PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS AS FAITH FORMERS

2016 Symposium: Families at the Center of Faith Formation

LifelongFaith Associates

WHAT'S NEW?

GENERATIONAL PARENTING STYLES

Parents Have Generational Parenting Styles

- In general Gen X parents approach child-rearing as a set of tangible practices that will keep their children safe, reasonably happy, well-behaved, and ready to take on life's challenges. They practice *protective parenting*.

GENERATIONAL PARENTING STYLES

Parents Have Generational Parenting Styles

- In general, Millennial parents, reflecting their values of individuality and self-expression, focus more on a democratic approach to family management, encouraging their children to be open-minded, empathetic, and questioning—and teaching them to be themselves and try new things. They are moving away from the overscheduled days of their youth, preferring a more responsive, less directorial approach to activities. (*Responsive Parenting*)

PARENTAL RELIGIOSITY

Parents Have a Diversity of Spiritual-Religious Identities

- Parents reflect an increasing diversity in religious beliefs, practices, and affiliation.
- Increasing numbers are not religiously affiliated and the number of unaffiliated Millennials is growing.
- Families of Generation X and Millennial parents are participating less in church life and Sunday worship. Religion and spirituality may be important to families today, but for many it is not usually expressed by participation in churches.

PARENT/FAMILY RELIGIOSITY

RELIGIOUS TRANSMISSION

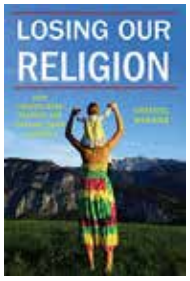
Religious Socialization & Transmission Is More Complex.

- Significant indicators, such as religious identification as a Christian, worship attendance, marriages and baptisms in the church, and changing generational patterns, point to a decline in family religious socialization across all denominations.
- There is also a decline in religious traditions and practices at home. Younger parents often lack the religious literacy and religious experiences necessary for faith transmission.

RELIGIOUS TRANSMISSION

Strategies that parents use to incorporate religion in the lives of their children.

1. Nonprovision
2. Outsourcing
3. Self-provision
4. Alternative
5. Traditional



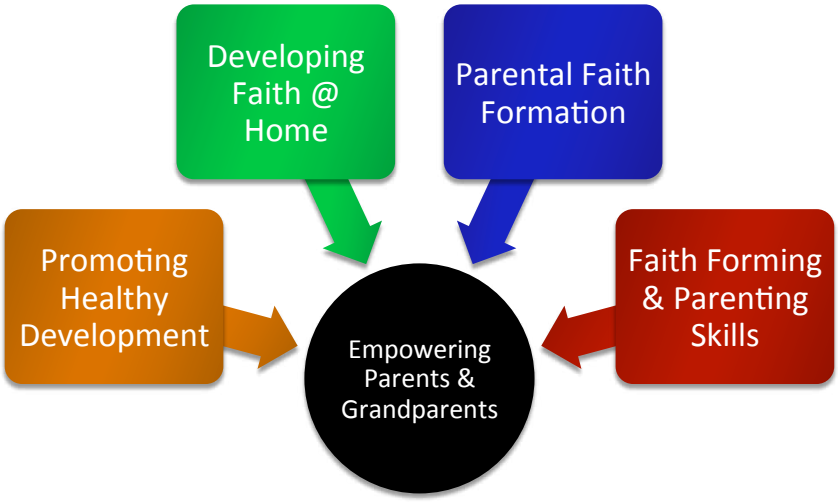
CHANGING RELIGIOUS TRANSMISSION

Manning found that in most cases, there was a great deal of consistency between the parent's religious or secular identity and how they raised their children.

She observes, "the fact that most parents in the study took steps to incorporate religion into the lives of their children is surprising only if we take None to mean the absence of any religious, spiritual, or philosophical worldview. Once we discover the more substantive dimensions of unaffiliated parents' worldviews, we see that they transmit those beliefs and practices to their children much as affiliated parents do."

