CPYU PARENT PAGE

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THE CENTER FOR PARENT/YOUTH UNDERSTANDING

Helping parents understand teenagers and their world

PARENTING HOMEWORK

WALT MUELLER, CPYU President

It's your kids who are heading back to school in the coming days. Because youth culture is changing at breakneck speed, the school they're going back to isn't the one they left when summer vacation began just a few short weeks ago. Think about it. For example, Pokemon Go was unknown in June. Now, it's taken the world by storm. And while most kids are engaged with it, most parents are ignorant to it. That's why you're getting these parental homework assignments.

As a parent, you have been given primary responsibility for the spiritual nurture of your children (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Ephesians 6:4). Because you grew up in a world that's different from the world of your teen, you must view this calling as a cross-cultural missionary venture. As a result, you must work to stay in touch – like foreign missionaries – with the language and culture of your mission field. Here are three assignments that aren't meant to be burdensome, but helpful.

First, take the advice of the theologian who once said that every Christian should start their day with the Bible in one hand, and the newspaper in the other. In other words, you must begin your day spending time getting to know the One who has sent you, and the message that One has called you to communicate to your kids. Be sure that God's truth is coursing through your veins. Then, take the time to use your newspaper to get to know today's world so that you can communicate the Word's truths to the needs of your teenager and his/her world.

Second, read what they read, watch what they watch, and listen to what they listen to. Because of its pervasiveness, media is now the most powerful shaper of the values, attitudes, and behaviors of teens. What media are your teens engaging with, and what are they hearing/seeing/learning as they engage with those media? You can only know by checking it out for yourself. By getting to know your teen's media, you are getting to know your kids. Knowing their media will offer you great opportunities to discuss life in the light of God's Word. You will be able to affirm what they are learning that conforms to God's will and way, and challenge those things that don't.

Finally, spend time perusing the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding (www.cpyu.org), website. We've worked hard to create an online community where you can find valuable information on teenagers and their world that's updated daily, growing archives of searchable information on youth culture, and dozens of links to other helpful organizations that deal with every conceivable type of youth culture pressure and reality.

As your teen heads back to school, decide that you're going to go back to school as well. If you become a serious student of your teen's culture, your teen will find it easier to navigate the hallways of that culture in a manner that glorifies God. *

YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

"I'm not just some f@#$ing martyr who's trying to make all of these lost, misfit kids feel better; I need them to help me feel normal too."

Breakout pop star Halsey, speaking about how writing music is a form of therapy, RollingStone.com July 28, 2016.

TOP 10...

Anticipated Upcoming Video Game Releases in 2016

as ranked by Nerdmuch.com
July 22, 2016

1. ReCore
2. Titanfall 2
3. Batman: The Telltale Series
4. Uncharted 4: A Thief's End
5. Pokemon Sun/Moon
6. World of Warcraft: Legion Expansion
7. Dead Island 2
8. Watch Dogs 2
9. The Last Guardian
10. Cuphead

QUICK STATS

The number of poisonings related to e-cigarettes in children ages 5 and under increased 15x over the 3-year period from 2012 to 2015.
(*Pediatrics*)

In a recent survey of college students, almost 8% reported having had drugs put in their drinks without their knowledge. About 4 out of 5 drink-spiking victims are women.
(*Psychology of Violence*)

FROM THE NEWS:

CONCUSSION EFFECTS LAST 2 YEARS

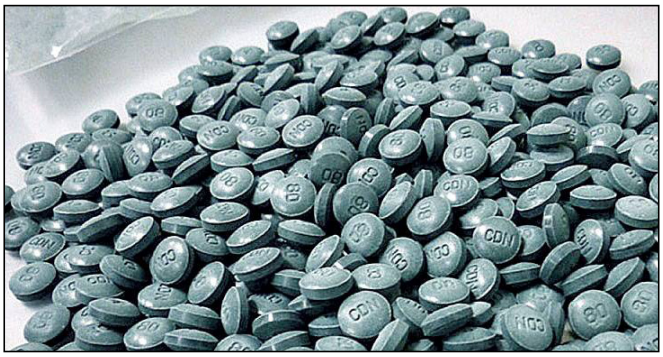
As parents, we need to protect our children and teens from harm, while providing for their well-being. In recent years, we've been hearing more and more about the physical dangers related to youth sports, particularly in those sports that are high-impact in nature. Medical experts are calling on parents to understand and respond to the dangers related to concussions. When we were kids we were told to shake it off and get back in there after getting our bell rung. Some new research from York University is now telling us that children and youth take longer to fully recover from a concussion than previously thought. In fact, it might take up to two years to fully recover from a concussion. Since their brains are still developing, kids are neurologically more fragile than adults. Because we live in a culture that idolizes athletics and sports, we need to pause and ask, "What's best for my kids?" Parents, you are called to be a good steward of your child's physical health.

