

PARENT/STUDENT INTEGRITY GUIDE

8th Grade Conversation

OBJECTIVE

Have an intentional conversation with your student about the importance of living their life with integrity.

THE 411

Integrity can be defined as doing the right thing even when no one is watching. Your student is surrounded with influences and many of those influences are telling them that doing life the “easy” way is better than doing life the “right” way. Our news is filled with examples of people who have lived their life without integrity. In some cases, those people have flourished and despite their failures we still hold them to be “heroes” in our society. Use this lesson to share with your student the importance of doing the right thing, even when no one is looking. God has called us to live a life that is set apart or holy.

SUGGESTION

Take your student out to play a sport they love or introduce them to a new game that requires them to adhere to some rules. A great example is to go play golf because it is considered to be a sport that requires integrity. When you are playing golf, you are required to call penalties on yourself if your ball goes out of bounds, or even if you accidentally improve the lie of your ball. These infractions can seem minor at the time and in many cases, people choose to cheat in that area of the game. They cheat for a variety of reasons, but mostly because they feel they can justify their actions, or “it isn’t that big of a deal.” As you are playing with your son/daughter make sure you point out the rules of the game and ask them why they believe those rules are in place. Use the discussion suggestion below to have a conversation with your student about the importance of integrity.

DISCUSSION

ASK: What do you think playing a game would be like if we didn’t have any rules?
Would the game be more or less enjoyable if it didn’t have rules?

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: When you are playing a sport, it is often advantageous to break or to bend the rules. Many people do that and call it being “competitive,” when truthfully it is just cheating. Rules are in place in sports to help each person involved have a level playing field. When we break the rules of the sport and in doing so we win or get an award, that achievement is tainted. It isn’t an honest award.

ASK: How is cheating in a sport the same as not being completely honest in life?

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Integrity is defined as 1) an unimpaired condition, i.e., soundness, wholeness 2) firm adherence to a code of moral values, i.e., incorruptible, honor, 3) the quality or state of being complete or undivided. Or more simply, doing the “right thing” even when no one is looking.



ASK: What are some areas in life that teens your age typically compromise their integrity?
If I asked your friends to give me five words that describe you, would honesty or integrity be one of those words? Why or why not?

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: I want you to live an honest life and be a person of integrity because success without your integrity is worthless, it's tainted. God tells us in His word that we need to live lives that are holy or set apart. And part of being holy is being a person of integrity.

READ: **Proverbs 10:9 (NIV)**
“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.”

Proverbs 11:2-4 (NIV)

“When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity. Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.”

Matthew 16:25-26 (NIV)

“For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Being someone that does the right thing is much more important than being successful. When your life is over, we will be judged by God on how we lived our lives, not by how much money we have or how many people think we are successful.

ASK: Is there an area of your life where you struggle to maintain your integrity?
How can I help hold you accountable in that area of your life?

PRAY

Be sure and pray with your son/daughter that they would live a life of integrity. Ask God to give them wisdom in all areas of their life.

