

**“Therefore
encourage one
another and
build one
another up,
just as you are
doing.”**

1 Thess. 5:11



**Interactive
gatherings
designed to
help you
confidently
counsel
people's
problems**

Counseling with Youth Nov. 13, 2025



Dana Roberts
Garden Gate Biblical Counsel

Where We've Been and Where We're Going

- Quick review from last time together
- General helpful info
- My method of counseling with youth
- Apply to the "Smith Family"

Quick review:

Counseling with Families

- What is my focus when counseling with families?
 - Build Relationships/Friendships
 - Everything is Christ-centered
 - Love and Sanctification

“Age and Stage”

Late Childhood = ages 10-12

physically	energetic/active, height/weight increases=hungry, body begins to change
emotionally	confidence/insecurity waivers, fluctuating emotions, affects of body image
cognitively	increased learning/skill set, perspective/interpretation expands, increased attention span
socially	increased importance of peers, strong group identity/peers, increased ability to interact/engage,
spiritually	beliefs/values are challenged, increased awareness of choices/behaviors, struggles to respond to sin and suffering, struggles to know how God sees them

What “drives” my counsel?

- General knowledge is good, but isn't the focus of counsel
- Enter the young person's world to know specific thoughts, words, and actions
- According to the Bible, a person's heart “drives” my counsel (Jer. 17:9; Luke 6:45)
- Thoughts - Words - Actions = The Heart
- Sin/suffering does not discriminate against age, therefore, neither does the gospel of Christ
- My counsel is “driven” by pointing young people to Jesus — no matter their age and stage and/or their diagnosis

Three Main Areas:

1. Big Picture of the Bible: Who is God? Who is man?
What is the problem? What is the cure?
2. Saint, Sinner, Sufferer and 3 Causes of Suffering
3. Think Biblically and Respond Godly... Even If...

Progression of Sessions

Session **1**: Meet and Greet

Be genuine—kids spot “a fake” a mile away!

- Tell them I take notes to help me remember
- Ask questions about their name, family, hobbies, friends, schoolwork, church
- Relate to things I did at their age, or pets, or family/grandparents
- Set the expectation and goals

•RB: Heart Q's worksheet, joy prayers, gratitude journal

Progression of Sessions

Session **2 - 4 / 5**: Big Bible Picture, SSS, 3 Causes of Suffering

- Game/Activities (chutes/ladders, get to know me or in my house worksheet, outside game, Toolbox)
- Relate these to life and point to Jesus/His amazing Love!
- Great thing from the week and not such a great thing
- Where is Jesus in your story this week?
- Pray, Bible verses, review RB, books, lies/truth T chart (put off/put on)
 - RB: songs, worksheets, post it notes, index cards, journals, artwork**

Progression of Sessions

Session **6**: Review/Evaluation

- Bring Toolbox!
- Schedule Parent Meeting (growth/change? struggle?)

Session **7+**: Think Biblically, Respond Godly, Even if..

- T-W-A = HEART — Who's on the throne?
- What path are you taking? Y chart
- Rejoice!
 - RB: specific Bible accounts - meditate for application, journal, draw pictures, tell a story, write a song, create your own**

From: Hazel Smith

Subject: seeking counseling for my two children

Dear Dana,

I've received your contact information from a mutual friend. You counseled her daughter in the past. I would like to know how I can make an appointment with you for my son, Henry, and my daughter, Harper. Thank you, Hazel Smith.

Phone call revealed:

Dad, Harvey, late 30's — shift work at the local paper mill

Mom, Hazel, mid 30's — homemaker (on Harvey's off days she works at her family's farm)

They've been married for 13 years and live locally.

Son, Henry, age 13 in 8th grade — dx with Tourettes at the age of 10 and in May 2025 dx with ADHD

Daughter, Harper, age 11 in 6th grade — just dx with OCD in May 2025

They had just had the well-child check in May.

PERSONAL DATA INVENTORY FOR CHILD OR TEEN

CHILD/TEEN'S NAME: Henry	DOB: May 1, 2012	GENDER: M
GRADE: PRESCHOOL ELEMENTARY MIDDLE SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL		
PLEASE LIST NAMES AND AGES OF SIBLINGS: Harper (11)		
WHO DOES CHILD/TEEN LIVE WITH: parents and sister; great grandma Gertie		

HEALTH HISTORY

CURRENT PHYSICAL HEALTH: GOOD AVERAGE POOR	SLEEPING PATTERNS: STATIC OR BROKEN HRS
DATE OF LAST MEDICAL EXAM: May 15, 2025	5-6HRS 7-8HRS 9-10HRS
CURRENT MEDICATIONS: none but now wondering if would be helpful	
LIST ALL ILLNESSES, INJURIES, OR HANDICAPS:	
Tourettes (age 10); ADHD (May 15, 2025)	
PAST OR PRESENT ALCOHOL OR DRUG ABUSE? YES NO	IF YES, DATE(S):
PAST SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE? YES NO	IF YES, DATE(S):
OTHER THERAPISTS OR COUNSELORS? YES NO	IF YES, DATE(S): therapist age 10 to help cope

Henry

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET –Please have child/teen fill out, if possible:

What is the main problem, as you see it? What brings you here?

