

2020-2021

Middle School

WEEKLY CUES

YOU GOT THIS!

Theme

AWKWARD

THINK ABOUT THIS:

One of the most potentially awkward and uncomfortable conversations to have with your middle schooler? The one about sex, dating, and relationships! That's why we're spending four weeks talking about just that in our new series, *Awkward*. A conversation like this one may be awkward, but it's so important! Some students may be curious about it while others may be uninterested. Some may be embarrassed while others may be experiencing some of these things for the first time. And some may have never thought about sex, dating, or relationships before. No matter where your middle schooler may be, it's important to lay the foundation for healthy thoughts, habits, and behaviors around sex now so that they'll have a better framework to make decisions as they grow.

Week One

Romans 12:1-2

What we do with our desires matters.

Week Two

1 Corinthians 6:12; John 10:10

Just because you can do something doesn't mean you should.

Week Three

Mark 12:30-31

How you treat others and yourself matters to God.

Week Four

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Focus on becoming love before looking for love.

REMEMBER THIS

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect"
Romans 12:2, NLT

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DAILY CUES



Morning Time

Reach out to your kid's Small Group Leader this week. Let them know that you appreciate their voice and presence in your middle schooler's life. Empower them to be a safe person your kid can talk to about things like sex and dating. Thank them for being a trusted adult your kid can go to with difficult and potentially awkward topics.



Meal Time

Find an easy way for your kid to talk to you about sex and dating. To do this, come up with a code word or phrase your middle schooler can say, write, or text to you to let you know they need to talk about something that's potentially awkward for them. This will give them an easy way to come to you and give you a chance to mentally prepare before the conversation happens.



Drive Time

If there's one thing we all know and understand, it's the feeling of an awkward moment or experience! So, challenge your family to come up with the ultimate awkward list. Together, think of as many moments or experiences as you can that could easily be labeled "awkward." Whoever can come up with the most potential awkward moments is the winner of this awkward family challenge!



Bed Time

Conversations about sex have the potential to be... well, awkward! So do your best to plan ahead. Think about how you want to respond before the conversation happens. Prepare for the way you want to handle talks about or experiences with sex and dating in your house so that when the time comes, you can respond rather than react.

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DAILY CUES



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DO SOMETHING

THINK ABOUT THIS:

Do Something is a series designed to help middle schoolers listen, learn, and lead in response to injustices in the world around them. This can be a difficult topic to talk about as your middle schooler may not recognize injustices they see or experience in the world. And if they do, chances are they may feel overwhelmed at the thought of trying to help! The goal of this series isn't to motivate them to a one-time response, but rather, to help open their eyes to what injustice is and how they can be a part of the solution in listening, learning, and serving throughout the course of their lives.

Week One

Matthew 25:34-39; Matthew 25:40
Before you do something about injustice, you have to see it.

Week Two

Daniel 3:24-27
When you experience injustice, you don't have to face it alone.

Week Three

Matthew 9:35; Isaiah 61:8
God is doing something about injustice.

Week Four

James 2:15-16; James 2:17; Galatians 6:9-10a
When it comes to injustice, never stop doing something.

REMEMBER THIS

"All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it."
1 Corinthians 12:27, NLT

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Morning Time

One of the simplest ways to show others value is by knowing and using their name. So this week, have a conversation with your kid about their name. Talk to them about the origin of it, where it came from, what it means, and why you chose it specifically for them.



Meal Time

Injustice isn't just a global issue; it's a local problem, too. Spend time with your kid researching what kinds of injustice people in your community or school system might be experiencing. Start a conversation about what's happening locally and think about how you can respond as a family.



Drive Time

Rather than ask your middle schooler to tell you who may be mistreating or causing injustice toward them, ask them a question that will take the conversation there more naturally. Start by asking something like, "Who's been a good friend to you this week?" Let them answer the more positive question first and allow the conversation to move to who hasn't been a good friend to them next.



