

# MEMORY MAKERS



## **Movie Night**

Sometimes it is just about being together and not talking. Find a movie you can both attend, sit side by side, eat snacks and watch a movie together. It might not feel like quality time but non-verbal fun and communication can be just as powerful as verbal communication. No matter if the movie is good or bad, it will provide space for a great conversation and connecting on the way home afterwards!

## **Late Start or Ditch Day**

We are advocates for education in JHM, however every once in awhile it can be really refreshing for your teenager's normal routine to be tossed out the window. Plan a "Late Start Breakfast" and go a little late to school or plan a "Ditch Day" and skip the whole day together! Not all teenagers like surprises, so you will need to be cautious about how you spring the news of the time off. Make sure there is nothing major happening academically or socially on the day that you choose. Moments like these can be life giving and life changing for your relationship with your teenager and it is something they will always remember and remind you of. In the grand timeline of their life, missing a little school is not going to alter their future presidency!

## **20 Questions**

Grab a jar, bucket or envelope and fill it with 20 questions on separate strips of paper. Find a favorite treat spot and go back and forth asking the questions. Your teenager's likes and dislikes change often, so you could use the same questions multiple times. You can even add to it every month and make it a habit! One of the ways middle schoolers feel affirmed is by being known. Make it your mission to "know" the little things about them and then use that information to affirm them throughout the week!

## **Share Your Testimony**

Does your student know about your journey with Jesus? Where and how it began? The ups and downs you have experienced in your faith journey? What your relationship with Jesus looks like today? Sharing your story is a great way to open the door for your teenager to open up about theirs. Sharing where it has been difficult for you, gives your teenager the freedom to share their own doubts and tough spots in their faith. We know it can be intimidating as parent to be vulnerable and open up to your kids, but this could be an amazing way for you and your teenager to connect on a whole new level. Begin praying ahead of time for God to open a window to share your story!

## **Would You Rather Day**

Most of the time your teenager is on someone else's agenda. What if for one day they got to make all of the choices? Create some different options and categories to help you plan ahead, but give them the freedom to make the final choices!

3 Sample categories:

- Would you rather....lunch (In N Out or Picnic)
- Would you rather....fun activity (Mini Golf or Bowling)
- Would you rather...treat or dessert (Starbucks or Ice Cream)

## **Post it Note Prayer**

Invest in Post-it Notes. Every once in awhile, write a few verses or encouraging thoughts on separate post it notes. Place them in different spots that your teenager frequents such as, the bathroom mirror, bedside table, or passenger seat in the car. Don't have any expectations of them saying anything about it- just simply deliver the messages. You could even write out simple prayers that you prayed over them on that day. Small pieces of connectedness often times yield really powerful results.

## **Create the Ultimate Playlist**

Many middle school student love music, but often time their taste is not the same as yours. Create a playlist of their favorite songs for the ride to and from school. Utilize Spotify and give the playlist a name that you think your teenager would like! Sometimes tastes are different, but middle schoolers love when you come into their world and try to understand what they love. Just don't sing, it will ruin everything you've worked for.