



OFFICIAL TOOLKIT

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COMMUNITY TOOLKIT

What's Inside This Toolkit

This guide is designed for anyone who wants to invest in their family, connect with their community, and live out shared values with intention. Whether you're new to the Families community or simply looking for a fresh start, these pages offer practical tools, conversation starters, and resources to help you thrive.

Sections at a Glance

- Our Mission & What We Believe
- Starting Meaningful Family Conversations
- Building Traditions That Last
- Raising Responsible, Engaged Children
- Serving Your Community Together
- Resources: Books, Podcasts & Activities
- Your Family Action Plan

Stronger Families. Stronger Communities. Stronger America.



Our Mission & What We Believe

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Core Beliefs

- The family is the foundational unit of a healthy society.
- Strong relationships are built through intentional, everyday choices.
- Values are caught as much as they are taught — what we model matters.
- Service to others builds character and deepens family bonds.
- Every family, regardless of shape or size, has the ability to contribute.

Who This Toolkit Is For

This resource is for everyone. Whether you are a couple building new rhythms, a single parent navigating a busy week, or grandparents hoping to pass something meaningful to the next generation — this toolkit meets you where you are.

There is no perfect family. There is only the next right step. These pages are designed to help you take it.



Starting Meaningful Family Conversations

Healthy relationships are built on honest, consistent communication. Yet in the noise of daily life — work, school, screens, and schedules — real conversation is often the first thing that gets crowded out. This section gives you practical tools to start talking more intentionally, whether around the dinner table, on a drive, or at the end of a long day.

Why Conversation Matters

Research consistently shows that families who eat together and talk regularly raise children with stronger mental health, better academic outcomes, and a greater sense of belonging. Conversation is not a bonus — it is the foundation.

Conversation Starter Sets

Everyday Questions (Great for Dinner)

- What is one thing that went well today?
- What was the hardest part of your day, and how did you handle it?
- Who showed kindness to you today? Did you show kindness to anyone?
- What is something you are looking forward to this week?
- What is one thing you are grateful for right now?

Deeper Questions (Monthly or Weekly Check-In)

- What is something you have been thinking about a lot lately?
- What does it mean to you to be part of this family?
- What is one area you think our family does well? And one we could grow in?
- Who do you know that could use our help right now?



Questions for Children & Teens

- What is something you believe strongly, and why?
- What kind of person do you want to become?
- What does friendship mean to you? What makes a good friend?
- If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be?

Facilitator Tip: The Weekly Family Check-In

Set aside 15 minutes once a week — Sunday evenings work well for many families. Keep it low-pressure and consistent. Rotate who leads. Try these four questions:

- What went well for our family this week?
- What was a challenge, and how did we handle it?
- How can we support each other in the week ahead?
- What is one thing we are looking forward to?

Even 10 minutes of this practice, done consistently, will transform family culture over time.

Building Traditions That Last

Traditions are the underpinning of family identity. They tell children: this is who we are, this is what we value, this is where you belong. They do not need to be elaborate or expensive. The most powerful traditions are often the simplest; repeated faithfully over time.



Why Traditions Matter

Traditions create anchors. In seasons of change, disruption, or difficulty, a familiar ritual gives family members (especially children) a sense of stability and continuity. Traditions also create shared memory, the kind that binds people together long after childhood ends.

Tradition Ideas by Rhythm

Weekly Traditions

- Friday night pizza and games
- Sunday family dinner
- Attend Church together
- Evening walks or bike rides
- Read-aloud before bed

Monthly Traditions

- Monthly service project
- Outdoor adventure day
- New recipe night
- Family movie and discussion

Annual traditions to consider: a family vacation (even a local camping trip), holiday rituals that reflect your values, a back-to-school celebration, a summer kickoff, or an annual volunteer day together as a family.

How to Start a New Tradition

- Keep it simple enough to repeat consistently.
- Let every family member have input — buy-in matters.
- Give it at least three repetitions before deciding if it works.
- Write it down. Put it on the calendar. Protect it.



Tradition Builder Worksheet

One tradition we want to start:

When and how often it will happen:

Who is responsible for making it happen:

How we will know it is meaningful:

Raising Responsible, Engaged Children

Responsibility is not a trait children are born with. It is a skill developed through practice, expectation, and encouragement. Families that give children meaningful roles at home raise adults who contribute meaningfully to society.

The goal is not a perfectly clean house. The goal is children who understand that their actions matter and that they are valuable contributors to something larger than themselves.



Age-Appropriate Responsibilities

Young Children (Ages 4–9)

- Tidy up toys and belongings
- Feed pets with supervision
- Set and clear the table
- Make their bed each morning
- Put laundry in the hamper

Pre-Teens (Ages 10–13)

- Assist with meal preparation
- Take ownership of laundry
- Manage yard and outdoor tasks
- Help younger siblings
- Plan and execute a family dinner

For Teenagers

- Introduction to household budgeting and financial responsibility.
- Part-time work or entrepreneurial projects.
- Leadership roles in school, faith communities, or civic organizations.
- Planning and executing a community service initiative.
- Meaningful participation in family decision-making conversations.

