Tactics for Talking to Young men

1. Be PROACTIVE
	* Young men will most often NOT come to you first. You are the adult and the obligation is on you to take the initiative. You must take the step no matter how scared, incompetent, or hypocritical you feel.
	* Start BEFORE things become a problem or crisis are made known
	* For example: For Dads start talking to young mens about sex around age 11 (in an age appropriate manner)
2. Be SPECIFIC.
	* When young men begin to move into the teenage years conversations should be often and should be specific. But this should be built upon a culture of conversation that has developed since the beginning of your relationship.
	* “How are you doing” is too general
	* “In what areas are you struggling with X” is a better question
	* Once you have built some trust questions like “When was the last time you looked at porn” is a good specific question
3. Talk Often and regularly – Develop a culture of communication
	* Young men need regular interaction because there is always something going on and things to discuss
	* If you hardly ever talk you will never become comfortable with it and neither will young men
	* The more you truly get to know each other the more trust and comfort there will be.
	* Consider setting up a regular time of discipleship
4. Ask what you can be praying for
	* This is additional evidence to him that you care about him and his spiritual condition
	* This creates an opportunity for him to open up to you
	* This gives you something concrete you can do to help him. Prayer is powerful, after all, because the God who hears is powerful.
5. Ask Lots of questions and make them open ended
	* Actually listen
	* Genuinely want to learn and understand
	* Do you really think you are that interesting to God? But he genuinely cares about what you care about. Learn to care about what young men cares about.
6. Share about your life
* Be willing to throw yourself under the bus
* Tell stories (true stories)
* Be appropriate but candid
1. Be thought of as an encourager as well as a constructive challenger
	* Look for opportunities to build him up
	* God is not constantly criticizing neither should we
	* When God does criticize us He does so for our good not simply because He is annoyed
2. Be real/authentic
	* Do not be cool
	* Don’t say you like something when you don’t but look for something that you can like or at least have an attitude that you enjoy learning about the things they enjoy
	* You can be a true friend and that means fun is not your primary objective
3. Do not trivialize his concerns or interests
4. Look for areas of common interest
	* Look for things that you enjoy about them
	* Look for things that you can enjoy together
	* Learn to like what they like
5. Get in the habit of not ever being “shocked”
6. Seek accountability for yourself
7. Refrain from speaking in anger or annoyance (not because anger is always bad but because we often speak in anger wrongly).
8. View young men where they will be not where he is today
	* Don’t think only of where they are today think of where you can imagine God taking them in 10 or twenty years.

Tools for Talking

* Car rides
* Special breakfasts
* Weekly coffee
* Activities like walking, bike rides
* Home Depot Runs
* Activities you both enjoy
* Emailing
* Texting
* Facebook
* Write physical letters – even mail them
* Write back and forth (A shared journal)
* Father/Son Trips