

## The \_\_\_\_\_ Family Constitution

As you (kids) enter adulthood, we understand you desire more freedoms. We also realize that you will find some of our parenting decisions or rules as “in error” in your mind or “unreasonable”. This is expected and it is fine. In fact we will make errors in parenting and so will you in your behavior toward your parents and later in parenting yourselves. You will be leaving home soon enough, for post-graduate education toward a career and will then experience more freedom than you ever wanted. We realize how scary it is to grow up and grow apart from your parents to the point of leaving home and taking upon yourselves the responsibilities of adulthood. We realize that our relationship will never be the same again after you leave home, just ask your Grandparents and this makes us sad—but it must be. We do not want to hold on to you so tight that we suffocate you as you are about to spread your wings and fly, so we will not. Nor do we want to push you into adult responsibilities before you are ready and in doing so rob you of your “young adult freedom”, enjoyable while still under the protective umbrella of the family. We will also try to be protective of you and try to keep others from robbing you of the fun time of “freedom as a young adult.”

We want to preserve a relationship that is marked by continued love, respect and counsel—one where you can feel free to drop in anytime just for a home cooked meal and a “Mom and Dad what do you think about...” kind of discussion. We want to continue a relationship where you are comfortable to come and ask for assistance when needed as you set up a household and a career. We want to be the place you think of first when you need someone to watch your kids while you and your spouse go out on a weekend alone. We want to be the first people you think of when you feel like your back is against the wall and you need someone to intercede in prayer for you, or your family.

While living at home, you will experience the same government there has always been with your parents as President and Vice President of a Republic with it’s foundation the Word of God. We are open to arguments and discussions about family rules or laws, as long as they are done so with respect for the persons who are ultimately responsible to the laws of Man and God for the outcomes—Mom and Dad. We have not codified all of the household laws or rules, but by now you have a good idea what they are.

### **Family Interaction**

Interaction between family members is to be respectful of each other, allowing the other to finish their comments and responding in a manner that is considered polite. We will not stomp out or leave as a way to avoid a discussion that the other family member feels is important but will commit to talk through problems, even if the other family member seems argumentative. If we “mess up”, we will confess our failure rather than lying or attempting to hide the results. We will respect the parents as those whose home we live in and those who are responsible socially and in God’s eyes for the family. We will respect parental

authority as outlined in the Bible. We will not “talk back” in a disrespectful way to each other.

We realize that we do not just sleep in this house, but have a family and a system of authority and a responsibility to attempt to be an integral part of this family. We will keep the family apprised of our plans when away from home—where, when, with whom, and when returning. We will comply with curfews—10pm weekdays and 11pm weekends—in general.

We commit to support each of the other members of this family in any ways we can, with our time, our money, our labors and our prayers.

We will commit to attend church as a family while living at home.

### **Responsibility in Maintenance of our Home and in Developing a Work Ethic**

We will be responsible in performing our chores including participating in a rotating schedule of chores. We will perform these duties realizing that every home, including our own future home, requires a lot of attention to be maintained.

We will apply ourselves to our work and our homework to the best of our ability so that our family and ourselves will be proud of our effort.

We realize that we are not the only ones living in this home and commit to pick up after ourselves and maintain a clean and reasonably orderly room and bathroom.

### **Responsible Recreation**

We realize the importance of relaxation and recreation, but will be responsible in the management of our time so that we do not put relaxation ahead of our other responsibilities as outlined here. We will try to live a lifestyle that does not put “self” first.

### **Social Interactions Outside the Family**

We realize that we represent our family and our God in the community. We will strive to make our actions consistent with those values. We will forgive. We will turn the other cheek. We will realize that each person with whom we interact is a soul loved by God.

We will respect the persons who we go out with on a date and comply with the attached Dating Guidelines.

We realize that our “friends” with whom we spend time, do affect our own behavior and we will seek relationships that do not interfere with our families’ morals. In the same way, the books, music and movies we listen to and read/watch have been proven to affect our behavior and the way we think. So,

we will guard ourselves from entertainment that would undermine our faith and values or suggest irresponsible behaviors.

### **Responsible Driving**

We will maintain our automobile in a reasonable running condition, follow the speed limits, wear seat belts and be sure our passengers are also. We will not have guns in our car unless hunting and with parental approval. We will drive cautiously and carefully to avoid accidental injury to animals and pedestrians, especially on our lane to the house.

