

# ***What's Going on With Your 9<sup>th</sup> Grader?***

The 9<sup>th</sup> grade year signals the beginning of the high school experience and the last stage of the adolescent journey. This is a look into the world of your 9<sup>th</sup> grader.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

- ♦ There is a heightened sensitivity to appearance and its social value.
- ♦ Boys and girls have a propensity to diet.
- ♦ Upper body strength begins to develop in boys.
- ♦ Boys and girls level out in height.
- ♦ Girls have fully developed physically into their adult bodies.
- ♦ Boys have more of a growth spurt to continue.
- ♦ Sexual desire is awakened, and the temptation to be sexually active is common.
- ♦ They have a need to develop exercise routines and healthy habits.

## **EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*The 9<sup>th</sup> grader may:*

- ♦ Have a desire for more control over aspects of their life
- ♦ Have a more evident "adult" personality
- ♦ Have an idealistic viewpoint of the world at large
- ♦ Love to try new things in an effort to discover identity
- ♦ Obtain a strong sense of accomplishment from being involved in various activities
- ♦ Be easily "bored"
- ♦ Exhibit impulsive behavior with friends and peers

- ♦ Not respond to adult lectures, feeling they know better what is going on than the adult does
- ♦ Become better at setting and achieving goals

## **RELATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- ♦ Less time may be spent with family, while more time may be spent with peers.
- ♦ Competition with outside groups is preferred over competition with friends.
- ♦ Relationships with parents become focused on a negotiation to get what they want.
- ♦ There is a strong desire for conformity with peers.
- ♦ Girls have a tendency to be interested in older boys.
- ♦ Popular peers, adults, and celebrities are strong influences.

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

- ♦ Their capacity for self-discipline increases.
- ♦ Summer camps and mission experiences influence them spiritually because of the peer connections that those events create.
- ♦ They begin to imagine what life would be like as an adult away from their parents, and they begin deciding whether or not their faith will be a part of that.
- ♦ The ability to fully process abstract thoughts gives them the ability to engage God personally.
- ♦ Rather than being told what to believe, they need spiritual leaders to ask their opinions and let them develop their beliefs.
- ♦ Their interest and commitment to faith change rapidly back and forth, signaling an internal struggle on whether or not to accept it.