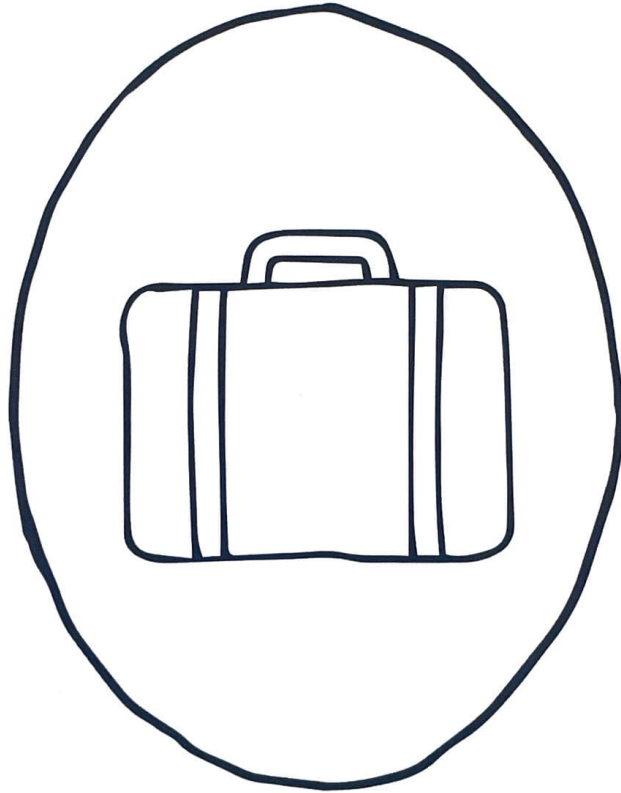


# TWELFTH GRADE



**THE PHASE WHEN YOUR EMERGING  
ADULT PULLS AWAY, GETS CLOSER,  
DOES THINGS FOR THE LAST TIME, AND  
YOU BOTH START ASKING, "WHAT'S NEXT?"**

# Your twelfth grader is changing...



## PHYSICALLY

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- Wisdom teeth may begin to "come in" (17-21 years)
- Has difficulty falling asleep before 11pm (it's biological)
- Needs nine hours of sleep and one hour of exercise per day
- Girls have likely reached adult height and body development
- Guys may continue to grow in height, and develop muscle mass, body and facial hair

## MENTALLY

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- May overly romanticize or catastrophize
- Open to discussing current affairs and social issues
- Capable of complex, multi-step problem solving
- Still struggles with long-term planning

## SOCIALLY

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- Increased interest in sexual expression (64% of twelfth graders report being sexually active)
- Less available for family time
- Wants to feel ownership in personal decisions
- Shows respects for others' opinions and able to compromise
- More at ease around adults

## EMOTIONALLY

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- Becoming more emotionally stable, but needs support and grace
- Often thrives in a particular area of interest
- Values being true to themselves
- Frequently demonstrates initiative for personal interests

## **IF SIXTEEN IS “SWEET,” EIGHTEEN IS “LEGAL.”**

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Your kid is no longer a kid. Technically speaking, they are responsible for themselves. (Of course, you may still have to pick up the pieces from time to time.) You will feel them pull away as they drive to a first job, deposit a paycheck, or register to vote.

## **THE COUNTDOWN CLOCK IS RUNNING FAST.**

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You will probably feel urgency in these last 52 weeks. As a senior takes on more responsibility, they may also lean in relationally. They discover—especially late in the year—they need you a little bit more than they thought. All of a sudden, the decisions they face have very high stakes, like, “Will I date long-distance?”

## **EVERYONE IS WONDERING, “WHAT’S NEXT?”**

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In fact, it can drive you both a little crazy. Your senior may mentally check out of high school long before they feel certain about what they want to do with their future. Even the most accomplished seniors will take a few years (and maybe some counseling) to figure this adult thing out. For now, just remember to focus on the next few months more than the next “rest-of-your-life.”

