

THE DANDELION FAMILY CURRICULUM

Where Courage Blooms

September Youth Curriculum

Middle School | Grades 6–8

Identity, resilience, boundaries, and healthy connection

GROW TOGETHER Four weekly lessons designed to help children and teens explore the same pillars as the adults in their family—at a pace and depth that fits their stage of development.

Name: _____ September: _____

A guide for caring adults

This workbook helps young people participate in the same monthly conversation as the adults in their family. It is educational and reflective. It does not replace therapy, medical care, legal advice, crisis intervention, or school support services.

CHOICE & SAFETY A child or teen may pass, pause, draw instead of write, request privacy, or ask to speak with a trusted adult. Do not require disclosure of painful experiences.

How to use each weekly lesson

1. **Connect:** Begin with the story or scenario and invite observations without forcing personal sharing.
2. **Learn:** Review the three key ideas and clarify unfamiliar words.
3. **Practice:** Complete the activity and one real-life skill rehearsal.
4. **Reflect:** Let the young person write, draw, discuss, or pass.
5. **Grow Together:** Use the shared family practice with the adult lesson for that pillar.

Support and safeguarding

If a young person describes abuse, danger, self-harm, or another serious safety concern, stay calm, listen, avoid promising secrecy, and follow applicable safeguarding and reporting requirements. In the United States, call or text 988 for immediate mental-health crisis support; call 911 for immediate danger.

September family rhythm

Week 1 — HEALING: My Story, Safety & Self-Compassion

Week 2 — GROWTH: Patterns, Resilience & Healthy Boundaries

Week 3 — EMPOWERMENT: Worth, Voice & Courageous Choices

Week 4 — COMMUNITY: Healthy Relationships & Support

Week 1 • HEALING

My Story, Safety & Self-Compassion

THIS WEEK'S TRUTH What happened to me is part of my story, but it does not decide my worth or my future.

Begin with the story

After a friendship ends, Cameron keeps replaying every conversation and blaming themselves for all of it. Healing begins when Cameron separates facts from painful assumptions and talks with a counselor instead of carrying the story alone.

What do you notice?

Three ideas to remember

- Painful experiences can influence thoughts, emotions, and body responses.
- A survival response is not a character flaw; it may be a strategy that once helped.
- Healing includes safety, honest reflection, support, and self-compassion—not forced forgiveness.

YOUR PERMISSION You may answer, draw, ask a question, take a break, or talk privately with a trusted adult.

Week 1 Practice • HEALING

Activity

Story and Identity Split: Make two columns. In one, describe what happened without labels. In the other, name values, strengths, hopes, and identities that remain yours.

Pause and reflect

A harsh label I am ready to question is...

A more accurate truth is...

The support I need while healing is...

COURAGE IN ACTION Create a three-part support plan: warning signs, grounding tools, and trusted people/resources.

GROW TOGETHER Create a family calm plan. Each person names one feeling, one calming choice, and one trusted person they can ask for help.

OPTIONAL FAITH CONNECTION Read Psalm 34:18 or another comforting passage. Talk about how faith can remind us that we are not alone when feelings are heavy.

Week 2 • GROWTH

Patterns, Resilience & Healthy Boundaries

THIS WEEK'S TRUTH I can notice what is not helping, learn a new response, and protect the space I need to grow.

Begin with the story

Whenever group work feels uncertain, Morgan takes over, becomes frustrated, and shuts others out. Morgan recognizes that control reduces anxiety in the moment but harms teamwork. A new response is to clarify roles and request a short check-in.

What do you notice?

Three ideas to remember

- Patterns continue because they offer a short-term benefit, even when there is a long-term cost.
- Resilience is supported by skills, rest, relationships, resources, and repair.
- A healthy boundary describes your limit and the action you will take; it does not control another person.

YOUR PERMISSION You may answer, draw, ask a question, take a break, or talk privately with a trusted adult.

Week 2 Practice • GROWTH

Activity

Pattern Cycle Lab: Identify a trigger, meaning, emotion/body signal, usual response, short-term payoff, long-term cost, and earliest point for change.

