

PARENTLIFE NEWSLETTER

May 2011

for Parents of Junior and Senior Highers



Bible Focus

“Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it.”

Proverbs 22:6

Student Ministries
Glen Ellyn Bible Church

 **GLEN ELLYN**
BIBLE CHURCH
501 Hillside Ave
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
630.469.2964
www.gebible.org

PARENTS PLAY KEY ROLE IN TEENAGERS' FAITH GROWTH

When children morph into teenagers, many parents feel like they've lost their ability to influence them. But nothing is further from the truth. In fact, recent studies show that parents make a lasting impact on teenagers *and* that kids value parents' input and involvement.

Nowhere is this more important than in faith growth. Families are key to teenagers' Christian identity. When parents exhibit "all in" behavior, it's hard for kids to resist. Here are essential ways to nurture your teenagers spiritually as they're growing physically:

1. Lead by example. Let your life speak louder than your words.
2. Connect with your kids. They want relationships with purposeful engagement.
3. Help them understand and articulate their beliefs.
4. Make faith relevant. Provide bridges between biblical truth and everyday life.
5. Pray for your kids—and help them listen to God's leading.

INTRO FROM DAN .02

TEENAGE SPIRITUALITY .03

PREPARE YOUR TEENS .04

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT .06

TIPS

In his groundbreaking book *Soul Searching*, researcher Christian Smith offers parents this advice:

Challenge your teenagers in their faith walk. Don't be afraid of them—or afraid of teaching or relating to them.

Don't worry about not seeming "cool" when you relate important truths to your teenagers.

Nurture your overall relationship. Teenagers benefit the most from significant bonds with mature, loving adults. Kids want to have respected grown-ups spend time with them "through the stuff of their ordinary lives," Smith says.

Get involved with your church's youth ministry. For better or worse, you're the most important "pastor" your teenagers will ever have.

Look for ways to get involved with faith-formation efforts in the community, school, and church.

Give kids opportunities to practice, practice, practice articulating their faith. Walk through scenarios where kids can talk about their beliefs.

JUNIOR HIGH DIRECTOR DAN RIEMER INTRODUCES THE NEW PARENTLIFE!

Well if you haven't already noticed, our **ParentLife Newsletter** has taken a new shape and form this month. We have partnered with Simply Youth Ministry and Group to bring you a "new and improved" **ParentLife** full of applicable information for any parent who has students in Junior High or in High School. As we launch an Equipping Vision church-wide, Antho and I want to offer you as parents resources that will help you grow in your relationship with your student, but also be in the "know" about upcoming events and cultural trends that your kids may be involved in. Additionally, as part of this newsletter, Simply Youth Ministry and Group has provided professional reviews of both secular and Christian music and movies.

We hope that you will find this a valuable resource as you engage daily with your children. We also would welcome your feedback on our new format and content! If there are specific areas you and other parents would like to see information on, we will do our best to provide that in these updates.

Thank you for allowing us to partner with you in this adventure of shepherding your students. Let us know if there are other ways in which we can equip or be a resource to and for you!

JUNIOR HIGH MINISTRY UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNIOR HIGH SPRING OUTREACH EVENT

Saturday, May 14 @ 4:30 p.m.-11:00 p.m.

This event is a great opportunity for you to invite your friends from school, sports, etc. and come out for a fun night and hear about Jesus! We will meet at GEBC and take a bus to Chasers Laser Tag in Aurora and then to the YMCA in Glen Ellyn (Climbing Wall, Basketball, Wallyball, XBOX, Wii, and more!). We will have a ton of food and plenty of stuff to give away! **Cost is \$25 per person** (discounts given for each friend you bring!). Register by contacting **Carol Getz**. You must complete the required **Permission Slip** and bring it with you.

Cost for Yourself= \$25

You + 1 new friend = \$45 (That's \$22.50 each!)

You + 2 new friends = \$60 (That's \$20 each!)

You + 3 new friends = \$72 (That's \$18 each!)