A Note on Allowance and Incentives

Families differ on whether responsibilities should be tied to compensation. What matters most is that children understand two things: some contributions are simply expected as part of family life, and hard work and initiative are recognized and rewarded. Both messages are essential.



Family Discussion Prompt

Gather your family and ask: What responsibilities can each of us take on in the next month? Write them down together. Post them somewhere visible. Check in weekly.

Framing tip: Describe these as contributions, not chores. Language shapes culture.

Serving Your Community Together

Service is one of the most powerful tools a family has for strengthening its own bonds while making a tangible difference in the world. When families serve together, children develop empathy, parents model generosity, and the whole family grows a shared story of giving.

You do not need a lot of time, money, or resources. You need intention and a willingness to show up.

Service Ideas for Families

In Your Neighborhood

- Introduce yourself to a neighbor you have never met.
- Mow a neighbor's lawn or shovel their driveway without being asked.
- Deliver a meal to a family going through a hard season.
- Organize or participate in a neighborhood cleanup.



In Your Community

- Volunteer at a local food pantry or soup kitchen.
- Assemble care packages for first responders, veterans, or families in need.
- Write thank-you letters to military personnel or law enforcement.
- Support a local charity or nonprofit with time, not just a donation.

As an Ongoing Practice

- Adopt a monthly family service project.
- Sponsor a child, family, or cause together.
- Mentor another family that is newer to your community.
- Invite others into your service — multiply the impact.

Service Project Planning Template

Who we will serve:

What we will do:

When and where:

What we need to prepare:

Who else can we invite to join us:



Connecting With Your Community

Families do not thrive in isolation. Healthy neighborhoods are built by families who choose to show up, get involved, and invest in the people around them. Community connection is not a luxury — it is a necessity for a flourishing society.

Ways to Engage

- Attend local events: town halls, school board meetings, community festivals, and fairs.
- Support local businesses and know the people behind them.
- Join a civic organization, faith community, or neighborhood association.
- Volunteer with local schools, libraries, parks, or emergency services.
- Introduce yourself to your neighbors — starting with the five nearest to you.

The Families Community Itself

One of the best ways to strengthen your family is to surround yourself with other families who share your values. The TPUSA Families community exists to make that connection easier. Through local events, shared resources, and an online community, Families members encourage, challenge, and support one another.

Look for local Families chapters in your area or consider starting one. Hosting a monthly gathering of three or four families — even just for a shared meal and conversation — can transform the culture of an entire block or neighborhood.



Monthly Community Challenge

- Attend one local community event
- Intentionally support one local business
- Introduce yourself to at least one new family
- Complete one family service project
- Invite another family to join you in something meaningful

Recommended Resources

The following books, podcasts, and activities have been curated to support families in growing stronger together. These are conversation-starters, not prescriptions. Take what is useful and leave the rest.

Books

For Parents

- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families — Stephen R. Covey
- Boundaries with Kids — Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend
- The Family Board Meeting — Jim Sheils
- Becoming a King — Morgan Snyder
- Hunt, Gather, Parent — Michaela Douclev
- Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters — Meg Meeker, M.D.

For Children & Teens

- The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe — C.S. Lewis (ages 8+)
- Little House on the Prairie series — Laura Ingalls Wilder (ages 8+)
- Wonder — R.J. Palacio (ages 10+)



- Do Hard Things — Alex and Brett Harris (teens)
- The Hiding Place — Corrie ten Boom (teens and adults)

Podcasts

- Focus on the Family — practical guidance on marriage, parenting, and faith
- FamilyLife Today — real conversations about what it takes to build strong families
- Raising Boys & Girls — developmental insight for parents navigating different stages
- The Art of Manliness — character, virtue, and what it means to be a person of integrity

Family Activity Resources

- Your local public library — story times, STEM programs, summer reading, and more
- State and national parks — free and low-cost outdoor experiences for all ages
- Community events boards (Nextdoor, Facebook Groups, local city websites)
- Volunteer Match (volunteermatch.org) — find service opportunities near you

Note: Inclusion of a resource in this toolkit does not constitute a formal endorsement. Families are encouraged to evaluate all materials through the lens of their own values.



Your Family Action Plan

Everything in this toolkit comes down to one thing: action. Small, consistent choices made with intention produce meaningful change over time. Strong families are not built in a single weekend — they are built through hundreds of ordinary moments chosen well.

Use this page to make it personal. Write it down. Put it somewhere visible. Come back to it.

Our Family's Plan

One family goal we are working toward this month:

One new tradition we want to start:

One community we want to serve:

One connection we want to make or deepen:

The first step we will take this week:



A Final Word

You do not need a perfect family to start. You just need the next right step.

Every dinner table conversation, every tradition honored, every neighbor served, and every child trusted with real responsibility is a deposit into a future that is stronger because your family existed in it.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for investing in what matters most.

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