

MILESTONE

Turning
THIRTEEN



Welcome to the Teen Years

Thirteen is the beginning of a brand new season! Your child is stepping into adolescence, discovering who they are, asking bigger questions, and beginning to own their faith. While they'll naturally desire more independence, they still need your presence, wisdom, and encouragement more than ever. This isn't a season to step back. It's a time to act more like a coach and give your child permission to spread their wings while still having you on the sidelines.

MAKE IT STICK

Write Letters to Their Future Self

Sit down together and each write a letter to be opened on their 18th birthday. Share your prayers, your hopes, what you admire about them today, and the person you believe God is shaping them to become.

Create a "YES Day"

Give them complete ownership of one day. Let them choose every meal, every activity, and every stop along the way. Celebrate who they are becoming, not just the day they were born.

Spend an Evening Around a Fire

Whether around a campfire, on the porch, or at the beach, tell stories from your own teenage years. Talk about all of the victories, the mistakes, the moments God taught you the most. Let them know they don't have to navigate these years alone.

Give Them Something That Will Grow With Them

Present them with a quality Bible, a journal, or plant a tree together as a lasting reminder that the greatest things in life take time, care, and faithfulness to grow.

TALK ABOUT IT

The time for lectures is over. Your new role becomes a lot more about asking questions and listening well."

"Talk about...

- **Identity:** Who is God creating you to become? What do you hope people remember about your life?
- **Faith:** What questions do you have about God? How can you begin making your faith your own?
- **Friendships:** What makes a healthy friend? How do the people around you influence who you're becoming?
- **Technology:** Discuss healthy boundaries, social media, comparison, and learning to let technology be a tool not an obsession.
- **Growing Up:** Talk honestly and graciously about physical changes, emotions, relationships, dating, and God's beautiful design for love, sex, and marriage. Make sure they know your home is always a safe place for honest conversations.

A NEW RESPONSIBILITY

With greater freedom comes greater responsibility.

Choose one meaningful responsibility your child will own this year. Whether it's cooking dinner once a week, managing an allowance, serving at church, doing their own laundry, or leading family prayer, help them experience the joy of becoming independent and being responsible for something that affects more than themselves.

BLESS THEM

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the incredible gift of this child. As they step into their teenage years, remind them every day that their identity is found in you and not in achievements, popularity, or the opinions of others. Give them courage to follow Jesus, wisdom to make good decisions, and friends who encourage them toward what is good. Help them discover the unique gifts you've placed inside of them and use those gifts to make a difference in the world.

No matter where life takes them, may they always know they are deeply loved by You and unconditionally loved by us.

Amen.