

# SIXTH GRADE



**THE PHASE WHEN THERE'S NEVER  
ENOUGH GROCERIES, TOO MANY HORMONES,  
AND A DRAMATIC KID THAT NEEDS  
SOMEONE TO PROVE, "WHO CARES."**

# Your sixth grader is changing...



## PHYSICALLY

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- Needs lots off food and 9-11 hours of sleep each night
- Girls begin outpacing guys in development
- Guys experience changes in height and weight, an increase in hormones, and possible acne
- Girls experience changes in height and body shape; may begin menstruation (10-16 years)

## MENTALLY

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- Enjoys learning new skills and being challenged
- Increasingly able to grasp abstract concepts like "justice"
- Growing ability to see the world from different perspectives
- Differentiates actions from motives while trying to discern motives (but frequently misinterprets them)

## SOCIALLY

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- Seeks peer approval and conformity
- Often displays worst behavior at home (especially with mom)
- Values non-parental adult influences
- May have romantic interests and experiment with physical affection

## EMOTIONALLY

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- Often masks emotions in order to fit in
- Benefits from talking about what they are feeling and why
- Struggles with decision-making
- Lies more than in any other phase
- May become preoccupied with perceived abilities and undervalues persistence, effort, and practice
- Debates often, but argues more from emotion than logic

## **NO PHASE HAS LESS CONSISTENCY.**

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Your sixth grader may still want to sleep with their stuffed animal— and also their new cell phone. They may appear sloppy and unkempt one moment and preppy and overdressed the next. They may be silly, sad, mean, or affectionate. That's what makes every day (or hour) a new opportunity to discover who this growing person is now.

## **IN 52 WEEKS, YOUR SIXTH GRADER MAY GROW THREE INCHES AND GAIN TEN POUNDS.**

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But the place you're most likely to notice the growth is in your grocery bill. Buy in bulk. Keep carbs handy. This might be a good year to shop the discount aisle.

## **THERE WILL BE TEARS (BOTH YOURS AND THEIRS).**

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Doors will slam. Drama will happen. But amid all the ups and downs, now is the time to lean in even more closely. When they push, prove you can't be pushed away. When they change, prove you will love them consistently. When they break your trust, prove you are someone who can be trusted. It may be challenging, but keep showing up so there's never any reason to wonder, "Who cares?"

**IT'S JUST A PHASE**



**SO DON'T MISS IT.**

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**YOUR ROLE IS TO**  
**AFFIRM**  
**THEIR PERSONAL JOURNEY**

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Sixth grade is a crisis. For many, this is the first year of middle school, which means an entirely new social context: lockers, health class, and dating couples. Regardless of their particular school, every sixth grader has an increased social and self-awareness. When you consistently affirm their journey through this sometimes-turbulent season, you help them gain stability.

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**THINKS LIKE AN ENGINEER**

You help them learn when you . . .

**CONNECT THE DOTS.**

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**WANTS TO KNOW,  
“WHO DO I LIKE?”**

You capture their heart when you . . .

**PROVIDE STABILITY.**

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**IS MOTIVATED BY  
ACCEPTANCE**

You coach their moral abilities when you . . .

**AFFIRM THEIR VALUE.**

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# THIS YEAR YOU WILL **PROVOKE DISCOVERY** SO YOUR CHILD WILL OWN THEIR OWN FAITH AND VALUE A FAITH COMMUNITY.

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Your sixth grader needs consistent, positive friends and mentors—now more than ever before. This year, help them strengthen their church relationships, and stay engaged in their personal faith journey by having conversations at home.

SAY THINGS LIKE . . .

**“CAN WE PRAY ABOUT THIS TOGETHER?”**

**“HOW CAN I PRAY FOR YOU TODAY / THIS WEEK?”**

**“GOD MADE YOU, HE KNOWS YOU, AND HE LOVES YOU.”**

**“THE WAY YOU LIVE CAN SHOW OTHERS WHO JESUS IS.”**

**THAT’S A GREAT QUESTION. I DON’T KNOW, BUT WE CAN FIND OUT.**

**“I AM FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE.”** Psalm 139:14

**“I HAVE QUESTIONS TOO. WHAT ARE OTHER THINGS YOU WONDER ABOUT?”**

**“HAVE YOU READ ANYTHING IN THE BIBLE THAT MEANS A LOT TO YOU RIGHT NOW?”**



Instill purpose when you start the day with encouraging words.



