

The Joys of Homecoming

By Jolene Roehlkepartain



In fall high schools have a homecoming week filled with homecoming festivities. Fall holidays such as Halloween and Thanksgiving bring family members and friends together. Celebrate the joy of homecoming when you come together.

For

Teen Family

Season

Fall

Needed

Bible, A Better Homecoming worksheet, pens or pencils, the Washington Post article on the [Homecoming Dance](#)

Prepare in Advance

- Mark your Bible to Genesis 28:15 and Mark 5:19 (or see text below)
- Print one copy of A Better Homecoming worksheet for each family member
- Gather needed materials as listed above

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

*God, thank you for homecoming opportunities to connect with others and remind us of what matters.
Amen.*

2. Ask someone to read aloud Genesis 28:15.

"Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Ask another family member to read aloud Mark 5:19.

"And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."

3. As a family, discuss these questions:



- What does homecoming mean to you? Why?
 - Which types of homecomings do you enjoy best: school homecomings or holiday homecomings, such as Thanksgiving? Why?
 - What has been your experience in leaving home (such as going to camp or on vacation) and then returning home?
 - How is God always with us: when we're away from home and when we return home?
4. Read the Washington Post article about [homecoming dances](#) online. What do you think of this article? What are homecoming dances like at your school? What were homecoming dances like for your parents when they were in high school? What spoils homecoming dances? What makes them better?
 5. Give each family member a pen or pencil and a copy of A Better Homecoming worksheet. Have each person complete the worksheet separately.
 6. After family members have finished the worksheet, get together and compare answers. Talk about these questions:
 - Which homecoming activities do most of you enjoy? Why?
 - Which homecoming activities are unique to certain family members?
 - How does each family member's personality affect which homecoming experiences they enjoy most?
 - How does each family member's experience with a past homecoming affect which homecoming activities they look forward to or dread?
 - How can we make homecoming a better experience for each family member?
 7. As a family, plan ways to make your school homecoming a positive experience for everyone. For example, some family members enjoy dressing up in school colors for the homecoming football games. Others enjoy eating popcorn at the homecoming game or drinking hot chocolate. Some enjoy getting ready for the homecoming dance. Other families like to create their own activities around a school homecoming, such as hosting a homecoming pizza dinner for their teenagers and their friends.
 8. When Thanksgiving draws closer, talk as a family about the ways the holiday can bring family members closer. Some families think watching a football game on Thanksgiving is a great way to be together. Other families would prefer playing their own football game outside—or playing a board game. Listen to each other's ideas and incorporate as many as you can.



A Better Homecoming

A Homecoming at School:

Which activities do you enjoy best? Check all that apply.

- Homecoming football game
- Homecoming dance
- Seeing friends during homecoming
- Getting dressed up for homecoming
- Getting caught up in the homecoming excitement
- Avoiding homecoming activities
- Doing special homecoming activities (such as a pie-eating contest)
- Other (specify): _____

A Homecoming during the Holidays:

Which activities do you enjoy best? Check all that apply.

- Seeing friends and family
- Preparing holiday food
- Eating holiday food
- Being together as a family
- Doing activities together (such as watching a football game or playing games)
- Preparing the holiday food
- Decorating for the holidays
- Dreading most of the holiday activities
- Giving gifts during the holidays
- Receiving gifts during the holidays
- Doing volunteer or service projects during the holidays
- Other (specify): _____