8TH GRADE GRAD & DUCT TAPE BANQUET

Sunday, May 22 @ 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Here we go, round two of the ultimate duct tape costume contest! That means it's time to start saving your pennies for the wackiest Duct Tape money can buy! This is also our time to celebrate our 8th grade students as they graduate and move on to high school this summer. **7th graders bring appetizers and 6th graders bring desserts to share!**



Junior High Ministry

SENIOR HIGH MINISTRY UPCOMING EVENTS

SUMMIT MOVIE NIGHT

Wednesday, May 18 @ 6:30-9:00 p.m.

(Note: We will meet 30 minutes earlier than usual to allow for plenty of time to see the movie)

We'll be watching the movie, "End of the Spear" in the Student Ministry Room. Invite your friends!

SUMMIT END OF YEAR PARTY

Wednesday, June 8, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Meet at Elise Almer's (1415 Lakeside Dr. in Wheaton) for a BBQ and games. Bring \$5 for food.

POOL PARTY!

Saturday, June 11 @ 8:00-10:00 p.m.

Lying out by the pool in the night sky, swimming, enjoying the good life...come to Sunset Pool in Glen Ellyn. Invite your friends and bring a snack to share. Cost is \$5.

SUMMIT GRADUATION CELEBRATION

Wednesday, July 27 @ 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Student Ministry Room



Senior High Ministry



By Steve Merritt

GOING DEEPER-TEENAGE SPIRITUALITY

EXPERT INSIGHTS FOR PARENTS OF TEENAGERS

At *SimplyYouthMinistry.com*, youth-culture expert Walt Mueller discusses teenage spirituality:

Generally speaking, today's teens are a consciously spiritual bunch. They're on a deliberate quest to understand and embrace faith. While this is good news, it comes with distinctive issues related to our unique culture. Because swimming in the soup of our postmodern times is pushing more kids away from a belief in absolute truth, orthodox biblical Christianity is often looked down on with scorn. Christians believe they alone have spiritual truth, so more kids are struggling with that exclusivity.

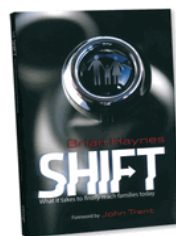
In addition, the postmodern emphasis on feelings above rationality leads teenager to look for a faith system that's emotional. Globalization and immigration have opened the door for a variety of previously foreign and unfamiliar faith systems, especially eastern spirituality and mysticism, to find a new home in American youth culture.

All this has combined to create an environment where kids step up to the spiritual buffet table to load their

plates with a personally created faith system that combines a variety of elements into a personal mix put together to satisfy their spiritual palate and hunger. Varied day-to-day tastes allow them to change from day to day.

Parents must consistently discuss and live out the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. We were made to follow him—and him alone. Young people won't be able to experience a full relationship with God until they leave the "buffet table" behind.

RESOURCE



In *Shift* (Group), Pastor Brian Haynes offers practical ways that parents can guide their kids through important faith milestones.

PREPARE YOUR TEENAGERS FOR LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Expert Insights for Parents of Teenagers

Making the transition to college (or the world of full-time work) is a major step not only for young people but also for their parents. It's what many people view as the "end" of their major parenting duties. But in fact, your kids need you now more than ever. As high school seniors start to grasp their move to adulthood, many feel compelled to re-engage their parents in meaningful ways—though they rarely admit it.

Parents can use this brief window of opportunity to strengthen their relationship with their teenagers and also to help their teenagers strengthen their relationship with God. Ideas for doing this include:

- Spend one-on-one time with your soon-to-be-graduate, possibly at a retreat-like setting. Make fun memories, share a meal, and engage in discussions about life beyond high school.
- Embrace the emerging adult lurking inside your teenager. Begin talking to him or her more as an "equal," sharing your own stories of stepping out into the real world.
- Connect your kids with thriving college-age adults. Seek your youth minister's help to provide positive examples and mentors.



THE VIEW

- Although estimates of faith abandonment by college students run as high as 94%, some researchers show otherwise. They say college attendance can actually *prevent* young people from losing their faith. According to one study, 86% of college students retain their religious affiliation.

(University of Texas, Austin)

- Attendance at religious services decreases dramatically between the freshmen and junior years in college, yet older students consider themselves to be more "spiritual."