CPYU'S

TREND ALERT

TRENDS:
FENTANYL ABUSE

The CDC recently posted warnings about a deadly new drug trend that we need to communicate. It is being reported that a growing number of young people are now abusing the prescription painkiller Fentanyl, and many are overdosing. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 50x more potent than heroin and 100x more potent than morphine. Pharmaceutical Fentanyl has been used to treat severe pain, usually in cancer patients. Now, illegally manufactured Fentanyl is being mixed with heroin, cocaine, and other drugs with or without the user's knowledge. An amount that's the size of three grains of sand can be deadly. The drug is typically being peddled in powder or pill form, but is also manufactured as a liquid. Parents, the sad reality of life in today's world is that we need to be warning our kids about the dangers of all illicit drugs.



LATEST RESEARCH:
SMARTPHONE ADDICTION

The folks at Common Sense Media have released some survey data that should serve as a wake-up call to all of us who are concerned about the very real possibility of smart-phone addiction. The new survey found that 80% of teenagers say they check their phones hourly, and 72% felt the need to immediately respond to texts and social networking messages. This reality has become a point of contention between many parents and their kids. 36% of parents said they argued with their child daily about device use, and 77% of parents feel their children get distracted by their devices and don't pay attention when they are together at least a few times a week. Here at CPYU we believe that parents have a responsibility to set technology limits for their kids. We are called by God to raise children who care for others and who redeem the gift of time. Smart-phone addiction is just another form of idolatry.

CPYU'S DIGITAL KIDS INITIATIVE

www.DigitalKidsInitiative.com

Pornography's Lies

by Walt Mueller

As an expression of brokenness, pornography takes God's good gift of sexuality and twists it all around. Pornography tells lies. And the deeper we go into pornography, the more we are convinced that the lies are not lies, but that they are truth.

Help your kids understand these lies of pornography:

- **People are sexual objects to be used for our own pleasure**
- **Using pornography will make your life – and your sex life – better**
- **Sex is purely a recreational sport**
- **The main purpose of sex is to have your own personal needs met**
- **Pornography doesn't hurt anyone**
- **To dominate someone sexually is more fun and enjoyable than mutual sexual pleasure between a married husband and wife**
- **Pornography offers intimacy**
- **Pornography portrays sex as it was meant to be**

New Podcast

Youth Culture Matters is a new long-format podcast from CPYU. Co-hosted by Walt Mueller and Jason Soucinek, each episode features an interview with an expert in a youth culture related field.

Listen at www.cpyu.org/podcast.

FROM THE WORD

When you discover your kids engaged in sinful or immoral behavior, how do you respond? William P. Smith reminds us that like when our first parents (Adam and Eve) fell into sin (Genesis 3:6) and rebelled against God, "they attempted to hide." Doesn't that sound a bit like our kids?

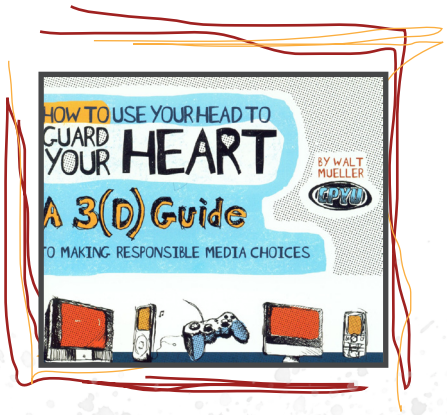
Smith says that the way we respond to our children's sin can set the table either for more deception, or for repentance and restoration. He writes, "We provide powerful incentives for others to run and hide rather than confess what they have done wrong." These incentives include pouring out our anger, listing all the ways they have hurt us, ridicule, humiliation, and shame.

"BUT THE LORD GOD CALLED TO THE MAN AND SAID TO HIM, 'WHERE ARE YOU?'"
GENESIS 3:9

But the fact that God is different should point us to a more redemptive and helpful approach to responding to our kids when they sin. Smith says, "He doesn't swoop down on Adam and Eve and start demanding, 'What were you thinking?!' He doesn't berate, badger, and interrogate them. Nor does he hold himself aloof, waiting for them to make the first move. Instead, he comes to them."

Our kids need us to gently, yet with conviction, approach them to start the process of making things right. Next time your kids fall into sin, lovingly seek them out, and then parent them through their sin into confession and repentance.

HELPFUL RESOURCE



Available in the CPYU Resource Center at www.cpyuresourcecenter.org.

Our children and teens are growing up in a rapidly changing world. It's very different from the world we grew up in. The frequent development of new media technologies has created a world where our students' lives are saturated by media. The growing variety of technologies, media types, and glut of media outlets have combined with the decline of institutions (the family, church, and school) that traditionally nurtured children and teens to create an environment where students are not only engaging with a greater amount of media, but where the media is shaping their values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

How to Use Your Head to Guard Your Heart: A 3(D) Guide to Making Responsible Media Choices is a unique and easy-to-use tool that is designed to be employed by parents, youth workers, Christian School teachers, and other adults to help you stay informed as to the media students are consuming, while helping those students become more media literate.

The *3(D) Guide* allows you to teach your students how to move from being "mindless consumers" of media, to an approach of "mindful critique" as they learn how to filter all media through the lens of a Christian worldview.

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