

Getting Started with a Prayer Partner Program

Note: With all the information provided, feel free to change anything to make it work for your situation. Also, feel free to use this with boys, too. The wording is towards girls, as that is how we have used it, but this would also work with all ages and genders. The devotionals share some of my personal stories, feel free to share them or change them to your personal stories. These are just ideas to help you get started. We would love to hear about the changes you make and how we can support you in leading young people to follow Jesus.

To the Coordinator:

The generations of the church were meant to be connected. It says in Titus 2:3-5, "Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God." When relationships are built between the generations, opportunities open for us to learn from each other. The older generation feels encouraged, needed, loved, and connected when given the opportunity to pray for a younger girl. Young girls are encouraged, mentored, and learn how to pray for another person, which is an important aspect of the Christian life.

Expectations for Mature Prayer Partners:

*A Prayer partners' main goal is to PRAY. Prayer changes lives! When asking if a more mature woman wants to be a prayer partner, you do not want her to be overwhelmed. We want her to step out and make a difference in another person's life. Prayer is something that can be done, even from a bed. If we are breathing, we can pray. We want a woman to feel it is doable. Ask women who no longer are raising children. These women are not so busy with the day to day parenting and often enjoy the connection to a young girl.

*Also ask them to send a birthday card and two letters during the year. The letters should be encouraging to the young ladies.

*Prayer partners are also asked to attend three connection events. Sometimes the prayer partners want to connect more and that is wonderful, but never mandated. Prayer is the goal.

*Commitment is for 1 year. Often times relationships grow, and they stay in touch throughout life, but at times it is only for a season. Both situations are great. Have the prayer partners make a commitment for one year and if both choose to continue in the program the following year, they can remain prayer partners.

*I suggest making a no gift policy as the goal is to pray. Gift buying can be stressful and not affordable for many. It also creates a comparison atmosphere between the young girls, which you want to avoid. If you have a prayer partner that feels the need to give a gift, encourage them to give it outside of a class or group event.

Expectations for Young Girls:

*They should make a card for their prayer partner that includes their contact information. Attaching a picture outside the card helps their prayer partner recognize them. These cards should be made prior to the first event. At the first event, the girls should give the cards to their prayer partner.

*The girls should be encouraged to serve their prayer partner at the events as it is a good way to show respect and appreciation.

*During class time, if applicable, be sure to take the time to write a letter to the prayer partners.

*Encourage girls to pray for prayer partners during the connection events. Ask them to be brave and if they don't feel comfortable to at least ask God to bless their prayer partner. Getting our young people willing to pray for others is important. They will never feel comfortable without practice.

*Make birthday cards for the prayer partners. When the month of the birthday comes, have the girl write on the card and then mail the card for her.

*Take time during class time (if applicable) to pray for their prayer partners in small groups. This is a good discipling time on how to pray for others.

*Make a small gift and card for the girls to give their prayer partners at the last meeting of the year. The gift could be painting flowerpots and putting a flower inside.

Connection Events:

*Meet & Greet

- Preparation
 - Prayerfully match up prayer partners and print list
 - Send invitations and Questionnaire to prayer partners
 - Send invitation information to younger prayer partner or parent/guardian
 - Have the girls make a prayer card with their name & picture on the front and a prayer list inside to give to their prayer partner during the event
 - Print Name Tags, Get to Know You Questions & Contact Info Sheets
 - Prepare your room – tables and chairs with name cards/prayer cards and Get to Know You Questions if space allows
- During event
 - Greet participants warmly
 - Receive Questionnaires from prayer partners or provide a copy to complete during event
 - As participants arrive, introduce them to each other and encourage conversation using the Get to Know You Questions
 - Make a copy of the Prayer Partner Questionnaires to keep and give a copy to the girls during the event
 - Provide a short devotional and encourage prayer partners to pray together
 - Provide a fun treat
 - Have someone take a picture of each pair, print if possible and give to the girls and prayer partners
 - Encourage the prayer partners to say hi to each other if they see each other at church or in the community
 - Hand out a list of Bible verses to the prayer partners to give them direction on how to pray for each other
 - Answer questions, thank them warmly and pray a blessing over them

*Parent Night

- Opportunity for a parent and student to interact with the Prayer Partner together
- Plan some sort of meal – parents and leadership can pitch in to bring components i.e.: soup and sides
- Plan a special speaker
- Create an inviting atmosphere with decorations and background music
- Name tags are important for this evening
- Provide a craft or outreach activity such as putting together gift packages that could be donated to a local ministry.

*Appreciation Night

- Help the girls make a small gift and a handwritten thank you card prior to event
- This evening can be run similar to the first night
 - Name tags
 - Fun décor
 - Time to visit
 - Devotional
 - Prayer time – encourage each girl to practice praying out loud for their prayer partner
 - Fun snack – scones, ice cream, fruit, coffee/tea...

*Optional events – Invite the prayer partners to participate in something you are already doing, like visiting a nursing home (sing Christmas carols)