**IT’S JUST A PHASE**



**SO DON’T MISS IT.**

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**YOUR ROLE IS TO**  
**MOBILIZE**  
**THEIR POTENTIAL**

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Graduation is a crisis—for both of you. Sure, it's exciting. It's a huge accomplishment. But something is about to change, and there's a good chance you aren't convinced they're ready. They might not be. And whether they seem to show it or not, your senior is probably just as concerned about that as you. You mobilize their potential when you help them prepare, as best as possible, for what's coming.

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**THINKS LIKE A  
PHILOSOPHER**

You help them learn when you . . .  
**ASK QUESTIONS.**

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**WANTS TO KNOW,  
"WHAT WILL I DO?"**

You capture their heart when you . . .  
**CREATE VISION.**

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**IS MOTIVATED BY  
FREEDOM**

You coach their moral abilities when you . . .  
**FOCUS THEIR OPTIONS.**

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# THIS YEAR YOU WILL FUEL PASSION SO THEY WILL KEEP PURSUING AUTHENTIC FAITH AND DISCOVER A PERSONAL MISSION.

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Your senior may be preparing to transition—not only out of their school and your home, but also potentially out of your church. When you talk with your senior about what’s next for them, include conversations about how they will find and serve in a faith community.

SAY THINGS LIKE . . .

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT CHURCH / YOUTH GROUP?**

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

**“WHAT’S SOMETHING YOU FEEL LIKE GOD IS TEACHING YOU RIGHT NOW?”**

**“LATELY, I’M FINDING I CONNECT BEST WITH GOD WHEN I’M . . .”**

**“THERE’S NOTHING YOU WILL EVER DO THAT COULD MAKE GOD STOP LOVING YOU.”**

**“ARE THERE WAYS YOU WOULD WANT TO SERVE IN OUR CHURCH OR COMMUNITY?”**

**“I DON’T KNOW.”**



Instill purpose by starting the day with encouraging words.



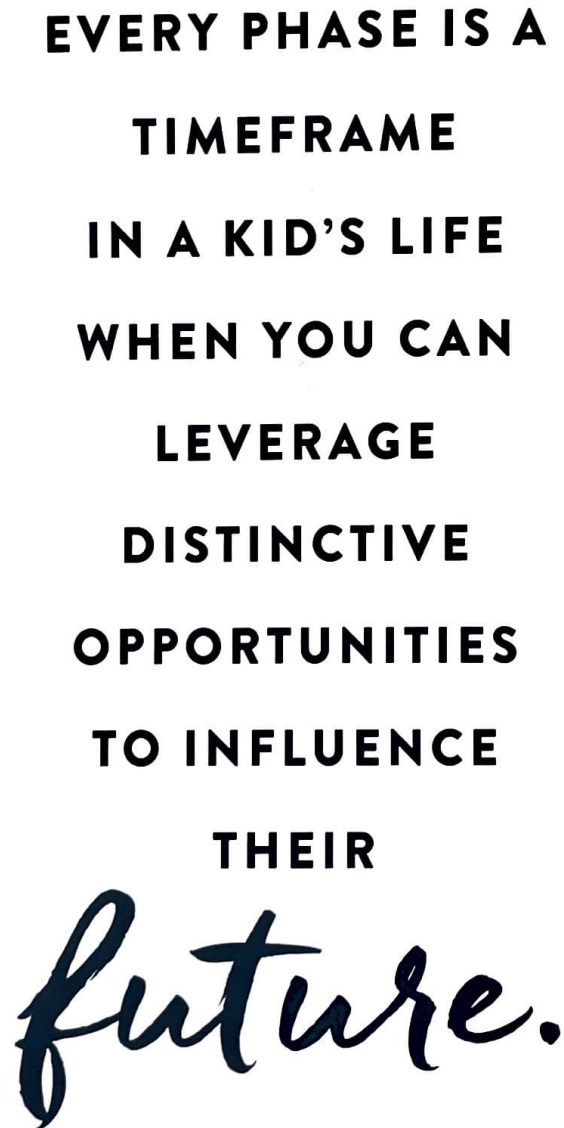
Connect regularly by scheduling time to eat together (even once a week).



Interpret life when they occasionally open up at the end of the day. (Stay consistently available—just in case.)



Strengthen your relationship by adjusting your plans to show up when they need you.



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

YOU HAVE APPROXIMATELY 52 WEEKS AND COUNTING . . .

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

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