

FAMILIES & FAITH

WALT MUELLER, CPYU President



YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

“It’s not shameful. For anybody that wants to reach out to somebody but doesn’t really know how because they’re too proud or they think that they’ll be looked upon as weak, it’s not a shameful thing to say. It’s not a shameful thing to share.”

Sarah Hyland, speaking about her failed kidney transplant, suicidal thoughts, and the importance of reaching out to others, *SELF*, December 10, 2018



My father prayed fervently for me when I was growing up. There were two prayers for me in particular that were at the top of his list. No, they weren’t that I would grow up to make lots of money and be a success in the eyes of the world. Rather, his first prayer was that I would grow up to love, serve, and honor Jesus Christ. And second, he prayed that I would marry a girl who would do the same.

God has been gracious to me and has honored the prayers of my father. Now, as a father and grandfather myself, I continue to pray my father’s prayers for my own children and grandchildren. If our lives are first and foremost meant to be lived in a relationship with God, it makes sense that Christian parents desire above all else that their children grow up to love and serve Jesus Christ. And beyond our prayers, what are some other ways that we can pass on our faith?

For almost four decades, researcher Vern Bengston and his team have been studying more than 350 families to discover how faith is and is not passed from one generation to another. His fascinating book, *Families and Faith: How Religion is Passed Down Across Generations* offers several helpful insights to people like you and me who desire more than anything else to see our children embrace and grow in their faith. Here are five of the elements of effective faith-legacy that Bengston identifies.

First, parents must realize that they have more influence on their kids than they

think. In fact, the single most important factor in the spiritual development of a child is their parents. While your children cannot inherit what is not yours, the opposite is true. A vibrant parental faith is necessary in order to leave a strong spiritual legacy.

Second, fathers must not only be actively growing in their own faith, but they must be present and active in their child’s life. Dad, you need to be fostering a close, positive, and affirming relationship with your kids.

Third, children need room to ask questions and even doubt their faith. Not only are they beginning to think for themselves as they move through adolescence, but the process of engaging with questions and doubts is an important step in allowing them to make the faith their own.

Fourth, grandparents who are followers of Christ play a powerful role when they seek to be present, active, and engaged in their grandchildren’s lives.

And finally, remaining hopeful and long-suffering when your child wanders from the faith is a key element in seeing your prodigal son or daughter return home. Keep praying for them. Keep living out your faith. Keep loving them. Trust God to bring them home in His time.

Parents, our calling is to pursue our relationship with God, endeavoring to be faithful and obedient in our relationship with Him. Your kids are watching. . . and learning. ✨

Most Popular Items Children Saved Their Allowance For

Kids ages 4-14
Source:
Rooster Money



1. *Phone*
2. *Lego*
3. *Tablet*
4. *Nintendo Switch*
5. *Dolls/Action Figures*
6. *Xbox*
7. *Bike*
8. *Books*
9. *NERF Toys*
10. *Computer*



QUICK STATS

62.2% of tweens and 70.5% of teens experienced cyberbullying (as a bully, victim or witness).

31.9% of tweens and 45.6% of teens engaged in online conversations about depression and/or anxiety.

59.6% of tweens and 75.8% of teens engaged in online conversations surrounding illegal drugs/alcohol.

(Bark's 2018 Children & Teen Cyber Fact Sheet)

FROM THE NEWS:

BEHAVIOR, DISCIPLINE, and CONSEQUENCES

Late last year, a news story out of Ohio went viral. The story centered on a video posted by the father of a ten-year-old girl who made her daughter walk five miles to school. Following slowly in his car, the father narrated his video, explaining why he was making his daughter walk to school. It seems that she had been taken off the bus by school officials because she had been bullying a classmate. Rather than driving his daughter to school, dad determined that she needed to be disciplined. In the video, he explained that he would not tolerate his daughter bullying anyone, and that she needed to learn that her behavior was wrong. We applaud this dad for loving his daughter enough to discipline her in this way. We live in a day and age where way too many parents coddle their kids by covering for them when they have done something wrong. Parents, we are given responsibility by God to nurture and discipline our children towards Godliness. Are you preparing your kids for a lifetime of Godliness?

TRENDS:
VAPING

With the advent and spread of electronic cigarettes and vaping devices over the last few years, some people laud the technology as a safer alternative to conventional tobacco-filled cigarettes. That's turned out to not be the case. Now, the FDA is sounding the alarm about a youth vaping epidemic. Last year, the FDA announced that manufacturers of vaping devices were required to submit significant and robust plans to prevent youth vaping. Nearly 12% of high school students and 3% of middle students report using the battery operated devices to inhale liquid-based and flavored nicotine vapors in the past 30 days. The devices and vaping liquids are easy to obtain, and their brightly-colored packaging makes them especially attractive to kids. Parents, educate yourselves on the dangers of these devices. Set borders and boundaries for your kids. Monitor their behavior. And most of all, teach them to steward their God-given bodies and health.



