

Family Pause

By Audrey Cox

In the midst of summertime's fun, there also may be some summer blues. Commit to a weekly pause for caring conversation as a family to offer support and encouragement to one another. Caring conversation can be fun, and before you know it, a wonderful family faith practice.



For

Teen Family

Season

Summer

Needed

Bible

Activity Plan

1. At the beginning of the week, schedule a time (about 30 minutes) to be together. Invite a young person to be in charge of scheduling to build his or her ownership of the activity. Pick a place to meet. Around the table during a meal is perhaps the easiest place, but you could have your family pause during a walk, while cooking together, or while you're riding in the car. Post a note in a prominent place in your home (inside the fridge, on the bathroom mirror, next to the television) to remind everyone of the day, time, and place you will gather.

2. When you gather, begin by praying aloud:

Dear God, thank you for the time to pause for conversation. Help us to be honest, free from judgment, and faithful listeners. We ask you to make this a comfortable and blessed time together. Amen.

3. Have someone read aloud James 5:13 from your Bible or from the following text:

James 5:13: "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise."

4. Explain that you've gathered for a caring conversation—to listen and to learn about the highs and lows of one another's week. Allow a quiet moment for family members to recall happy moments and celebrations from the past week, as well as any troubles or challenges. Ask a volunteer to speak first. Remind one another that this is a time for careful listening and loving affirmation. It is not the time for making judgments or for parental teaching. Encourage family members to offer affirmation, support, and encouragement.

5. Once everyone has had a chance to speak, have someone pray aloud:

Dear Lord, we lift our celebrations and challenges to you. Thank you for hearing our prayers. Amen.

6. Try to set the time and place for next week's pause before everyone goes their separate ways!