DEVELOPING PARENT PROGRAMMING

KEY CONTENT

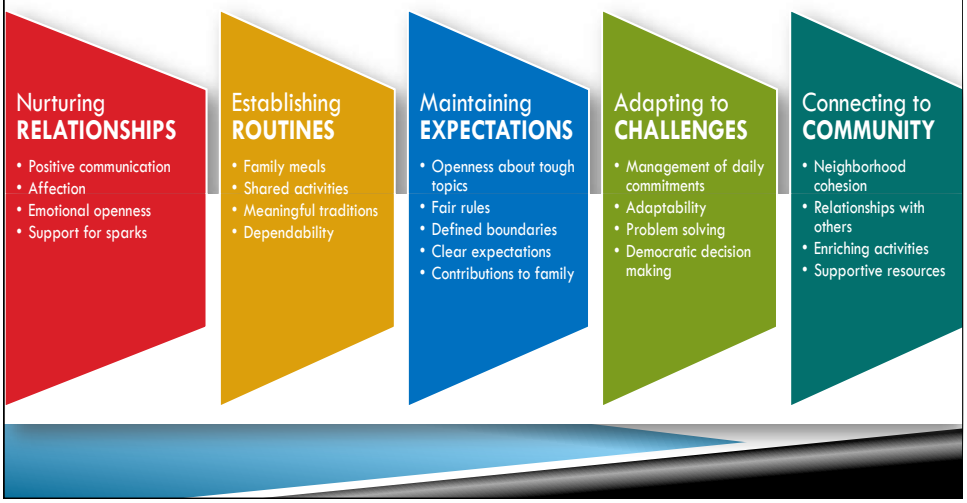


WHAT ARE THE PRACTICES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN FAITH TRANSMISSION?

1. Parents' personal faith and practice
2. Parent-child relationship: close, warm
3. Parents' modeling and teaching a religious faith
4. Parents' involvement in church life
5. Grandparents' religious influence & relationship
6. Religious tradition a child is born into
7. Parents of the same faith
8. Family conversations about faith
9. Embedded family religious practices – such as reading the Bible, praying, celebrating rituals/holidays

FAMILY LIFE ASSETS

Family Assets – Search Institute



21ST CENTURY FAITH FORMATION

1. A **variety** of relationships, content, experiences, and resources
2. New **methods**: immersive, multimedia, multi-sensory, highly visual, participatory, experiential
3. New **formats**: episodic, micro-learning, on demand, mobile, 24x7,
4. New **digital** media and digital platforms
5. Multiple **environments**: self-directed, mentored, at home, in small groups, in large groups, church-wide, in the community, and in the world.

DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS
Search Institute

Express Care: Show that you like me and want the best for me.

- **Listen**—Pay attention when you are with me.
- **Be Warm**—Let me know that you like being with me and express positive feelings toward me.
- **Invest**—Commit time and energy to doing things for and with me.
- **Show Interest**—Make it a priority to understand who I am and what I care about.
- **Be Dependable**—Be someone I can count on and trust.

Challenge Growth: Insist that I try to continuously improve.

- **Inspire**—Help me see future possibilities for myself.
- **Expect**—Make it clear that you want me to live up to my potential.
- **Stretch**—Recognize my thoughts and abilities while also pushing me to strengthen them.
- **Limit**—Hold me accountable for appropriate boundaries and rules.

Provide Support: Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.

- **Encourage**—Praise my efforts and achievements.
- **Guide**—Provide practical assistance and feedback to help me learn.
- **Model**—Be an example I can learn from and admire.
- **Advocate**—Stand up for me when I need it.

Share Power: Hear my voice and let me share in making decisions.

- **Respect**—Take me seriously and treat me fairly.
- **Negotiate**—Give me a voice in making decisions that affect me.
- **Respond**—Understand and adjust to my needs, interests, and abilities.
- **Collaborate**—Work with me to accomplish goals and solve problems.

Expand Possibility: Expand my horizons and connect me to opportunities.

- **Explore**—Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places.
- **Connect**—Introduce me to people who can help me grow.
- **Navigate**—Help me work through barriers that could stop me from achieving my goals.

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DEVELOPING PARENT PROGRAMMING

1. Address diverse spiritual-religious identities of parents – targeted content/experiences.
2. Address generational parenting.
3. Have parents practice new skills with their own children during program sessions. Immersion.
4. Develop a progression of workshops, webinars, courses, and resources for each stage of the lifecycle.
5. Develop lifecycle support groups for parents.

