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## Parents of Youth in Covenant Discipleship

This online resource is designed as a supplement to *Everyday Disciples: Covenant Discipleship with Youth*. This piece identifies ways that parents can support their youth in the experience of Covenant Discipleship.

### Why are Parents Important in Covenant Discipleship?

Research continues to show that parents are the primary influencers of faith in the lives of their children. Faith practices in the home are processed and reflected by youth. The faith life of parents helps to socialize the faith life of their children. Therefore, the willingness to participate in, discuss, and experience faith together builds relationships and faith in the family, directly influencing youth.

Specifically related to Covenant Discipleship, parents can be helpful and supportive in some very specific ways:

- 1. Help learn about and hold youth to their group's covenant.** Each Covenant Discipleship group is based upon a covenant created by, signed, and lived into by the group. Parents can discover what their youth care about in terms of faith in action by getting familiar with the covenant their youth have created and signed in their group. Parents can then also help their youth live into the covenant, helping make time for the actions required.
- 2. Be a part of confidentiality.** Parents can know what is included in the covenant, yet don't need to know everything that is said in a covenant discipleship group. Youth are encouraged to keep confidence within their group, unless something is shared in the group that would cause harm to themselves or others. If a parent hears their youth talking about things shared in covenant discipleship, the parent can be instrumental in reminding their youth of the importance and responsibility of trust.
- 3. Support covenant discipleship with Guides and Church Staff.** Parents can support church staff, or others involved with the administration of covenant discipleship. Adults serving as guides for youth in covenant discipleship need support through prayers and presence. Covenant Discipleship deepens intergenerational relationships in a church community, so make yourself available in support of others. Parents should not be in the same covenant discipleship group as their own youth, so supporting church staff or adult guides are an excellent way to be involved.

- 4. Consider becoming a guide.** Even though you should not be in the same group as your own youth, consider serving as a guide for other youth. You may be surprised at the honesty, vulnerability, and movement that can happen when a small group works together to be active disciples of Jesus Christ, seeking transformation. If interested, talk with the volunteer or church staff overseeing covenant discipleship to find out what it takes to serve in this way.