



THE

PARENT UPDATE

West Side Youth Ministry

February 2016

Jake Greer

Hello WSYM Family! Wow! I was warned about the months leading up to CHRIS^Teens, but now experiencing them personally has really been an adventure! I am super excited about CT16 and I hope you are too! Please be praying for all those that will be making their way to Russellville in a couple weeks and also for our group. This is not only a great opportunity to serve a great multitude of people, but it is also an amazing opportunity for each one of us to grow in Christ and in knowledge of his Word! There are signup sheets in the foyer for housing, ushering, and for helping sell CT merch. If you can help any of those ways, please go sign up for let me know. Be looking for more announcements concerning 'week of' set up soon! Love you guys!



UPCOMING EVENTS

CT Celebration

Saturday, February 20, 2016 at 7:00 PM to Saturday, February 20, 2016 at 9:00 PM

This Saturday we will be celebrating 30 years of CHRIS^Teens! Please join us at 7:00PM in the Family Center for desserts and refreshments.

CT16 Work Nights

Tuesday, March 1, 2016 at 5:00 PM to Thursday, March 3, 2016 at 10:00 PM

Show ready to work! Help set up the CftA for CT16. More info coming soon!

CHRIS^Teens 2016 // LOGOS

Friday, March 4, 2016 at 7:00 PM to Sunday, March 6, 2016 at 1:00 PM

CHRIS^Teens is a youth conference hosted by the West Side Church of Christ in Russellville, Arkansas.

Need more info? Email me at jake@westsidear.org or visit us at www.westsideyouthministry.org

Now What? Study Examines Teen Pornography Attitudes and Use

HomeWord.com

A new study released by the Josh McDowell Ministry has unveiled current findings about teens and young adults, and pornography. According to the ministry's press release, the study is the "most comprehensive, in-depth and wide-ranging study to date on pornography among the American population."

Key findings of the new study included:

- Twice as many young adults ages 25-30 first viewed pornography before puberty than did the previous generation (Gen X).
- Teens aged 13-17 are watching more pornography and seeking it out more than any other generation, with 8% viewing porn daily, 18% weekly, and 17% once or twice a month.
- 8% of teens say they come across porn daily even when they aren't seeking it out, 21% do so weekly, and 21% say they do so once or twice a week.
- When teens talk about pornography with friends, 90% say they do so in an either neutral, accepting, or encouraging way.
- Less than one-third (32%) of teens and young adults say that viewing pornography is "usually or always wrong" compared to more than half (56%) who say not recycling is "usually or always wrong."
- Only one in 10 teens say their friends think viewing pornography is a bad thing.
- Most teens and young adults have been involved in "sexting," with 66% saying they have received a sexually explicit image, and 41% have sent one.

Now What?

- Assume your teen will be exposed to pornography on a regular basis (whether intentionally or unintentionally.)
- Understand the difference between a teen that stumbles upon online pornography and a teen that seeks it out. React appropriately based on behavior.
- Make discussing pornography a topic of discussion with your teens.
- Set clear expectations for online behavior regarding pornography.
- If your teen is regularly viewing pornography consider using an accountability tool such as the ones found on xxxchurch.com.

How to Create a Family Constitution

Jim Burns

The Constitution of the United States of America documents the foundational laws for governing our country. These are the basic, or essential, rules from which our government derives other laws. If a

constitution is important for a country, then why don't more parents create a family constitution for their families? I encourage you to gather your family and create your own family constitution.

How? Here are some ideas and an example of what your family constitution might look like. First, be sure to let your children take an active part in the process. Next, brainstorm a list of your family's values and desires and then find words that describe what you want your family to stand for. Then, when you complete your family constitution, post it on your refrigerator where everyone can be reminded of it. Don't be surprised if from time to time, a family member needs to be reminded of the commitments your family has made to one another to live by the constitution.

Example: The Burns Family Constitution

We, the Burns family, believe that God loves us and has demonstrated His love to us in many ways, including His provision of standards that should guide our own attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, seeking to both please God and to benefit our family, we enter into and agree to pursue the following ideals in our relationships with one another - as well as with those outside of our family.

