

Orange Parents

Think Orange.

Influence :

The home is the place where **kids** and **students** find love and nurture. The home has around 3,000 hours a year with a child. This influence of time is critical to the development of faith in a kid or student. It is critical that we use this time wisely. We must take the moments of time that we are given to influence the **faith** of our children.

The church is the place that God has entrusted and empowered with the message of his Son's coming to earth to bring salvation to his people caught in sin and death. We call this message the good news or gospel. The church is trained to communicate this message. It is in the church that we practice in order to communicate this message well. It is critical that we think about how we are presenting God. We must communicate about a big God that is not the topic of another sort of education but rather compels us to give our lives to his mission.

The word "influence" is an important word. If you are a parent you can increase your influence by having short discussions about spiritual matters with your child. Take advantage of 4 moments of the day when life slows down; **morning-time**, **drive time**, **mealtime**, and **bedtime**. Taking these opportunities to discuss spiritual things can make a huge difference in the faith development of a child. If you are a leader of kids or youth you can increase your influence by presenting the message of God in such a way that it invokes **wonder**, **discovery**, and **passion**. God's word is HIS story that HE is telling us. Present it in such a way

that it leaves them with questions. Encourage them to talk with their parents and connect with parents often to discuss where their child is spiritually.

Partnership:

The care of souls and the development of faith is something that must be taken seriously by the church and the home. If we are both taking this process seriously then we must be willing to partner together to foster faith development in our kids. Because the church and the home have different areas of influence it is necessary for both to be engaged in a strategy to make a difference in the lives of our children. This engagement has implications for the home and the church.

For the church to be engaged in partnership means that we will teach our kids with the home in mind. This means our objective is far greater than giving simple answers, rather our objective is to spark questions that will lead to "faith talks". We must also resource parents with the tools, encouragement, and preparation to engage in these "faith talks". We must find creative ways to celebrate major faith events like Easter and Christmas so that "faith talks" can happen consistently and naturally.

For the home to be engaged in partnership then faith cannot be left as a topic for church. We must know the spiritual goals that the church has for our kids. We must take the initiative and make "faith talks" a part of the fabric of our home. We must be ready and willing to receive questions for which we do not have the answers, these lead us to discussion. We must make knowing our kids small group leaders a priority and keep their phone number close at hand (on the refrigerator

door), this is especially important for teens.

Community:

The partnership of the home and the church for the benefit of the faith of the next generation creates a community of like-minded people that are committed to a mission. This community is represented by the color orange. If we give the home the color red, for the love and nurturing that comes and we give the church the color yellow, for the gospel message being the light of the world. Then when these influences partner together they form an **orange community**. This community is determined to **impact the next generation** by taking responsibility for the influence that it shares because of the powerful partnership that has formed.

For the church to be effective it must communicate the message.

The need for listening to a child must take priority over teaching a lesson. Kids and leaders must spend relational time in the experiences offered by the church. There must be open discussion of life-mission and opportunities to serve must be offered. Kids and leaders are invited to share their stories as real and authentic parts of God's story. Kid's views must be accepted and discussed instead of dismissed as "wrong". Opportunities must be offered for intergenerational worship.

For the home to be effective it must be engaged in faith discussions. Natural times to slow down like bedtime and mealtime are taken as opportunities for "faith talks" and prayer. Faith celebrations like Christmas and Easter are approached seriously and with intention to make faith a reality in the home and lives. Meaningful discussions are taking place between the home and the child's small group leader. The home must be intentional about worshiping with their children.

In short, the goal of the church must be to have **relational leaders**. The goal of the home must be to have **intentional parents**. When these two influences combine they will become more powerful than either one alone.