organizational skills, negotiation, team-building, and socialization.

18. Dating – What, When, Why?

The thought of teens dating can be frightening for even the most prepared parents. Some parents choose to simply ignore teens' interest in dating, while others are totally restrictive, forbidding teens to date at all. This session looks at how parents can guide, prepare, and support teens for healthy relationships as they begin dating.

19. Responding to News from School

Schools send parents a great deal of information about children. This includes progress reports, report cards, behavior reports, upcoming events, test results, and more. Some of the news is great to hear, while other information is difficult to receive. How parents respond and the action parents take send critical messages to children. This session addresses how to use all information from school in a way to help your child grow, develop and succeed.

20. Communicating with School Staff

Healthy communication between home and school is an essential component of providing the best academic opportunities for children. Sometimes, key bits of information from parents to school staff can make a tremendous difference as to the degree to which school personnel understand students' needs. Additionally, parents may find that they need additional information about academic or behavioral issues that are occurring at school. Most children quickly learn to manipulate adults when they realize that neither parents nor teachers have all of the pertinent information. This session will provide multiple strategies for implementing comprehensive communication between home and school.

21. Kids Have Feelings, Too

This session addresses the similarities and differences between the ways children and adults experience and express feelings. Learn how sadness, anger and other emotions in children may be misread by adults and therefore, responded to inappropriately. Also, included in this session are the ways parents can help children learn to identify and verbally express emotions, thus reducing tantrums and physically aggressive behaviors.

22. The Importance of Play

Adults may believe that play is merely a way for children to pass time. But, play is a critical activity for children, important for healthy brain development and the enhancement of social skills, imagination, and creativity. This session will address the types of play children engage in, as well as ways in which parents can facilitate and encourage play in a safe environment.

23. From Chaotic, Exhausting Parenting to Calm, Enjoyable Parenting

Do you often feel completely exhausted or overwhelmed as a parent? Every parent has probably been there at some point of the parenting process. If you feel that the job is never done and there aren't enough hours in the day, you're not alone! This session will help parents establish key routines that focus on the priorities of child-rearing.

24. Personal Safety

Keeping children safe at every age is the top priority of every parent. Today's broad technology coupled with children's early exposure and access to the dangers of society can result in tremendous concern. This session will explore important guidelines that should be in place for every child in order to enhance personal safety. Parents will also be alerted to the tactics of predators that children should be trained to avoid.

25. Sibling Rivalry

What should you do when your children don't get along with each other? To some degree, most families will experience disagreements between or among siblings. But, what should families do when the disagreements are ongoing and disruptive for everyone? This session will include strategies that encourage healthy, loving relationships between siblings.

26. Parenting Teens – No Easy Matter

The rapid physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty can be alarming for parents and children. As children enter adolescence, parents often feel as if they have strangers in their home. This session will focus on understanding the developmental goals of the teen years, how to keep communication flowing, and how to support the important transitional period between childhood and adulthood.

Format of Seminars

Seminars are presented in a relaxed, unthreatening manner that is designed to be comfortable for all participants. Real-life, relatable stories are used as the backdrop for powerful truths that are shared and discussed. Emotions may be stirred, resulting in lots of laughter and sometimes tears, that move participants to re-think previous or current actions. Each session includes audience participation which varies according to audience size. Action steps are provided via soft or hard copy handouts which reinforce the seminars' key points long after the event ends.

Each topic can be presented as a standalone seminar or as part of an ongoing series. Sessions are typically 60-90 minutes, but can be customized to fit the needs and size of the audience.