

PRAY FOR TEENAGERS



Teenagers face peer pressure and digital temptations, often seeking acceptance through harmful behaviours. Can wise decisions help them to navigate the teen years without falling into danger?

Prayer is one powerful way to make a difference in avoiding destructive behaviour in your life and the lives of your friends. Elijah is a person in the Bible who prayed for the rain to stop—and it did not rain for three and a half years! (James 5:16-18). Imagine what God could do in your generation if you commit to pray for yourself and your peers.

This article focuses on four important struggles many young people deal with. Scriptures and prayer points are provided to help you pray for yourself and your friends.

Challenge 1: Body Image

Body image refers to how teens view their bodies. Eating disorders like anorexia, bulimia and obesity negatively impact the development of a healthy self-image.

God's Truth

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? (1 Corinthians 6:19).

I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. (Psalm 139:14) .

Pray: Lord, I pray for _____ (insert the name of a friend or peers) to become established in who You have created him/her to be. Help us to see our bodies in the light of Your wondrous works. Your Word says that our bodies are a temple of Your Holy Spirit and that we were bought at a price. Help us to glorify You in our bodies.

Challenge 2. Sexual Purity

a. Pornography

A 2012 True Research study of 2,017 teens (ages 13–17) and their parents found that 71% of teens had hidden their online activity. Tactics included clearing browser history, using private browsing, deleting videos, lying, using phones instead of computers and creating hidden email or social media accounts, among other methods to avoid parental detection.*

God's Truth

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will

draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (James 4:7-8).

I will set nothing wicked before my eyes... (Psalm 101:3).

Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. (Psalm 24:3-5)

Visit this site for help and resources: <https://stop.org.za/>

Pray: *Lord, I pray for my peers to be alert to the trap of pornography and the danger of becoming addicted to it. Help us understand how truly harmful it is to both mind and spirit. As young people, we submit to You. Strengthen us to resist the devil in Your Name. Teach us how to draw near to You and urge our generation to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts.*

b. Sexual promiscuity

"I don't want to be weird."

"Everyone thinks it is OK. Why should I be different?"

Staying sexually pure in today's immoral society is tough. Seek guidance from parents, youth leaders, or God's Word for support.

God's Truth

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor...

(1 Thessalonians 4:3-4).

Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. (1 Corinthians 6:18).

Challenge 3: Substance Abuse

a. Drugs

Teens who abuse drugs are at a higher risk of developing an addiction later in life. It's important to understand the difference between drug abuse and addiction—many teens try drugs but do not become addicted. **

Pray: *Lord, I pray for protection over teenagers who fall prey to peer pressure and lose their dignity. Help them realise the dangers and to say no to drugs. You are our Deliverer who can do the impossible. Save those who call on Your name in desperation and free them from the bondage of drugs.*

b. Alcohol

Excessive alcohol lowers self-control and often leads to risky behaviour. Teenagers under the influence are more likely to try drugs, engage in sex and face increased risk of assault or robbery.

Helpline: Alcoholics Anonymous SA Helpline: 0861 435 722 (SA only). Outside SA? Contact your local AA helpline for support.

God's Truth

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light...

(1 Peter 2:9).

Pray: *Lord, I pray for parents and guardians who do not conduct themselves according to Your will. Please show them the truth of Jesus Christ. I cry out for teenagers who follow their example, or who drink for fun and become alcoholics. Please help them acknowledge their addiction and that they need help.*

Challenge 4: Social media, Internet, TV & computer games

A teen's passion for a hobby can foster learning and creativity, but when it becomes addictive, it may harm their well-being and hinder functioning in everyday life.

Brad Huddleston, author of *Digital Cocaine*, says any digital activity for more than one hour pushes adrenal systems over the edge. Two hours of gaming have the same impact as snorting one line of cocaine. ***

Excessive digital exposure alters the brain, causing neurological and psychological issues. Studies show it rewires the brain for instant gratification, with MRI scans revealing damage to attention networks in the frontal lobe.

Pray: *Lord, I pray for myself and other teenagers to recognise the line between enjoying games and becoming addicted. Help us set limits on the time we spend playing computer games willingly. Protect us also from the dangers of interacting with people of evil intent. Help Christian teenagers to remember that they were raised with Christ, so that they might seek the things above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Help them set their minds on things above, not things on earth (Colossians 3:1-2).*

References:

* <http://www.covenanteyes.com>

** <https://www.addictioncenter.com/teenage-drug-abuse/>

*** <http://bradhuddleston.com/>