

*“The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion - to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.”* Isaiah 61:1-3

## ***Love in Action:***

If this week has stirred within you a desire to do something more to care for, defend, and deliver children at risk, please prayerfully consider how you can walk in obedience to love your neighbor.

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves... Proverbs 31:8a*

- ***Volunteer*** at a preschool or after-school program in your church or community.
- ***Organize*** a parenting class or parent-support group for single parents in your church and community.
- ***Encourage*** your church to adopt a local school, ensuring children at risk have what they need to be healthy, prepared learners.
- ***Speak up*** for children at risk by educating your policymakers about programs that are proven to help a child have a better future.

*Visit [www.shepherdingthenextgeneration.org/resources](http://www.shepherdingthenextgeneration.org/resources) for additional ideas on how to help at-risk children and their families.*



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PRAYING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

## **A SEVEN-DAY PRAYER GUIDE FOR CHILDREN AT RISK**

*“Is anyone among you in trouble?  
Let them pray...”*

*James 5:13a*

*Today, millions of American children are growing up in family situations that put them at high risk for long-term poverty, delinquency, teen pregnancy and addiction. These families are in our churches and in our communities. They are our neighbors. And, we are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves (Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 19:19, Romans 13:9 and James 2:8).*

*“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.” Matthew 7:7-8*

*Believing Christ is the hope of each child, we ask God to redeem broken pasts, strengthen each child and family at risk, and empower the Body of Christ to minister grace and hope to each one.*



***Let's approach the throne of God with confidence on behalf of children at risk; praying for them, their parents and families, and each individual whose life and decisions will influence the future of one of these children (1 John 5:14-15).***

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***Day 1: The Children***

- Pray that each child will receive the care and resources needed to grow physically and emotionally, becoming healthy and happy children who are prepared to succeed in school and life.
- Pray for protection from those who seek to harm (Psalm 5:11).
- Ask God to provide each child with knowledge and discernment and for caring adults to provide guidance and discipleship (Proverbs 1:4).
- Ask God to bring joy to the children at risk in your community and to demonstrate His love and salvation to each one.
- Ask God to heal the hurts, including abuse and neglect, that some of these children have experienced, bringing deliverance, reconciliation, and restoration through God's grace.

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***Day 2: The Parents***

- For fathers, that they will provide good counsel to their children. For mothers, that they will provide good teaching to their children. (Proverbs 1:8)
- Pray for those parents who did not learn good parenting skills. Ask God to provide individuals and couples who will teach and model these skills so that they are able to parent well.
- Pray for the single mothers and the lack of support, both emotional and financial, that often leaves them feeling hopeless.
- Pray for absent fathers. Ask God to bring reconciliation and to raise up a generation of men who will be present, engaged, and faithful.
- Pray for wisdom and strength as parents teach, lead, and lovingly discipline their children (Proverbs 22:6, James 1:5, Ephesians 6:4).
- Pray for single parents who are often financially stressed, that they will have access to quality childcare and early education.
- Pray that each parent will possess and model love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control to their children (Galatians 5:22-23).

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***Day 3: The Family***

- Ask God to heal and restore broken relationships and marriages (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).
- Pray that God would provide neighbors for these families who would demonstrate a God-centered home and willingly provide support to the entire family (1 John 3:17-18).
- Ask God to provide for each family's need (Matthew 6:11).
- Ask God to strengthen families so that they will have endurance and patience (Colossians 1:11).
- Pray for safe and stable homes where everyone is well cared for (Psalm 107:41).

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***Day 4: The Church***

- Pray that the church would be filled with doers of justice, lovers of mercy, and people who walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).
- Pray for church leaders: Ask God to fill each one with a deep compassion for children at risk and to actively equip their members to care for these children and their families (Philippians 2:4).
- Pray for the children's ministry leaders, that their time with children at risk would be used by God to sow seeds of hope and help.
- Ask God to make the church a people of salt and light whose good deeds point to Jesus (Matthew 5:13-16).
- Pray for unity (John 17:21).
- Pray for Christians who will love in action and truth (1 John 3:17-18).

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***Day 5: The Community***

- Pray for peace and prosperity in your community (Jeremiah 29:7).
- Pray for a growing openness toward collaboration and innovation, where the most vulnerable members are valued.
- Ask God for a spirit of unity where suspicion, prejudice, and pride have often reigned (Romans 12:16-18).
- Pray that your community would be characterized by faith, hope, and love (1 Corinthians 13).

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***Day 6: The Workers***

- Pray for the teachers, social service workers, counselors, and volunteers that connect with these children each day. Pray for wisdom, integrity, patience, and endurance to serve with joy.
- Pray for compassion and grace as they interact with parents.
- Pray that these workers would be encouraged and that they will not grow weary in doing good (Galatians 6:9).
- Pray for sufficient resources (Philippians 4:19).
- Pray for God's favor to be on them and that the work of their hands would be established and effective (Psalm 90:17).

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***Day 7: The Policymakers***

- Pray that our policymakers would speak truthfully and walk and work with integrity (Proverbs 10:9).
- Pray for your policymakers by name, asking God to provide strength of character to lead and make decisions for the glory of God.
- Pray that each policymaker's eyes would see the needs of children at risk and that God would give them wisdom to make sound policies.
- Pray for godly wisdom for your leaders, that they will work together productively and for the good of children at risk (James 1:5, 3:13-18).