

Thirty-one Needs

Thirty-one needs have been identified as the most common issues of families today. The Family Needs Survey questions help church leaders discover felt needs in their congregation in the areas of marriage, family, and parenting. The thirty-one needs as defined by a survey question are listed below.



FAMILY NEEDS SURVEY ITEMS EXPLAINED

GENERAL

1. **Establishing adult friendships** - this item has to do with a desire to experience more connection with the people around you. It includes aspects of accountability, encouragement, transparency, support and just plain old fun.
2. **Managing finances/money** - this item has to do with better spending and saving your money. It includes aspects of debt, savings, budgeting, tithing, planning and attitudes associated with them.
3. **Growing in my relationship with God** - this item has to do with spiritual growth. It includes both education of the theoretical and practical, as well as opportunities to experience them through worship, evangelism, fellowship, service and devotion.
4. **Managing my time-** this item has to deal with our schedules. It could include tools such as Day Timers and Palmpilots as well as planning our time to include margins allowing us to live less stressful lives in times of instant obstacles.
5. **Selecting wholesome entertainment for me and my family-** this item has to deal with the media. It includes setting standards for movies, TV, radio, printed materials, music, etc. and then finding those that fit the standard.
6. **Having ministry in the lives of other people** - this item has to do with helping others. It could include using Spiritual Gifts, simply showing love to them in a time of need or equipping them to live better physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally.
7. **Handling divorce** - this item has to do with helping an individual heal after a divorce. It could involve large group programs or one-to-one counseling and encouragement.
8. **Adjusting to my season of life** - this item has to deal with getting older. While

there are no set ages at which people change, we all experience different needs at different ages. Sometimes the needs are easily met and sometimes we need help.

9. **Adjusting to a change in employment** - this item has to deal with the stress of changing jobs. It could be due to various reasons but it may include aspects of physical as well as emotional change.
10. **Developing and maintaining spiritual disciplines** - This item has to deal with regularly practicing activities that will help us grow in our relationship with God.
11. **Dealing with current or past drug/alcohol abuse** - this item has to deal with getting free from addictive behavior and its results. It could involve large group programs or one-to-one counseling and encouragement.
12. **Dealing with current or past sexual/physical/emotional abuse** - this item has to deal with healing from abusive experiences. It includes learning new ways of thinking and breaking old patterns and habits.
13. **Developing healthy living and eating habits** - this item has to deal with our physical bodies. It could include everything from smoking to how much we weigh, from how much sleep we get to how much stress is in our lives.

MARRIAGE

14. **Dating and preparing for marriage** - this item has to deal with getting ready for marriage. It includes learning about what attracts you emotional, physically and mentally and then personally getting yourself ready dealing with any baggage along the way. It also includes helping your potential mate to learn and making sure they are ready as well.
15. **Understanding different personality types** - this item has to do with how your mate is wired. After learning the characteristics of your spouse and their behavior you will be able to make wise adjustments in your relationship to help them become all they can.
16. **Understanding biblical roles and responsibilities for a husband and wife** - this item has to do with the fog in our culture over who men and woman are from a biblical perspective. It would include redefining what true headship and submission are.
17. **Understanding your spouse's needs/expectations** - this item has to deal with learning how your mate sees life and is different from item #15. While item #15 could be considered our mate's hardware, this is the software programming that runs daily on that hardware. These needs and expectations are generally a result

from previous experiences and not from core characteristics.

18. **Developing and maintaining good communication** - this item has to deal with becoming transparent to your mate. It could include aspects of time management, learning new speaking or writing skills, dealing with past hurts and willing to become vulnerable.
19. **Developing and maintaining sexual intimacy in marriage** - this item has to do with our desire and need for sex. Included could be issues of frequency, time, impotency, romance, pornography, adultery, abuse, etc. and learning how to improve these.
20. **Rekindling and maintaining romance** - this item has to deal with emotional connection. It includes the areas of communication, respect, simple enjoyment of one another, spending time together, encouragement, complementing and learning to improve all these.
21. **Building a strong marriage** - this item has to deal with creating a marriage bond that won't break. It includes learning how to be a good spouse, how to challenge your spouse to grow, how to stay committed through the storms of life, accountability and enjoying the whole ride.
22. **Relating to in-laws** - this item has to deal with building a connection to your mate's family. It might include learning history, setting limits, learning new traditions and willingness to change.
23. **Living in an interfaith marriage** - this item has to deal with the situation a spouse who has different beliefs than you. Since there would be some different core values, it would deal with keeping the marriage strong in spite of them. It would include learning to depend on similarities instead of differences and how to negotiate for a win/win ending.

PARENTING

24. **Developing and sharpening parenting skills** - this item has to deal with an overall desire to parent better. It would include recognizing our deficiencies, learning and changing.
25. **Releasing and moving a child towards adult independence** - this item has to deal with letting go of your children. It would include learning what to teach your children about this stage of life as well as how to make your own process smoother.
26. **Developing and improving family communication** - this item has to deal with increasing transparency in your family. It could include aspects of creative time

management, learning new speaking or writing skills, learning to adjust to others and creating an environment of emotional stability and security in the home.

27. **Developing a child's character, identity and morality** - this is about raising your children to maturity. It includes deciding what you believe, researching your child's personality and then teaching and developing your child to their greatest potential.
28. **Disciplining a child** - this item is about changing behavior in your child through rewards and punishments. It would include learning limits and creative ways to apply rewards and punishments as you shape their behavior.
29. **Helping a child succeed at school**- this item is about educating your children. It could include everything from learning the three "Rs" well to getting along with peers.
30. **Helping a child grow spiritually** - this item has to do with increasing their desire to know God. It includes developing an environment at home that promotes spiritual growth as well as providing opportunities and encouragement outside the home for this as well.
31. **Establishing and teaching Christian values in the home** - this has to deal with teaching your children your values. It would necessitate deciding what values you have and then preparing yourself to pass those on to your kids with objective intentionality.

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