

APPLICATION EXERCISES

How Can I Apply This Tool?

- 1.** Speak more words of life to your kids and teens more often. Tell them you love them. Tell them you are proud of them. Write sticky notes and leave them on their bathroom mirror or locker at school. When birthdays come around, write a card with substance. Keep speaking and leaving notes even if it feels like it doesn't make a difference. It does!
- 2.** The Bible indicates that "life and death are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21)." As parents and caring adults, we can both positively and negatively influence kids' lives by our words. Emphasize scriptural truths that speak hope into your kid or teen. Here are some examples . . .
 - a.** You were lovingly and intentionally created by God. (Psalm 139:14)
 - b.** God has a special plan for your life. (Jeremiah 29:11)
 - c.** God is always with you. (Deuteronomy 31:6)
- 3.** Faithfully speaking truths will help them to establish their identity in Christ. In addition . . .
 - Encourage them by sharing your observations of their efforts rather than solely offering praise for their appearance or abilities. For example, "I noticed that you shared part of your lunch with a friend who forgot his at home," or, "I can tell that you've been putting in some extra hours on the ball field this week in preparation for the game," and, "I noticed you listened respectfully even when you didn't agree with my viewpoint."
 - Be direct and honest. Why? Kids and teens, in particular, are really good at detecting fabrications. You establish credibility with them when you always tell them the truth.
 - Avoid criticizing your kid or teen publicly. This is shaming and damages your relationship with your child.