

# FAMILY LIFE CYCLE MODEL FOR PARENT EDUCATION

FAMILY STAGE	MAJOR TASKS	MINISTRY IDEAS
<b>Married Couples (without children)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing the capacity for intimacy, both emotional and sexual, and the skills of communication needed to facilitate mutuality.</li> <li>• Accepting the real person... marital adjustment -- idealization vs. disillusionment.</li> <li>• Fitting in with the kin network and establishing their own identity and traditions.</li> <li>• Adjusting to pregnancy and the promise of parenthood.</li> </ul>	
<b>Childbearing and Preschool Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining balance - How to encourage the development of children while maintaining a satisfying marriage.</li> <li>• Establishing roles of mother and father.</li> <li>• Establishing a satisfying home for both parents and children.</li> <li>• Coping with energy depletion and lack of privacy as parents.</li> </ul>	
<b>Families with School-age Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deparentalization - the process of letting go of the parenting role.</li> <li>• Fitting into the community of school-age families in constructive ways.</li> <li>• Companionship – For the couple, the task involves developing a genuine sense of companionship in light of the competitive demands of the children, career, and church.</li> </ul>	
<b>Families with Teenagers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letting go - the process begun in the previous stage is continued. How to relinquish control to an adolescent who seems so irresponsible is the dilemma... balancing freedom with responsibility.</li> <li>• Working together as parents, while at the same time allowing each parent to develop his or her own relationship with the teenager and not getting in the middle. This can put a strain on the marriage relationship.</li> <li>• Establishing postparental interests and careers as growing parents.</li> <li>• Building trust and keeping the lines of communication open.</li> </ul>	
<b>Families Launching Young Adults</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Releasing young adults into work, military service, college, marriage, etc. with appropriate rituals and assistance.</li> <li>• Maintaining a supportive home base.</li> <li>• Developing new forms of communication across the generations.</li> </ul>	

Above material adapted from the following:

Duvall, Evelyn Millis and Brent C. Miller. Marriage and Family Development. 6th ed. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985.

Guernsey, Dennis B. "The Church and the Life Stages of Its Families." Innovations for the Church Leader. Volume 1 No. 5. Bonus 1985. pp. 8-10.

Olson, David and DeFrain, John. Marriage and Family: Diversity and Strengths. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1997.

Otto, Herbert A. ed. Marriage and Family Enrichment. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976.