Pause and reflect

A pattern I want to understand is...

What it may be trying to protect is...

My realistic pattern interrupt is...

COURAGE IN ACTION Use NOTICE–PAUSE–CHOOSE–REVIEW during one manageable situation this week.

GROW TOGETHER Choose one family reset routine: pause, name the problem, choose a respectful next step, and repair when needed.

OPTIONAL FAITH CONNECTION Read Romans 12:2 or another passage about renewal. Discuss one thought or habit your family wants to practice differently.

Week 3 • EMPOWERMENT

Worth, Voice & Courageous Choices

THIS WEEK'S TRUTH My voice matters. I can make thoughtful choices, ask for help, and speak with courage and respect.

Begin with the story

Friends pressure Devon to go along with a risky plan. Devon slows down, checks the facts, considers consequences, and texts a safe adult for a ride. Courage is not proving fearlessness; it is choosing with wisdom under pressure.

What do you notice?

Three ideas to remember

- Inherent worth does not rise or fall with grades, appearance, relationships, or approval.
- Agency means recognizing the choices and support available to you.
- Courageous decisions consider safety, values, capacity, consequences, and support.

YOUR PERMISSION You may answer, draw, ask a question, take a break, or talk privately with a trusted adult.

Week 3 Practice • EMPOWERMENT

Activity

Courageous Choice Filter: Apply six questions—Truth, Safety, Values, Capacity, Consequences, and Support—to a realistic decision.

Pause and reflect

A value that gives my voice direction is...

Information I still need is...

The next wise step I can take is...

COURAGE IN ACTION Write and rehearse one clear boundary or request using calm, direct language.

GROW TOGETHER Hold a family choice circle. Let each person share one decision, the facts they know, the support they need, and their next wise step.

OPTIONAL FAITH CONNECTION Read Ephesians 2:10 or another passage about purpose. Name gifts and strengths you see in one another.

Week 4 • COMMUNITY

Healthy Relationships & Support

THIS WEEK'S TRUTH Healthy connection includes respect, honesty, boundaries, repair, and room for every person to be whole.

Begin with the story

A group chat turns cruel after a disagreement. Lee refuses to pile on, checks privately on the person being targeted, saves evidence, and reports the situation to an adult. Community means both belonging and responsible action.

What do you notice?

Three ideas to remember

- Healthy connection makes room for two whole people—not pressure, monitoring, or self-abandonment.
- Reciprocity means care and effort move in both directions over time.
- Repair requires accountability, changed behavior, and respect for the other person's limits.

YOUR PERMISSION You may answer, draw, ask a question, take a break, or talk privately with a trusted adult.

Week 4 Practice • COMMUNITY

Activity

Support Network Map: Identify inner-circle people, school/community supports, professional resources, and safe digital resources. Note what kind of help each can offer.

Pause and reflect

A relationship quality I want to strengthen is...

A boundary that protects healthy connection is...

One community action I can take is...

COURAGE IN ACTION Practice one relationship skill: listen without fixing, make a clear request, repair harm, or seek help for an unsafe situation.

GROW TOGETHER Build a family support map with people, places, and community resources that help each person feel safe, known, and encouraged.

OPTIONAL FAITH CONNECTION Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 or another passage about support. Discuss what it looks like to help without controlling or judging.

September Family Celebration

Where Courage Blooms

CARRY THIS WITH YOU Growth is not perfection. It is the courage to notice, practice, ask for support, repair, and begin again.

My four-pillar reflection

HEALING — Something I learned about feelings, safety, or compassion is...

GROWTH — A pattern, boundary, or resilience skill I want to keep practicing is...

EMPOWERMENT — A strength, value, or courageous choice I recognize in myself is...

COMMUNITY — A relationship or support practice I want to carry forward is...

Our family courage commitment

As a family, we will make room for honest feelings, respectful boundaries, brave choices, healthy support, and new beginnings. We will listen without forcing, help without controlling, and keep growing together.

Young person: _____ Caring adult: _____

Date: _____