

## **Strong Mothers/Strong Sons and Daughters | Linda Mintle, Ph.D.**

### **Introduction**

Most of us recognize the powerful influence mothers have in the lives of children at all ages. That said, no mom is perfect, but we must recognize the scope of our influence and use it wisely. Perhaps the greatest challenge for moms of teenagers is to stay strong in our own Christian faith and model biblical principles of daily living. As parenting shifts during the teen years to a coaching and counseling model, strong moms understand the developmental phases of their teenagers and parent accordingly. Approaching our teens with unconditional love and grace, strong moms hold firm to our convictions and parent with confidence in the wisdom God provides. We don't measure success according to cultural standards. Instead, we desire to raise what Barna calls "spiritual champions", teens who make a difference and positively influence others for the cause of Christ.

### **I. Introduction: The positive influence of mothers**

### **II. Phases of adolescent development**

- A. Preadolescence (ages 9-13): known as tweens: they feel disorganized; rapid physical change; they have one step in childhood and one in adulthood; exposed to adult media and adult themes that they might not be ready for. For parents, this is a time of transition. They should meet this with warmth, fairness, and humor. These parents need to monitor the media that teens are using.
- B. Middle adolescence (ages 14-16): moody and easily upset; parents need to act as a coach but also counselor; positive communication of the counselor; limits must be set and rules must be enforced
- C. Late adolescence (ages 17-20): many decisions that need to be made; preparing to leave home. Authority is redefined; gradual shift towards emotional and economic independence; beginning of an adult-adult relationship emerges.

### **III. Parenting style**

- A. Changes to more of a coaching style; they come along side their child.
- B. Need at times to use a counseling style

### **IV. Fourteen principles of teen parenting**

- A. Be a good listener; available for late night talks; listening is more important than talking.
- B. Help with decisions
- C. Separation with attachment; they must separate and become their unique selves within the context of the family.
- D. Unity with spouse; agree with the spouse; be clear and consistent; available and reliable.
- E. Ready in the moment: ready to respond with a listening ear or with a word of advice.
- F. Not the teen's best friend: but we are clear that we will listen like a good friend does.
- G. Treat them individually; we will do what we can to bring out their uniqueness. Understand that God made us all unique.
- H. Teach a Biblical worldview: constantly teaching from biblical standards.
- I. On their team: we are a part of their team and not their enemy. Constantly remind them that you are looking out for their best interest
- J. Influence choice of friends: understand that peer pressure isn't always a negative thing.
- K. Stay involved and connected: research shows that parents of influence can prevent a number of risky behaviors. We talk but we listen more. We're involved in their friends. We know their culture.
- L. Set limits: don't let your teens limit throw you.
- M. Look for the positives –Character
- N. Success means a spiritual champion

**V. The need for self-care**

Exercise; time for just you and your husband (date night); important to be in a bible study or close fellowship with other women (those that have been through what you've been through); setting personal goals; remembering to be a model; have some kind of creative outlet; sleep. In order to stay strong as a mom...you can't expect to give of yourself. The most important source of strength: stay in the word and do a lot of praying. They are not embarrassed to ask for prayer or to ask for forgiveness from their teen.

**VI. Issues in raising strong daughters**

Make sure she has her identity in Christ and strong self-esteem; model what you want to see in your daughters; be careful as moms watch what you say; This is a time when a daughter is separating from their moms – they need to feel safe to be themselves; she must be able to develop her own voice.

**VII. Issues in raising strong sons**

Communication – as mothers it's not just the boys talking, that the mom is willing to listen or talk. The moms need to be ready. Give them time to speak. Many times the boys will act out what they feel. Mom's gain respect by earning it.

**VIII. Issues in single parenting of teens**

Trust God and depend on him to lead and guide you; don't panic; listen to your children and listen to what God is saying through them. Understand that you cannot be the father of the household, but the authority is given to you by God. Beware of putting adult expectations on children..allow them to be teenagers.

**IX. Issues in blended families**

They feel like an intruder; define the roles in the family...they have to be in a position to enforce the roles. They have to consistent and fair to all parties. Allow the teens to develop at their own pace.

**X. Moms of color dealing with racism and discrimination**

You treat people the way you want to be treated.

**XI. Moms married to unsaved or ungodly spouses**

**XII. Conclusion: Hope and a prayer**

### **Soul Care Notes:**

#### **Strong Moms in the Bible:**

- Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-21; John 19:25-27) Endured gossip and family rejection, watched her son die and remained faithful to God.
- The woman of Canaan: Matt 15:21-28 Minority, single parent but her faith got Jesus' attention and her daughter was healed.
- Widow of Nain Luke 7:11-16 Single parent who lost her only son. Her faith led to the restoration of her son.
- Eunice Acts 16:1; 2 Tim 1:3-7 Homemaker of interfaith marriage. She and mother Lois invested in Timothy's spiritual nurturance.

#### **Scriptures to encourage:**

- Proverbs 22:6: Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.
- Romans 8:31; What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?
- Exodus 20:12; "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.
- Psalm 27:10: Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.
- Ephesians 5:15-17: Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.
- Deut 6:6-7: These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.
- Romans 12:10-12: Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.
- Psalm 62:2: He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

#### **Study questions:**

1. Describe the issues involved in each phase of teen development.
2. Discuss the shift in parenting to a more coaching, counseling style as children move out of childhood and into their teen years.
3. What is important to remember when a teen is trying to separate and become his or her own person?
4. How can you as a mom not buy into the idea of quality time?
5. How can you and your partner become more unified in your approach to parenting?
6. Discuss the importance of not treating every child the same.
7. Why should you set limits but also allow your teen more power in decision making?
8. What are some ways you could exercise self-care in your life?
9. What are some of the important issues in raising teen girls?
10. What are some of the important issues in raising teen boys?
11. List three issues to remember as a single parent.
12. What should a mom or step mom's role be in a blended family?
13. Moms of color must deal with discrimination and racism. How should this be approached with teens?
14. List two or three points in parenting a teen with an ungodly spouse.