(UCLA Higher Education Research Institute)

HOW TO KEEP THE FAITH

Dare 2 Share founder Greg Stier suggests ways you can prepare to help kids "keep the faith" in college:

- Wake up! Be aware of the statistics, which show that up to 50% of evangelical college freshman forsake their faith by their senior year of college.
- Prepare! Make sure your teenagers know *what* they believe, *why* they believe, and *that* they believe. Train them to know and live the core truths of Christianity.
- Discuss! Sign your kids up for Soul Fuel at www.dare2share.org. These free training devotions deal with Christian basics in a powerful, relevant way. You can discuss them together each week.
- Talk! Have conversations with your teenagers about the temptations that await them. If you suspect your kids won't be able to withstand the onslaught, consider sending them to a solid Christian college. The odds go way up for long-term commitment to Jesus in a thriving Christian setting.



HOW TO CONNECT AT COLLEGE

By Chuck Bomar

At *SimplyYouthMinistry.com*, author and pastor Chuck Bomar explores ways that young people can connect at college:

College-age kids are about to enter some new struggles. This next stage can be tough and lonely. Getting involved in a campus ministry is key not only for making it through but also for possibly helping young people dodge obstacles and challenges.

Many great Christian campus ministries are active on college campuses. Here are some thoughts on them that are worth exploring:

They provide a community of friends that can be very healthy. These people can serve as a great source of accountability and connection. Some could become best friends with your kids.

They offer exposure to people who have completely different church and family backgrounds and who view things entirely differently from your student. Kids are forced to think through why they believe what they believe—possibly for the first time.

Most of these ministries have a mission on campus. This is great because college students often tend to lose their sense

of mission. They'll be focused on themselves, homework, and social activities and can easily lose sight of the fact that people need to know what they know—the gospel. So ministries can really encourage young people to stay strong. When God places young people on a college campus, they should embrace the experience with everything they have. Encourage your teenagers to get involved, meet people, and make waves for Christ.

BIBLE FOCUS

For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord.

"They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

RESOURCE



By Alex McFarland—Everyone has choices. When you get to college, those choices will have an impact on your future and will shape the rest of your life. So how can you prepare for the academic, social, emotional, and spiritual challenges you will face in college? Prepare to stand strong!

M MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

MAINSTREAM MUSIC



AVRIL LAVIGNE

Background: This Canadian artist began her career at 16. Her pop-punk style plugs into teenage angst, relationships, and the skater/punk culture. Lavigne's new single "What the Hell" showcases her use of bad language to convey her point. Lavigne's charity has partnered with Easter Seals and Make-A-Wish.

Albums: *Goodbye Lullaby* (2011), *The Best Damn Thing* (2007), *Let Go* (2002)

What Lavigne Says: "I try to remember that even doing one small thing each day to help others really can make a huge difference."

Discussion Questions:

Why do people give to charities? Do Christians have more of a responsibility to help people in need? Why or why not? Read aloud Deuteronomy 15:7-11. What are some reasons people give for not being more charitable? How can you become more charitable?

CHRISTIAN MUSIC



KIRK FRANKLIN

Background: Franklin directed church choirs at a young age, but a rebellious streak in high school led to a pregnant girlfriend. He's led popular groups such as One Nation Crew but also had great solo success. Recently, Franklin admitted a porn addiction that nearly cost him his marriage.

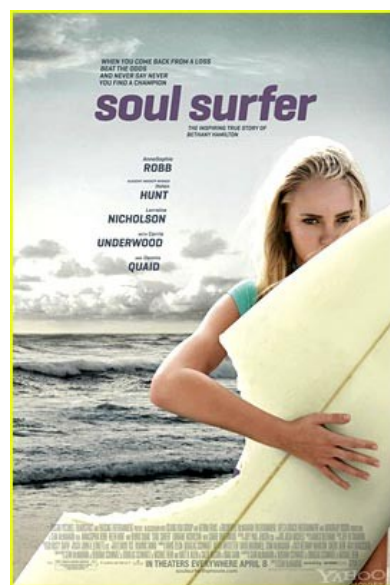
Albums: *Hello Fear* (2011), *The Fight of My Life* (2007), *The Nu Nation Project* (1988)

What Franklin Says: "Let's say that you're healed from your past, but [you're] associated with someone else that's not healed. So when you run into that person ...it can maybe strike up something."