- We believe in the importance of respecting, honoring, and affirming one another.
- We believe in the importance of expressing warmth and affection towards one another.
- We resolve to believe the best about one another. We will strive to maintain an atmosphere of trust. When trust is broken, we will provide opportunity for trust to be regained.
- We believe in the importance of truth and integrity.
- We shall pursue maturity in our spiritual lives, evidenced by the Fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- We resolve to provide support and encouragement to one another in both good times and in bad times.
- We value spending time together.
- We believe that everyone in our family must make contributions and at times, even personal sacrifices to benefit the family, keeping us healthy and strong.
- We resolve to display a spirit of generosity towards one another.
- We resolve to maintain our family values and follow our moral code.

Five Ways Busy Parents Can Reprioritize Their Lives

Jim Burns

Of the 24 hours - the 1,440 minutes - available to us each day, parents actually spend very little time with their children. Remember, all we have is right now. So, how about you? What does how you spend your time say about your priorities? Do you need a little help getting your priorities straight? Here are five ways you can reprioritize your life:

1. Ruthlessly Eliminate Stress. No one can get their priorities straight if they're constantly living "under the gun." If there's so much stress in your life that you're finding it difficult to keep your priorities in order, lighten your load first - and now!
2. Make Daily Solitude a Priority. Don't let guilt make you feel like you're "avoiding your family" for taking time for yourself each day. It's a must, even if it's just 15 minutes in the morning for "quiet

time" with the Lord. No one will miss you if you "take 5" for yourself every now and then.

3. Develop a "Blank Slate" Approach. Begin and end each day with no agenda. Come before the Lord with open arms, hands, and an open mind and heart each morning. Let Him set your day in motion and then give everything back to Him at the end of each day - all your worries, cares, successes, failures. Exchange them for a good night's sleep. (See Psalm 91:1.)

4. Give Your Family Your Best, Not Just Your "Emotional Leftovers." It may be noble to "give your all" at work. But what does that leave for your spouse and kids? Not much? Not good! Your family deserves the best you have to offer. They need you healthy, rested, happy, or perhaps more importantly, content. Don't just leave "table scraps" from your heart for them. Give them the main course. Then, watch how your priorities change by themselves!

5. Don't Wait. This is your life and these should be your priorities. If you're waiting for someone else to come alongside you and tell you how to live your life, you're in for a long wait. The time to make the changes is now—so get to it!

Reprioritizing your life doesn't have to be difficult. But, if you're like most of us, it does need to be done every now and then. And, with God's help, you can do it!

Building Trust with Kids Requires Your Honesty

Jim Burns

In addressing the relationship between parents and their teenagers, often the emphasis focuses on helping teens build more trust with their parents. But the truth is that many kids don't trust their parents! What is it that causes teens not to trust their parents? In my experience, most teenagers identify the source of their lack of trust in parents as the result of seeing firsthand that their parents are less than honest with them. Jesus commands His followers, "Simply let your 'yes' be 'yes,' and your 'no' be 'no'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one." (Matthew 5:37.) Let's face facts: no parent is perfect. Still, as parents we are called to live our lives with integrity. Because we serve as our children's role models for life and faith, we need to be very careful in how we live our lives before our kids. Your kids don't need your perfection, they need your honesty, and especially when you fail to follow through on something you said you would do. How can you increase your "honesty" quotient and, as a result, your trust level with your kids?


1. Think before you promise. Ask yourself, "If I make this promise, can I keep my word?"

2. If you can't keep your word, don't promise. It's much better to say, "I'm going to try my hardest to get to your game tomorrow, but I can't promise you I'll make it" and not make it, than to say, "I'll be there for sure!" and not show up.

3. Think before you act. When it occurs to you that you can't keep your word, be sure to evaluate the message it will send your son or daughter. Then, consider how you can minimize the resulting damage if you truly can't keep your verbal commitment.

4. Ask for your child's forgiveness when you fail to keep your word. Don't sweep your failures under the carpet. Face them head on. Apologize and ask for forgiveness.

Honesty and integrity are two vital parts of trust in any relationship. Keeping your word with your kids is always the best policy. When your track record as a parent is one of consistent honesty, trust



between you and your teen will grow.