

The Roots and Wings Principle

As children grow, freedoms and responsibilities should grow together.

One should never significantly outpace the other.

Freedom without responsibility produces entitlement.

Responsibility without freedom produces resentment.

Healthy families intentionally connect the two.

Every new freedom should be accompanied by a corresponding responsibility.

Every new responsibility should eventually lead to increased freedom.

Examples:

Freedom	Responsibility
Cell phone	Paying part of the bill or maintaining responsible usage
Driving privileges	Vehicle care, fuel expenses, safe driving
Flexible curfew	Consistent trustworthiness
Increased privacy	Honest communication
Managing money	Budgeting and saving
Less parental oversight	Demonstrated self-discipline

The goal is not control.

The goal is stewardship.

You are gradually transferring ownership of a young person's life from your hands into theirs.

Character Development Plan

Strengthening Roots Before Flight

Character does not develop accidentally.

Just as we intentionally teach reading, math, and life skills, we must intentionally cultivate the character qualities that will support our children long after they leave our homes.

At Foundation & Flight, we believe strong **wings** require strong **roots**. A teenager who can manage money, drive a car, and get a job still isn't fully prepared for adulthood if they lack integrity, responsibility, self-control, humility, respect, or faith.

Use the following plans to intentionally develop each area of your teen's character.

Integrity

Doing the Right Thing When Nobody's Watching

What Integrity Looks Like

- Tells the truth even when it is costly
- Keeps commitments
- Admits mistakes
- Does not manipulate circumstances for personal gain
- Behaves consistently across settings

How Parents Build Integrity

Model It

Your teen notices whether you:

- Keep your promises
- Follow through on commitments
- Admit mistakes
- Speak honestly about others

Reward Honesty More Than Success

When a teen tells the truth about a poor decision, focus first on the honesty.

Example:

"I am disappointed by the choice you made, but I am proud that you told the truth."