

# CPYU PARENT PAGE

THE CENTER FOR PARENT/YOUTH  
UNDERSTANDING

Helping **parents** understand **teenagers** and their world

## YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

WE'VE GOT TIME!

“We have decades of psychological research that tell us that there are two things that make an enormous difference in terms of helping children along. And they're warmth and structure. So in all of the challenges we are facing, those are what parents should focus on. Really making sure home is a compassionate and friendly place and that life is predictable, that there are routines that kids can count on whatever comes their way.”

Psychologist Lisa Damour on preventing a mental health crisis in children and adolescents during the Pandemic and beyond, CBS News, August 5, 2020.



Since we're all tempted to fall into a state of anxiety and lament over how the pandemic has changed our lives as a result of some very real and legitimate difficulties, I want to encourage you to sit your parental self down each and every day to take a few minutes to talk yourself out of seeing these present circumstances as an inconvenience to be eliminated, but rather to see them as an opportunity to be seized. The reality is that God in His providence has given us this gift of forced-concentrated time with our families as a real side-benefit to this ugly pandemic.

I remember hearing the late Senator from Massachusetts, Paul Tsongas, say that “Nobody on their deathbed ever said ‘I wish I had spent more time at the office.’” The reality is that when the time comes to reflect back on one's life and how they spent their time, most wind up regretting the fact that they didn't invest more time in their families, particularly their kids. Well... a huge chunk of time has been dropped in our laps... and we would all be foolish to waste it.

Could it be that “social-distancing” is facilitating “family closeness”? Activity cancellations, postponements, and quarantines are forcing us into what we should have already been embracing as a top priority. Let me suggest that for Christian parents, there are three particular ways you can use this opportunity to invest in your kids.

**First, take time to talk.** I was recently moved and challenged by a TV scene where two old friends sat at a bar lamenting how their lives and families hadn't turned out as they had planned. The one turned to the other and asked, “When was the last time you sat at the dinner table and asked your kids, ‘How was your day?’” The question was met with a deafening silence. The inquisitor then

said, “Me too.” Take the time to ask probing questions of your kids. . . and then sit back and listen. (Download CPYU's *Building Healthy Family Communication* handout on our website or by scanning the QR code found here.)



**Second, take time to tell.** We all have histories. Great lessons are learned from sharing stories of the ups and downs we've experienced in our own lives through our circumstances and choices. In generations past, there was not TV, radio, or internet telling the stories that would shape young lives. Families would be shaped by one generation passing on life lessons to following generations through the telling of stories. Even though our story-telling muscles may have atrophied due to lack of use, we need to start exercising those muscles, bringing them back to life with each other again.

**Third, take time to teach.** We must share the Psalmist's commitment if we hope to see our kids come to faith and grow in their relationship with Christ: “O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come” (Psalm 71:17&18). Dig deep into God's Word and teach what you are learning to your kids.

The statesman Charles Francis Adams once wrote this short entry in his daily journal: “Went fishing with my son today. A day wasted.” On that same day, his son penned these words in his journal: “Went fishing with my father today. The greatest day of my life.” There's a lesson in there for us! ★

WALT MUELLER, CPYU President

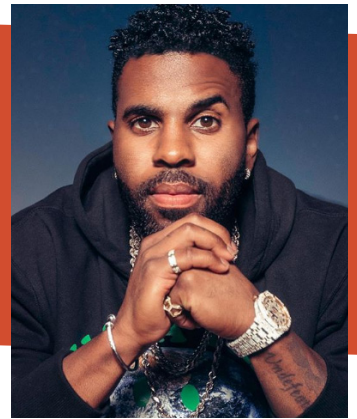


Who've Scored  
Hot 100 Top 10  
Hits Across the  
Past 3 Decades

All Artists Have a Hot 100 Top  
10 Hit in the '00s, '10s & '20s  
Source:  
Billboard Magazine



1. **Taylor Swift**
2. **Jason Derulo**
3. **Mariah Carey**
4. **Maroon 5**
5. **Drake**
6. **Eminem**
7. **Lady Gaga**
8. **Beyonce**
9. **Lil Wayne**
10. **Chris Brown**



## QUICK STATS

By the time they turn 5, 53% of children of cohabiting parents will have experienced their parents' separation; among 5-year-olds with married parents, this is 15%.

(Centre for Social Justice report titled Family Structure Still Matters)

Teens and young adults who vape are 5x more likely to become infected with the coronavirus compared with those who did not use e-cigarettes. (Journal of Adolescent Health)

## FROM THE NEWS:

### UNDERAGE DRINKING AT HOME

*Researchers in Ireland have found that well-meaning parents who allow their underage children to drink at home are sowing the seeds of alcohol addiction in their kids.*

They warn that early exposure to drinking can create a huge likelihood of full-blown addiction later in life. And, once kids start to drink at home, they are more likely to believe that this gives them permission to drink outside the home. Counselors responding to the report say that many of the adult addicts they treat started taking drugs and alcohol at an early age. One counselor says, "If you start using Cannabis before the age of fifteen, you increase your risk of addiction by four times by the age of twenty-six." Parents, there might not be a more unwise and foolish parenting practice than this one. If you truly love the Lord and love your kids, be wise and guide your kids on the same path.