I have Tics and I hate that people can see me shrug my shoulders all the time
ADHD

What have you done about it?

deep breaths and sit on my hands

What can I do or what are your expectations in coming to biblical counseling?

To know why God made me this way

As you see yourself, what kind of person are you? Describe yourself...

funny, happy, mad a lot, sometimes sad, good friend, good at basketball

Is there any other information you'd like to share?

I want a phone so that it will help me focus

PERSONAL DATA INVENTORY	CHILD/TEEN'S NAME: Harper			DOB:Feb,17, 2014	GENDER: F
	GRADE: PRESCHOOL ELEMENTARY MIDDLE SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL				
	PLEASE LIST NAMES AND AGES OF SIBLINGS: Henry (13)				
	WHO DOES CHILD/TEEN LIVE WITH: parents and sister; great grandma Gertie				
HEALTH HISTORY	CURRENT PHYSICAL HEALTH: GOOD AVERAGE POOR			SLEEPING PATTERNS: STATIC OR BROKEN HRS	
	DATE OF LAST MEDICAL EXAM: May 15, 2025			5-6HRS 7-8HRS 9-10HRS	
	CURRENT MEDICATIONS: none but now wondering if would be helpful				
	LIST ALL ILLNESSES, INJURIES, OR HANDICAPS:				
	OCD (dx in May)				
	PAST OR PRESENT ALCOHOL OR DRUG ABUSE?		YES	NO	IF YES, DATE(S):
	PAST SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE?		YES	NO	IF YES, DATE(S):
OTHER THERAPISTS OR COUNSELORS?		YES	NO	IF YES, DATE(S):	
RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND	CURRENT CHURCH ATTENDED, IF ANY: Local Christian Church of the Cross				
	CHURCH ATTENDANCE PER MONTH, IF APPLICABLE: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 MORE				
	PLEASE LIST ANY SMALL GROUPS OR CHURCH EVENTS, IF APPLICABLE:				
	Youth Group for Middle Schoolers				
	PERSONAL BIBLE DEVOTION/READING: YES NO IF YES, HOW OFTEN:				

Harper

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET –Please have child/teen fill out, if possible:

What is the main problem, as you see it? What brings you here?

Mom said it would be good for all of us to meet with someone to help us not fight and to learn how to cope with our sicknesses

What have you done about it?

I try not to yell at Henry but he is so annoying I just can't stop

Mom tells me just to ignore him, but when I do that he just bothers me more

What can I do or what are your expectations in coming to biblical counseling?

To help me stop fighting and to help me not wash my feet and hair so much

As you see yourself, what kind of person are you? Describe yourself...

singer, dancer, cry a lot from hurting feet and hair, good friend, good at gymnastics

Is there any other information you'd like to share?

I am sad when I think of Great Grandpa Gary, but I'm happy Great Grandma Gertie lives with us

Hardship and Heart Motive of Parents:

- Two “overwhelming” children. Medical DX not what they wanted for their family. How to live “normally”? Dad is angry and Mom is sad. “This isn’t what we thought our life would be like.”
- Frustrated with God that life is hard and don’t deserve this. Dad prays for easier life. Mom prays to be a good parent.
- Rarely together as a family: Dad’s work schedule, Mom’s farm family. Whoever can take kids to activities just does it. Sunday suppers together when Dad is home.
- Goal: easy and fun life together but getting harder. Goals for kids: Mom wants happiness, Dad wants them to be healed from medical dx
- Where is Jesus? “We think about Him when we are at church. We hope that He will hear our prayers.”
- Grandma Gertie lives with them. She moved in when Grandpa Gary died about 4 or 5 years ago.

Henry Smith

Session **1**: Meet and Greet

Maybe use the person outline

- Named after Gpa on Dad's side— never met Gpa
- Likes math (got my age right away)
- Friends at church and basket ball — doesn't have Tics when he plays ball
- Favorite food is waffles and syrup with cool whip or cereal (if he doesn't like what's for supper, he makes his own food - usually breakfast food)
- questions for me?
- expectations/goals
- RB: Heart Questions worksheet (compiled from David Powlison's 35 X-ray questions)**

Session **2-4** Teaching/guiding

- Take a walk or sit outside to start (if we can)
 - Good thing vs. bad thing (How was Jesus the hero of your story this week?)
 - Pray
 - Make Toolbox (session 2); review Heart Qu (session 2)
 - Gen 1-3 (Big Picture and Sin/Suffering)
 - Ps. 139: 13-16 (Creator knows everything - not surprised)
 - Ps. 23 (even if ...) - What does Jesus promise for now and all eternity
- RB: write Ps 139:13-16 on index card and tape to bathroom mirror, food and gratitude journal, and bedtime routine with joy prayers, create green pastures/cool waters art**

Session **5** Review/Eval (Parent mtg as well = growth/change/struggle)

- Specific incidents with family (sister!) or friends
 - When did he notice he was shrugging his shoulders more and /or less
 - What tools did you use = rejoice! or how to do it differently next time
 - **RB: which RB would be most helpful to use again this week, TWA poster**
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Session **6-12**

- Grandparents. Grief? Thoughts/Feelings
- Phone. Responsibilities. Lies believing about helping him focus. Heart motive.
- Sister. Peacemaker material.
- **RB: Lament and Questions, #RU Hooked booklet**

How about Harper?

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