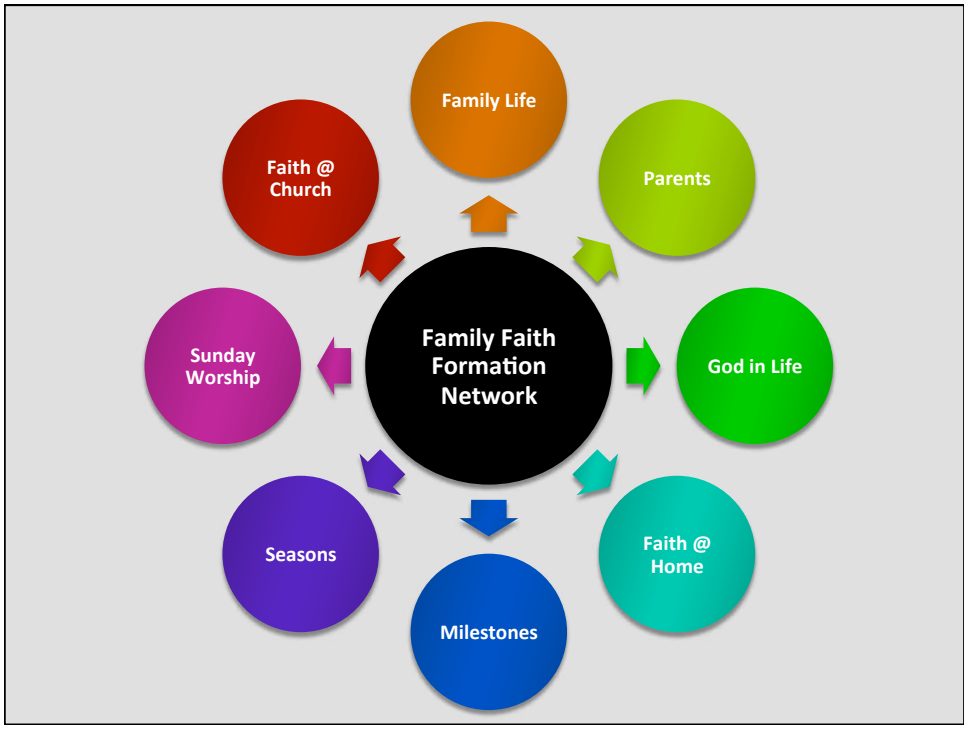
DEVELOPING PARENT PROGRAMMING

6. Offer parent coaches.
7. Give parents a plan for parenting.
   - Give them a plan for parenting proactively.
   - Show them how it works and how they can use it.
8. Use a variety of environments & methods to engage <u>all</u> parents.
9. Use digitally enabled and digitally connected strategies.
10. Build an online platform for parents and the family.

PARENT NETWORK - PARENTFURTHER

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION NETWORK

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION NETWORK


Family Life
Faith @ Church
Parents
Sunday Worship
Family Faith Formation Network
God in Life
Seasons
Faith @ Home
Milestones

Family Life
Parents
God in Daily Life
Faith @ Home

Milestones

Celebrate meaningful, memorial moments in your family's life with these ritual celebrations of milestones.

1. Baptism Anniversary
2. Starting School
3. Getting Ready to Worship
4. Birthday Celebrations

RITUALS & MILESTONES

Seasons

The seasons of the year offers a variety of opportunities for families to celebrate, learn, and have fun together. We have selected one family activity for each month of the year, reflecting the calendar seasons and the church year seasons.

1. January: Martin Luther King Jr.
2. February: Ash Wednesday
3. March: The Real St. Patrick
4. April: Easter and New Life
5. May: Mother's Day
6. June: Vacation Travel
7. July: Independence Day
8. August: Back to School
9. September: Fall Harvest
10. October: A Helping Halloween
11. November: Thanksgiving
12. December: Christmas is Coming!

SEASONS

Bible & Worship

Bring the message and experience of Sunday worship into your home. Try one or more of the following activities to learn more about the Sunday Scripture readings and to find ways to apply God's message to your lives.

1. Review this Sunday's Worship service.
2. Watch a video reflection on the Sunday reading in story and music.
3. Use "Taking Faith Home" for your daily devotion, Bible reading, and family conversation.
4. Use "Sunday Connection" to connect Sunday worship with daily life, and engage children in creative activities.
5. Read the daily Scripture readings & watch a video reflection.

BIBLE & WORSHIP

Faith @ Church

Participate with all generations in the events and experiences of the faith community and connect your experiences at church with your faith at home.

1. Worshipping Together on Sunday
2. Celebrating the Church Year Feasts & Seasons
3. Engaging in Service to the Community & World
4. Gathering for Social Events
5. Celebrating Rituals & Sacraments
6. Gathering with All Ages for Learning

FAITH @ CHURCH