TRENDS:  
**SUFFERING**

Are you teaching your kids to suffer well? On several occasions Jesus told his followers that they could expect pain and persecution. The Psalms are full of the moans and laments of human suffering and emotional misery. But all of God's Word points to the fact that God does not leave us alone in times of trouble. In the midst of intense personal pain the psalmist would write these words: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." "The Lord will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life." Our parental example should teach our children how to

handle the difficulties that life sends our way. As we model the Christian way to handle pain and suffering, our children will grow up learning that they must place full reliance and dependence on God, even when they can't see the light at the end of the tunnel.



## LATEST RESEARCH:

**BODY IMAGE & DISSATISFACTION WITH BODIES**

54% of our girls and 41% of our boys are dissatisfied with their bodies. 81% of our girls are afraid of being fat. 50% of girls believe they should be on a diet. And 50% of boys believe they should have more muscle mass. Where do these pressures and ideas come from? The fact is that we live in a world where all of our kids, and even all of us, are subjected to unrealistic body images 24/7. Eventually, we come to believe that we are what we look like. We believe that our value and worth is determined by what others think of us. Sadly, this is not just a physical issue that contributes to the rise

in disordered eating and other problems, but it's a spiritual issue as well. Yes, we are to care for and steward our bodies to the glory of God. But our value and worth is never to be found in our shape, our weight, or how others view us. Our value and worth is found solely in who we are in Christ.



**SEXUAL INTEGRITY  
INITIATIVE**  
*A resource of CPYU and Project Six19*

**Females and Pornography**

by Walt Mueller



When Jessica Harris went off to a Christian College, she carried with her a dirty little secret that she became quite good at hiding. Eventually, Jessica opened up and talked to someone about her addiction to visual pornography. In recent years, Jessica has shared her story in the hope that others can find the same freedom she has found in Christ, especially those young woman who, like her, struggle with a pornography addiction. In an article posted online at [HarvestUSA.org](http://HarvestUSA.org), Jessica Harris offers three suggestions for changing the script on pornography, so that we see it as not just a problem for men. First, use the word "and." When you talk about sexual struggles, it's a problem for men and women. Second, train women to help and minister to other women. Teach women to tackle these issues with truth and grace. And finally, stop worrying about causing problems. Discussing these issues doesn't introduce sin. When issues are talked about in the light of God's redemptive grace, hope and healing come.

## 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](http://www.cpyu.org/podcast).

Be sure to check out  
**Episode 112: "A Look Back  
at Episode 29 with Scotty  
Smith"**

## FROM THE WORD

From the time I was born my parents had me in church every week. Over the years, I've come to experience the weekly gathering for worship, preaching, teaching, and fellowship with other believers as a kind of lifeline. Last month we finally returned to the live in-person Sunday morning gathering at our church after an almost six-month absence due to quarantine orders and limits on large gatherings. It was as if I was finally once again breathing fresh life-giving air after several months of oxygen depletion!

While our current pandemic has put restrictions on our gathering together, there's always the danger that we will *choose* to absent ourselves from weekly gatherings with our local body of Christ. It could be due to youth sports, our hobbies, vacations, a desire to sleep in, or just plain spiritual disinterest that keeps us from weekly worship and other church activities. The writer of Hebrews knew that there were some who were "neglecting to meet together" (Hebrews 10:25), which had become a habit.

As the outside limitations on gathering together are lifted, make it a point to plug back in as a family with eagerness and joy. When we are together God uses our fellowship to "stir up one another to love and good works," along with giving us the gift of spiritual encouragement.

**"AND LET US CONSIDER HOW TO STIR  
UP ONE ANOTHER TO LOVE AND  
GOOD WORKS, NOT NEGLECTING TO  
MEET TOGETHER, AS IS THE HABIT  
OF SOME, BUT ENCOURAGING ONE  
ANOTHER, AND ALL THE MORE AS  
YOU SEE THE DAY DRAWING NEAR."**

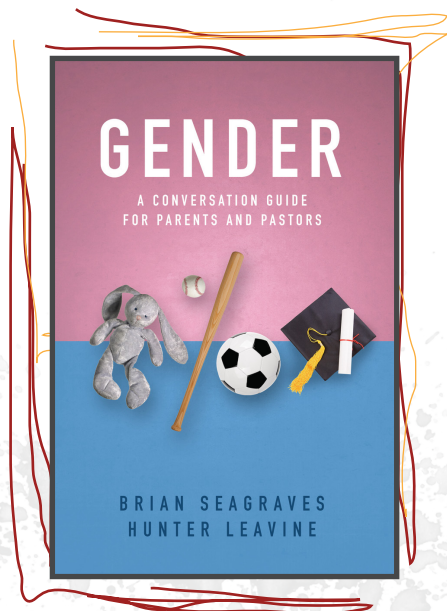
**HEBREWS 10:24&25**

## HELPFUL RESOURCE ←

Our culture is filled with confusing messages about gender and identity and it's difficult to keep up. If you are a parent or someone involved in youth or children's ministry who wants to teach the Bible faithfully, this book is for you. *Gender: A Conversation Guide for Parents and Pastors*, by Brian Seagraves and Hunter Leavine, provides a practical step-by-step guide to articulating the teaching of Scripture on gender to children and young people as they grow up.

Each chapter contains conversation starters and soundbites for every age and stage from preschool to high school and beyond. It will help families teach the Christian worldview clearly and consistently throughout a child's life.

Whether you are a parent, mentor, pastor or friend, this book will help you find clarity in a world spinning in confusion.



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