



## Spectrum Living Presents How to be a Mentor to Your Teen In the Positive Peer Group <sup>TM</sup>

### **Mission**

The mission of the Positive Peer Group (PPG) is to expand your teenager's horizons, bring them closer to their parents, provide them with a supportive peer group and lay a foundation of success by helping them to recognize and implement Habits of Greatness that they can build on for the rest of their lives.

### **Your Child Needs a Mentor**

PPG helps them to create habits of success by reading great books and extrapolating from them the qualities that will bless them as they strive to incorporate these new ideas. As part of the PPG Habits of Greatness and Leadership Certificates we require each participant to have a mentor. We would hope that you the parent would be willing to take on this role.

### **Increase Your Ability to be of Influence**

When your children were young, you were a natural mentor for your children. Certainly you remember overhearing your children imitating the things you said (good or bad) as they played with their dolls or friends. They just naturally imitated your mannerisms, tonal quality, etc. As your children get older and become adolescents it sometimes seems like your sphere of influence in their lives narrows. Teenagers often end up in two varieties, one that loves to talk to you and can talk for hours on end. The other type is the kind who will only talk to you if asked questions and then answers in mono-syllables for instance, "How was your day?" "Fine," "How did your test go?" "Good". Wouldn't it be great to have a platform for meaningful discussion with your child? Even the ones who like to talk would be provided with something of substance and purpose to discuss. The mentoring portion of PPG, with you as the mentor provides that opportunity.

### **How the PPG Works**

Each month your youth will choose a book in an topic of the current discussion. What we ask is that *you* read the book as well as your teenager. In order for them to earn an award/certificate it is necessary that they fill out the worksheets in the PPG workbook. Along with their PPG workbook, each youth is also given a Book Re-Mark, which is a book mark with questions on it. Questions on the Book Re-Mark encourage your teen to evaluate the book in ways that will help them to discover concepts that they would like to apply to their own lives. The answers to these questions are then recorded in their journal to be summarized in their workbook. Part of the requirement for the award/certificate program is that they discuss their findings with a mentor.

### **Opportunity for Meaningful Communication**

This provides a great opportunity for meaningful communication. This gives your child the chance to talk about their dreams, ambitions and struggles. The key here in your role as a mentor is to really listen. Some have said that listening is the best expression of love. Once your teen has fully expressed themselves, it is your turn to provide guidance. One of the tenets of the PPG is to inspire not require. Of course this does not necessarily apply to all areas of your teen's life. Obviously there are many things that must be required of your teen as a member of a functioning family. But there are some areas in which we will never be able to *require* them to comply. The best we can do in some cases, such as character development is to be the best example

and pray a lot. Being a mentor for your child in the PPG group will open other opportunities for providing your child meaningful insight into your life and philosophy as well. I don't know of anyone that has ever been meaningfully inspired by a lecture concerning their faults. In your role as a PPG mentor it is particularly important to put the emphasis on inspiring.

### **How to Have a Mentoring Meeting**

How can you as a parent/mentor inspire your child to broaden their horizon and reach greater heights? Here are some suggestions:

- I. Set aside a regular time each week when you will discuss the book being read. Try to make it the same time weekly, for instance, every Wednesday at 3:00. That way it will be easier to have consistent mentoring meetings
- II. It is appropriate to begin your meeting with a prayer to set the tone
- III. Listen to your child's insights with your heart.
- IV. Be supportive of your child in their realistic goals
  - A. Ask, "What is the end result you would like to **Create** as you apply these things to your life?"
  - B. What are you going to **DO** in order to gain this end result?
  - C. What kind of a person are you going to have to **BE** to obtain your desired outcome?

This is the hard part. During this time it is important just to listen attentively. Don't interrupt or make suggestions, just listen with your heart.

- I. When you have follow-up interviews, praise any progress that has been made
- II. If progress has not been made, ask:
  - A. What they learned from not doing what they needed to do to reach their goal.
  - B. What kind of result did they **Create** from not completing their goal?
  - C. Was the goal unrealistic?
  - D. Was the outcome they had more important than the goal?
  - E. What will they **DO** differently next week?
  - F. Who will they have to **BE** in order to achieve the goal they are seeking?
- III. Remember that this is not the time for a parent lecture. You know from experience how discouraging it can be to have someone judge you harshly when you have made a mistake or not completed an assignment. The goals that they set are their stewardship. You are there to guide, encourage and help.
- IV. The final question you ask as they are being accountable for a goal that was not completed is, how can I help? This in no way implies that you will take responsibility for the achievement of the goal, it is just another way to encourage the youth and let them know that you are there to support their worthy endeavors.

### **PPG Offers a Unique Opportunity**

Acting as a formal mentor to your child is a unique opportunity. It is not like many of your other roles as a parent. You will be relating to your child on a different level than at other times. It isn't about holding them responsible. It is about them holding themselves responsible and looking to you for support and encouragement. The commitments they make are theirs. As you learn with your child, you may also experience opportunities for growth and learning. That is the beauty of the program. Enjoy the journey!