

# *Initial Parent Session*

Preferably, before the Freedom Appointment with a minor takes place, there should be a parent session. Parents/guardians provide a perspective that is instrumental for the encourager. An adult viewpoint on the issues in play helps to define surface issues that will be addressed during a freedom appointment. It is important to first gain understanding from parental authority and it is equally important for parents to interview the encourager. Successful counseling requires trust. Operative trust, concerning minors, is often tied to a parent's confidence in the encourager. For this reason it is advantageous to meet with both primary caregivers/parents even if divorced. It works best if both parents attend together in this first session.

In addition to seeking to gain a perspective on the adolescent "inquirer", it is extremely helpful to look to the Lord to provide discernment into the parental headship and the level of spiritual freedom being cultivated in the home. Generational curses, authoritarian parenting, permissive parenting, neglectful parenting, etc. all shape the belief system of the child and can be leveraged by the enemy to foster lies that undermine the goodness of God.

Prior to this first parent session, parents/guardians will complete a CPI on behalf of their minor.

## **Subject matter of the parent session:**

- Specific concerns and primary problems with regard to the child's behavior and family dynamics
- Objectives for the FA
- The willingness of the child to have a FA (vetting is crucial)
- Follow up for the "inquirer"
- Current and historical life experiences that may be relevant
- Encourager-parental communication within the limits of confidentiality
- Crisis intervention possibilities
- Length, time, and **frequency** of the freedom appointment(s). *Note: many teens who are in bondage have also been silenced by a parenting approach that is lecture based rather than dialogue driven. Therefore, it may aid the freedom process to do more listening than directing during the first meeting between the encourager and teen inquirer.*

Directing the parents to not only seek personal freedom in Christ but to also explore options for parenting strategies, marriage enrichment and support.