

## Parenting Checklist: Preparing Teens to Thrive in Adulthood

### **Life Perspective:**

- Do they understand their unique assets, interests, passions, and worth?
- Do they know how to live life *strategically* with discipline and purpose?
- Are they guided by an *honorable* definition of “success?”
- Do they display self confidence with a positive and hopeful vision for life?
- Are they committed to developing a wide range of interests?
- Are they willing to take risks, even if they might not succeed?
- Are they adaptable to changing circumstances?

### **Character:**

- Do they readily demonstrate love, compassion, and service to others?
- Are they guided by integrity in their actions and words?
- Do they stand up for their beliefs and values with conviction?
- Are they committed to giving everything their best effort?
- Do they show respect for themselves and others?
- Do they take full responsibility for their mistakes and shortfalls?
- Do they demonstrate humility in their successes and recognize others?
- Are they open to receiving constructive feedback?

### **Relationships and Communication:**

- Do they prioritize relationships over possessions and power?
- Are they comfortable expressing their feelings and emotions to others?
- Do they build friendships with people who share their values, beliefs, and interests?
- Do they surround themselves with positive people/influences and understand that everyone is not meant to be their friend?
- Do they know how to make a great first impression and display great manners?
- Do they demonstrate excellent listening skills and fully engage in conversation?
- Do they know how to disagree in an agreeable manner?
- Have they cultivated a network of ambassadors?

### **Spirituality and Handling Adversity:**

- Do they understand the elements of a thriving spiritual life?
- Do they reserve time for daily reflection?
- Are they committed to keeping the faith during periods of adversity?
- Are they prepared to accept that adversity happens, builds our character, and often makes sense after the fact?
- Do they know how to release stress and pain in a healthy manner?

### **Personal Productivity:**

- Are they an effective goal setter, planner, time manager, and decision maker?
- Are they a responsible and self-disciplined user of technology?
- Are they comfortable speaking in groups and leading discussions?
- Are they discerning and skeptical of what they read and hear in the news media?
- Do they know how to grocery shop, do laundry, change a tire/car oil, manage a checking account/debit and credit cards, and develop prioritized daily to-do lists?

**Post-Secondary Education Transition:**

- Have they developed their preferences for post-high school training in terms of location, size, worldview, available majors/degrees, cost, personal fit, and reputation?
- Have they identified their key credentials, experiences, skills, community service, and leadership examples that would be valued by admissions departments?
- Are they aware of all the deadlines and planning resources for admission?
- Do they have a disciplined study method that works in high pressure situations?

**Career Selection and Advancement:**

- Do they know how to comprehensively assess their interests, skills, lifestyle preferences, and training desires to select a well-matched career?
- Do they understand how to build a winning competitive edge and effectively market themselves to potential employers?
- Do they know how to write a compelling cover letter and resume and navigate the latest job search methods? Do they have the interview skills to land the job?
- Do they fully understand the qualities that employers value in their star employees?
- Do they know the secret to attaining great performance reviews and how to become an indispensable employee?

**Love and Family:**

- Do they understand the difference between “love” and “lust” and that love takes time?
- Do they know that the keys to responsible dating involve being *discriminating*, *discerning*, and *deliberate*?
- Are they committed to fully examining their compatibility before marrying?
- Do they know the key qualities of successful, long-term marriages?
- Do they understand that the three best ways to avoid poverty are to graduate from high school, not marry before 20, and only have children *after* they marry?

**Financial Management:**

- Do they understand the basics of being financially literate and how to be a wise steward, skillful earner, savvy consumer, cautious debtor, disciplined saver, and cheerful giver?
- Do they know how to live within their means and manage a budget?
- Do they know the importance of investing early, regularly, and as much as possible in a disciplined and diversified long-term investment program?
- Do they know how to manage their bank accounts?
- Do they know how to build a solid credit rating and use debt wisely?
- Do they know the ways to avoid identity theft?

**Parenting Style and Upcoming Transition:**

- Are you adapting your parenting style from “control” to “influence?”
- Do they know how much you love them, value them, and *believe* in them?
- Are you actively finding ways to seek out their opinions and help with decisions?
- Do you regularly share time together at the time and place of *their* choosing?
- Are you prepared to let them go and be their “encourager-in-chief?”
- Have you shared the key transition risks with them: social impatience, lack of study disciplines, damaging recreational habits, lack of a support network, excessive personal performance stress, and financial irresponsibility?
- Do you introduce positive third party voices into their lives?