LATEST RESEARCH:

TEEN SPENDING AND CREDIT CARDS

When shopping was typically done in a brick and mortar store, it wasn't unusual to see a child or teen asking or even begging their parent to get out their wallet and purchase some item. Now that we are shopping more and more online, our teens are doing the same. But because online shopping transactions can't be completed with cash, kids are turning to their parents and asking for the credit card. Research is telling us that 52% of parents let their kids under the age of 18 use their credit cards to make online purchases. In addition, one-third of parents are reporting that their children have used their credit card to make an online purchase without their parents' permission. Parents need to monitor their children's spending so that decisions which reflect good stewardship are being made. And, we should never put a credit card in an unsupervised child's hands. We need to teach our children how to glorify God with their spending, because, after all, we all are just stewards of God's resources.

CPYU'S
DIGITAL
KIDS
INITIATIVE

www.DigitalKidsInitiative.com

Internet, Self-Harm, Suicide and Identity

by Walt Mueller



Perhaps you've heard it said that you can find anything on the Internet. For our curious kids who are on a path to answering the questions "Who am I?" and "What do I believe?", the Internet serves as a powerful educator. What they encounter and engage with online does shape beliefs and behaviors.

Researchers in the U.K. have made a connection with how the Internet fuels adolescent anxiety and insecurities, and the rise in self-harm among teenagers. Specifically, the research found that one in seven children and young people have attempted self-harm or suicide, most commonly through taking high quantities of the common and easily-obtained pain reliever known as acetaminophen.

The current crisis in mental health among kids should not only drive us to our knees to pray for our kids, but should trigger our deliberate efforts to connect with kids, listen to kids, love kids, and lead kids to the hope and healing that comes through finding one's identity and peace in Jesus Christ alone.

New Podcast

Youth Culture Matters

is a long-format podcast from CPYU, co-hosted by Walt Mueller and Jason Soucinek.



Listen at
www.cpyu.org/podcast.

Be sure to check out
**Episode 75 for a discussion
about anxiety with CPYU's
Walt Mueller.**

FROM THE WORD

There's a reason why our world is saturated with advertising. Because we are broken people who long to be made whole, we are easily led to believe that accumulating the right combination of experiences and stuff can somehow lead to a fulfilling and satisfied life. But the 4,000 to 10,000 marketing messages we see each and every day continue to influence us for the simple reason that nothing an ad sells can ultimately fill the God-shaped hole in our soul. And so we keep watching, listening, believing, and buying. Because they're growing up in a youth culture where marketers go to great lengths to influence them, our kids get caught up in this endless rat race from an early age.

**"FOR WHAT WILL IT PROFIT
A MAN IF HE GAINS THE
WHOLE WORLD AND
FORFEITS HIS SOUL?"**

MATTHEW 16:26

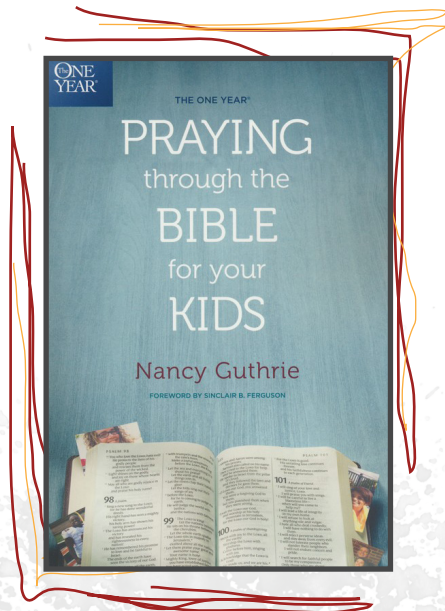
By no means is this a new battle unique to our modern times. Two-thousand years ago, Jesus instructed his followers to give up their way of living and adopt his way of living. . . a way marked by taking up one's cross and following in his footsteps. To do otherwise might seem like the path to an abundant life, but it is actually the path to our ultimate demise. He continues to warn his followers today to avoid the empty promises of the world when the world tells us what will lead to wholeness and happiness. Instead, by losing everything for his sake we stand to gain everything!

For parents, this can be a difficult pill to swallow. We don't like thinking about the possibility that our son or daughter might have to lose their lives to follow Jesus. Instead, we should consider the temporal value of having much in this life, compared to the eternal value of following Jesus. Are you modeling this kind of life in front of your kids? If not, what adjustments must you make? And are you praying to place your kids in God's hands rather than in your own?

HELPFUL RESOURCE ←

As parents we want to protect our children; we want them to move forward in life; most importantly, we want them to take hold of and grow in Christ. And while the advice offered by parenting experts can be helpful, at some point we realize there are no simplistic formulas or sure-fire methods. We need wisdom from God's Word for this all-important task.

In *The One Year Praying through the Bible for Your Kids*, trusted author Nancy Guthrie weaves together wisdom and insight from each day's reading in *The One Year Bible*, providing encouragement through the triumphs and turbulence of parenting. Day by day you'll find your dreams and desires for your children are becoming shaped more by Scripture than by the culture around you. Worry less, pray more, and help yourself to a daily dose of perspective, hope, and grace as you parent.



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