Bed Time

Watch a movie or TV show as a family that illustrates an injustice happening to one of the characters. After you've watched it, talk about the injustice. Start a dialogue as a family by asking questions like, "How did the character respond?", "What did other people do to help?", "Why do you think it happened?", or "How did it make you feel?"

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WEEKLY CUES

YOU GOT THIS!

Theme

Moods

THINK ABOUT THIS:

No Matter What is a series that celebrates the best news of the Easter season: the fact that Jesus' death and resurrection shows us just how much we're loved, valued, and forgiven by God, no matter what! Because middle schoolers developmentally have a hard time understanding abstract concepts, narratives or examples are helpful in making those concepts more concrete. That's why in this series, we look at the lives and stories of three different Biblical figures to illustrate the way in which something that may be hard to grasp (like the resurrection of Jesus) impacts their lives in big ways today.

Week One

1 John 4:9-10

Easter reminds us we're loved no matter what.

Week Two

John 20:11-13; John 20-14-16; John 20:17-18

Easter reminds us we're important no matter what.

Week Three

John 21:15-17

Easter reminds us we're forgiven no matter what.

REMEMBER THIS

"This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins."

1 John 4:10, NLT

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Morning Time

Remind your middle schooler that they're loved no matter what. Write the message, "You are loved no matter what," on a mirror, a sticky note, or somewhere they'll see it often. Let it serve as a reminder that in your family, everyone is loved no matter what!



Meal Time

Read 1 John 4:9-10 NLT together as a family. Then, personalize the passage to your family by putting in the phrase "our family" or your family's last name throughout. Post it where you all can see it in your home to remind you of the way God's love is real and personal to each of you.



Drive Time

Get an idea of who is speaking into the life of your kid by asking them who makes them feel important. Simply asking, "Who made you feel important this week?" will give you insight into the people whose voices your middle schooler is listening to and valuing in their lives right now.



Bed Time

Extending forgiveness isn't easy for a lot of us. And asking for it? That's even harder! Lead by example by asking your kid for forgiveness the next time you realize you've made a mistake. Acknowledge what you did wrong, apologize, and ask for their forgiveness. This will not only set the example for your kid on how to do the same, but it will set you up to have conversations about forgiveness together in the future.

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Trending: Coping

THINK ABOUT THIS:

Trending is a series of standalone messages that covers relevant and important topics in the life of your middle schooler. In this week's *Trending* message, we're talking about the difference between helpful and unhelpful coping skills your middle schooler may be using to deal with what they're feeling. As your kids mature and grow, they're dealing with a wide range of new emotions, experiences, and behaviors that may leave them struggling to cope in a healthy way. Introducing and encouraging helpful coping skills now will help them not only recognize the ways they can better manage their emotions, but also help them see areas in which they may not be coping well.

Week One

Lamentations 3:19-23

You can choose what to do with how you feel.

REMEMBER THIS

"The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning."
Lamentations 3:22-23, NLT

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Morning Time

Think about some of your own coping skills. What healthy coping skills are you modeling for your kid? What about unhealthy ones? If you're feeling brave, you can even ask your kid what they see you do when you're stressed, frustrated, or sad to get an idea of the coping skills you're modeling for them.



Drive Time

Come up with a list of healthy coping skills that might help you and your middle schooler better deal with what you're feeling. Then, try to practice a few of those as a family. Go for a walk, do some breathing exercises, watch a funny TV show, pray—whatever is on your list, work together to put those healthy coping skills in action this week.



Meal Time

Start a conversation with your family about the ways you each cope. List a feeling (bonus points if you use the Feelings Wheel!) and have each person share what they do when they feel that way. Talk about how that behavior or response could be helpful or unhelpful.



Bed Time

Getting your middle schooler to talk about what they're feeling or experiencing isn't easy. So, ask them a question that's easier to answer to get a clue of what's going on in their hearts and minds. Start with something like this: "On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you feeling today?"

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