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# FAITH @ HOME – THE BIG TEN

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## NUMERO UNO

The number one, most important place for passing on faith is in a home.  
The number one, most important person for passing on faith is a parent.



## IT TAKES TWO . . .

*The Child in our Hands* initiative is based on the concept that Faith is formed by the power of the Holy Spirit through trusted personal *relationships* — most often, but not always — in the home.



## THREE STYLES OF FAITH IN CHILDREN

John Westerhoff has suggested that as they progress through life, children's faith can be characterised as having three distinct styles:

- 'Experienced' faith
  - 'Affiliative' faith
  - 'Searching' faith
- 'Owned' faith generally emerges only in adulthood



## FOUR KEYS

Search Institute has identified four key activities for passing on faith in the home:

- Caring conversation
- Family Devotions
- Family traditions
- Family Service



## FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES

Gary Chapman defined five love languages. Ross Campbell collaborated with him in the book *The Five Love Languages for Children*.

- Touch
- Talk
- Time
- Doing things
- Gifts

For a free quick quiz to identify your preferred love language, check [selectsmart.com/FREE/select.php?client=lovelanguages](http://selectsmart.com/FREE/select.php?client=lovelanguages)



## SIX BAPTISMAL PROMISES

Traditional liturgies for baptism of infants ask parents and godparents to nurture faith in six significant ways:

- Set a good example
- Bring them to worship in church
- Teach them the faith
- Provide for their instruction in faith
- Pray for them
- Remind them of their baptism



## SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE FAMILIES

Steven Covey has applied his 'habits of highly effective people' to families

- Be proactive: be an agent for change in your family
- Begin with the end in mind: Develop a family mission statement
- Put first things first: make family a priority in a turbulent world
- Think Win-Win: move from 'Me' to 'We'\*
- Seek to understand, then to be understood: solve problems through emphatic communication
- Synergize: build family unity through celebrating differences
- Sharpen the saw: renew family spirit through traditions\*

\*See also David Ludwig's books *The Power of We* and *Renewing the Family Spirit*



## EIGHT AREAS OF ASSET BUILDING

Search Institute has identified a range of forty 'developmental assets'. Research shows that the more of these assets children and young people experience, the more likely they are to engage in thriving behaviours and the less likely they are to engage in high risk behaviours. The forty assets are organised into eight areas:

- Support
- Boundaries and expectations
- Commitment to learning
- Empowerment
- Social competencies
- Constructive use of time
- Positive values
- Positive identity

Google: 'thriving young people' or 'Search Institute'



## NINE HOME BASED PRACTICES

Marjorie J. Thompson's book *Family, the Forming Center (A Vision of the Role of Family in Spiritual Formation)* speaks of nine ways families reflect God's love.

- Presence
- Acceptance
- Affirmation
- Accountability
- Forgiveness
- Hospitality
- Prayer
- Scripture
- Service



## TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR BEING MORE EFFECTIVE IN PARENTING

Mary Hughes in 'Family Ministry', a chapter in *The Ministry of Children's Education* suggests

- Work at understanding our own parents and how we were parented.
- Reflect on the values and beliefs we wish to instil in our children and consider how those values and beliefs can be shared.
- Seek knowledge and resources to ensure the good physical health and safety of our children.
- Understand our child's development (what can be expected at this age and what's driving their behaviour).
- Develop and use our best communication skills for listening, having open conversations and solving problems.
- Develop a considered and consistent strategy for discipline, especially an approach to daily behaviour that is age-appropriate.
- Have in place an overall legal and financial plan that fits our goals and yet is flexible enough for life today.
- Develop a network of professional and personal support.
- Regularly give our children focused time.
- Take the time to ensure our own physical, emotional and relational stability.

### WHAT'S 'CHRISTIAN' ABOUT CHRISTIAN PARENTING

- A Christian parent's faith shapes all of parenting.
  - A Christian parent understands parenting to be a vocation, not simply a task.
    - A Christian parent sees children as gifts, not possession.
      - Within the relationships of Christian family, parents nurture and express faith and reveal Christ.
    - Christian parents know they are not alone in parenting.
      - Christ is present in family relationships; the whole Christian community of the church is the family of God surrounding children.
- (Mary Hughes, as above)