

The Student Section

Ministries for Children and Youth

Children - KiCK & KiCK jr.

January 6: KiCK & KiCK jr. @ 3:30pm

January 13: KiCK & KiCK jr. @ 3:30pm

January 20: NO KiCK & KiCK jr. (*Martin Luther King Holiday Weekend*)

January 27: KiCK & KiCK jr. @ 3:30pm



Youth - Encounter

January 6: Encounter @ 5:00pm

January 13: Encounter @ 5:00pm

January 20: NO Encounter (*Martin Luther King Holiday Weekend*)

January 27: NO Encounter (*Revolution Weekend*)



Confirmation

January 6: Confirmation Class in the WBC 9:45am

January 13: Confirmation Class in the WBC 9:45am

January 20: NO Confirmation - REGULAR SUNDAY SCHOOL (*Martin Luther King*)

January 27: NO Confirmation - REGULAR SUNDAY SCHOOL (*Revolution Weekend*)

3 Easy Ways to Impact a Middle Schooler's Identity and Faith

11, 12, 13. These are the awkward years. You remember them, right?

Greasy hair, frizzy hair, don't care. Weight gain and weight loss. You

feel like an adult, you think you should be treated like an adult, but everyone treats you like a kid. Life for a middle schooler is rough. Forget trying to figure out who you are in Christ – these preteens are hanging onto the "struggle bus" for dear life. Of course, adults know that middle school drama, like everything else, won't matter in a few short years. Well, with the right approach, you can help preteens focus on things that really count.

What is a Middle Schooler, Anyway?

The next time you take in an all-star performance from a middle schooler—complete with tears, of course—consider this: behind those emotions is a brain hard at work analyzing, processing and planning the next move. What we're talking about is a duality of sorts—the middle schooler you see and the middle schooler you don't see.



The Middle Schooler You See

- He's growing like a weed and eating all of your groceries.
- She's happy one moment, crying the next.
- He's embarrassed easily and often by you.
- She knows *everything*.
- He lies and argues more than ever before.
- She wants to be with her friends. Always with her friends.

The Middle Schooler You Don't See

- He loves to learn and be challenged.
- She wants to know if you care.
- He needs to talk about his feelings, even when his face says otherwise.
- She wrestles with decisions big and small.
- He's starting to view the world through the eyes of others.
- She longs for non-parental adult influence.

When it comes to helping these complex creatures understand who they are in Christ, you have to remember the middle schooler you don't see.

The engineer inside needs to know that God can do anything. That God can overcome impossible odds to rebuild what is broken, bring stability, restore peace, resolve doubt, give hope, and redeem everyone—including themselves.

Here's How To Help Impact Their Identity and Faith

Make some big assumptions. You wanna shock a preteen? Treat him/her like he/she's made in the image of God. Tell himh/her he/she's smart enough, strong enough and important enough to take on a new responsibility or make a big decision. Give him/her a chance to prove you right.

Because of how God created us, we all have the potential to lead, believe, imagine, love, care, relate, trust, reason and improve. When middle schoolers understand they are made in the image of God, they begin to look at the world and *themselves* in a whole new way.

Connect the Dots.

Engineers use both physics and design to solve problems. A middle schooler's brain works the same way. They're looking at more than a decade of learning to try and find ways that everything fits together.

This is your chance to show them how the overarching narrative of scripture connects not only from Genesis to Revelation but to their very own life as well.

Encourage questions.

The time has come for you to make a big decision. Will you be shocked by hard questions, touchy subjects and doubt? Or will you make room for the process that a middle schooler must go through?

Middle schoolers are smart. They may notice, for instance, that a loving and all-powerful God allows good people to die. They will wrestle with doctrine and faith and cultural norms. This is okay and normal. You won't always have the answers but you can affirm their journey.

Help Middle Schoolers Anchor Themselves to What is Constant by Sharing Stories About Your Faith and Pointing Them Back to Jesus.

You know who they are in Christ—a child of God, alive, free and set apart—but, really, the goal is for each middle schooler to understand and embrace this truth for herself/himself. Help middle schoolers reach this truth by making some big assumptions, connecting the dots and encouraging questions.