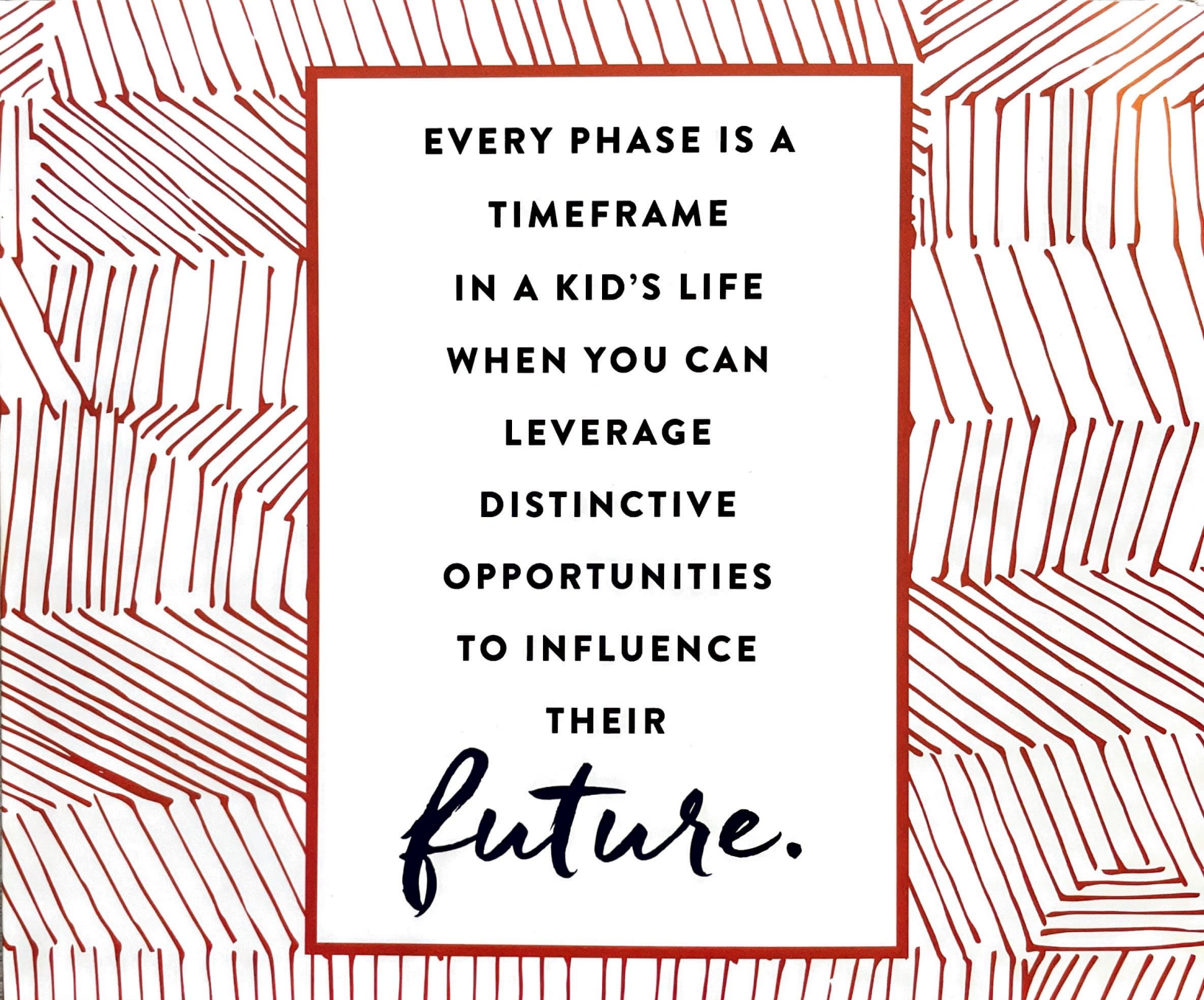
Interpret life during informal conversation as you travel.



Establish values with intentional conversations while you eat together.



Listen to their heart by staying available—just in case.



**EVERY PHASE IS A  
TIMEFRAME  
IN A KID'S LIFE  
WHEN YOU CAN  
LEVERAGE  
DISTINCTIVE  
OPPORTUNITIES  
TO INFLUENCE  
THEIR  
*future.***

**YOU HAVE APPROXIMATELY 364 WEEKS AND COUNTING . . .**

**FOR MORE RESOURCES VISIT [PARENTCUE.ORG](http://PARENTCUE.ORG) OR DOWNLOAD THE PARENT CUE APP.**

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