Discussion Questions:

Describe someone who's positively influenced you. Should we stay clear of people who aren't Christians? Why or why not? Read aloud Matthew 16:5-12. What "yeast" is Jesus talking about? How can we guard against the bad yeast we encounter?

MOVIE



Movie: *Soul Surfer*

Genre: Drama

Rating: PG

Synopsis: This film is based on the true story of surfer Bethany Hamilton, who lost her arm in a 2003 shark attack. The story shows how Bethany's faith kept her strong amid loss.

Discussion Questions: If you were in Bethany's situation, would you give up doing what you loved? Why or why not? What are some things you trust in? How would you change if you lost those things? Read aloud Matthew 7:24-27. Why doesn't belief in God keep life's storms from happening to us? What are some storms you've experienced? How has your faith helped you weather them?

For more media discussions and ideas, check out www.MinistryandMedia.com.



Bulletstorm —This game for Xbox 360, PS3, and PCs is more than your usual first-person shooter. While some games rated M could arguably be okay for older teenagers (*Halo: Reach*, for instance), *Bulletstorm* should be kept far, far away. In addition to the intense violence, the game is hypersexualized, with achievements that have sexual slang terms, such as "gang bang" and "three-way." With these phrases being uttered every few seconds on the screen, impressionable teenagers can't help but be desensitized.

M MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

MAINSTREAM MUSIC



BEASTIE BOYS

Background: This 25-year-old hip-hop band shows no sign of slowing down. Influential and successful, they've won numerous accolades. Recently, they've supported a free Tibet. Although the band's subject matter has matured, they use course language to get points across.

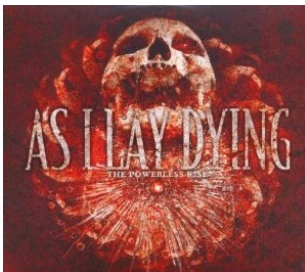
Albums: *Hot Sauce Committee Part 2* (2011), *To the 5 Boroughs* (2004), *Ill Communication* (1994)

What Beastie Boys Says:

"[We're] caught up in all these ideas that having a lot of money or having somebody beautiful to have sex with or having some cool objects... [will] make us happy," says founding member Adam Yauch. "[But] ... compassion or altruism actually brings a person happiness."

Discussion Questions: Why don't the world's sources of happiness always succeed? What makes you happy, and why? Read Matthew 5:1-10. How is Jesus' idea of happiness different from the world's? How might Jesus' concepts of happiness change your life? What is the source of true happiness?

CHRISTIAN MUSIC



AS I LAY DYING

Background: Despite the niche style of this metalcore band, their fourth album reached #8 on the Billboard 200 and #1 on the Top Rock chart. All the members are Christians, and their crossover success lets them share their faith.

Albums: *The Powerless Rise* (2010), *An Ocean Between Us* (2007), *Shadows Are Security* (2005)

What As I Lay Dying Says:

"We don't really call ourselves a Christian band," says drummer Jordan Mancino. "We're musicians who happen to be Christian. Obviously, being Christian is the main focus of our lives."

Discussion Questions: Do you prefer to listen to "Christian" bands? Why or why not? If people don't broadcast their faith, are they hiding from it? Explain. Read Mark 8:34-38. Is being a Christian the main focus of your life? Why or why not? What are some natural ways to show your faith?

MOVIE



Movie: *Thor*

Genre: Action-Adventure

Rating: PG-13

Synopsis: When the son of the king of gods is forced to come to earth as a man, he learns the meaning of "hero."

Discussion Questions: Thor was forced to come to earth and become a mortal; did Jesus have a choice to become a man? Why would someone give up that position of authority and humble himself? What makes someone a hero? Can you be scared and still be a hero? Explain. Read John 3:16. What was heroic about Jesus coming to earth?

For more media discussions and ideas, go to www.MinistryandMedia.com.



L.A. Noire— In this multiplatform game from Rockstar Games—maker of the infamous "Grand Theft Auto" series—you're a police officer in 1940s Los Angeles, trying to solve a series of murders. This is a change from a company that usually has you playing a bad guy who murders people. Players interview subjects and inspect crime scenes as they piece together the puzzle of these murders. The game uses groundbreaking technology to capture every aspect of the actors playing the characters. Rated: M for Mature.