### **Financial Responsibility**

We will not steal. We will give our employers an honest hours work for an hours wages. We will honor our families (or future families) by exhibiting the ability to save money as a measure of self-control and the ability to delay gratification. We will give to God, His portion.

### **Protecting our Minds and the Minds of Our Family**

We will have no R-rated movies in our home and commit to not view R-rated movies elsewhere. PG-13 movies will be pre-approved by one of the parents. We will approve music and videos with our parents, until we have demonstrated responsible decision making, and limit our secular entertainment to that which does not promote vulgar language, violence, premarital sex, infidelity or the consumption of alcohol, drugs, etc. We will only use computers that have a filtering program on them to protect us from inadvertent access to inappropriate material, and not use internet or satellite television in our bedrooms.

### **Protecting our Family Physically**

We realize that firearms in the household represent more of a risk for accidental injury than does the risk of an intruder entering the home, especially since we have dogs. We will commit to have limited access to firearms in the household—locked up.

### **In Areas Not Outlined Above**

We will agree to strive to uphold the “10 Commandments” and the “Greatest Commandment”—Love God with all our heart, mind and soul and love our neighbor as ourselves.

Signatures: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Parental Commitments:**

I. We invite you to live at home where we will continue to:

1. Do your laundry with your assistance
2. Fix your vehicle and keep it in general repair (normal maintenance wear and tear including tires)
3. Provide you a room
4. Provide meals, including about \$3-4 a day for lunches when you can't be home
5. Provide your clothing, shoes
6. Pay your Health insurance
7. Pay your Auto insurance
8. Pay your Life insurance
9. Pay your Medical and Dental expenses not covered by insurance
10. Board your animals in exchange for ranch help
11. Pay for accounting services if needed
12. Provide you with tools you need to earn money while living at home—i.e. kennels to raise dogs, pens for horse training, etc. (all subject to approval of course)
13. Provide assistance and reminders to help you manage your money and remember to get to work on time.
14. Guarantee your loans as cosigner for reasonable purchases—i.e. a better, high gas mileage vehicle for college.
15. Assist with budget shortfalls when not related to irresponsible spending—i.e. vacation times, etc.
16. Pay room and board (on campus), tuition and books for the first year to a College of your choice from our list (you can help make up our list). Depending on your effort, we will likely continue to assist you in your educational expenses after the first year—but ONLY in part. It will be your responsibility to assume financial responsibility for your education after your first year as a demonstration of your commitment to complete your education and enter a career that will provide for your future family.

We do NOT have an obligation to give you our blessing and support when you make decisions with which we disagree—BUT we will always, regardless of your decisions, and regardless of your behavior now or ever and regardless of whether you live at home or not, we will always commit to continue to:

- A. Pray for you and your future spouse.
- B. Provide counsel and guidance as you seek it.
- C. Assist in times of hardship.
- D. Give gifts out of love.
- E. Refuse to enable you to do things that are immoral or which undermine the foundations upon which we have built our family—those

religious beliefs and the human rules we have set forth in our family (our Family Constitution).

- F. Stand by reluctantly and watch you make mistakes when we are not allowed to intervene. We will be there with a broom and dust pan to pick up the pieces when you are through, and put bandaids on your wounds. You never break God's laws, you just break yourself against them.

(© 2006, Last updated by Dr. Using as references)

Resource from: [www.Wyomingkidtalk.com](http://www.Wyomingkidtalk.com)

### **Our Family Constitution**

- **Foundation**  
*The Bible is God's communication to us, and we will use it for our standard of morality and spirituality.* Prv. 1:7, 2 Tim 3:16
- **Our conduct**  
*We will strive to conduct our behavior in a manner that would be like Christ.*  
Phil. 1:27, 2:5; Phil. 4:6-8; Col. 3:8-10
- **Treating Others**  
*We will treat each other and our neighbors with love and respect.*  
Phil. 2:3,4; Rom. 12:10, 17; James 4:11; James 1:19; John 13:34
- **Toward Authorities**  
*We will respect all authorities, knowing they are given by God.*  
Rom. 13:1; 1Peter 2:13
- **Forgiveness**  
*We must be willing to forgive others as Christ has forgiven us.*  
1John 1:9; Matt. 18:20-22, 34-35
- **The World**  
*We are not to conform to or love this world, but have the mind of Christ.*  
Rom. 12:1-2; 1John 2:15-16