

LEAVING THE NEST

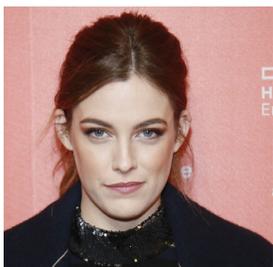
WALT MUELLER, CPYU President



YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

“People are judgemental about sex, but everyone has their own moral code. So unless you are hurting people, who are we to say what’s right?”

Actress Riley Keough, when discussing her new TV character Christine, for the show *The Girlfriend Experience*, Time.com, April 8, 2016



Adolescence is a time when teenagers begin to disengage from the family while building extensive and meaningful relationships with peers. This shift in social orientation from parents to peers is normal. But it can be painful for us as parents to see our children trade time with family for time with friends. Some of the time with friends is spent outside the family home, as kids gather to socialize, shop, or hang out. And even when your teens are in your physical presence, they may be locked in on engaging with friends near and far through their smartphone screens.

There are a number of steps that parents can take to help their teens transition smoothly through the social development of adolescence and into an independent adulthood.

- Remember that your role as a parent – from the time they are born – is to prepare your children for a lifetime of independence and service to God. We are to love them, train them, and let go of them. . . . entrusting them to our Heavenly Father all along the way.
- Don’t let how they treat you shape how you see yourself. While teens can be incredibly loving and compassionate, they can also be immature, rude, and insensitive to the feelings of others. Realize that many of their remarks are a result of the confusion and impulsivity they are experiencing as they change and grow.
- Let your teen know that they are loved. . . no matter what! The social world of the peer group can be brutal and unforgiving. As children struggle to find a place to fit

in at school and on social media, they need to know that they are always loved and accepted at home. Parents should continue to provide a secure home base from which teens can venture out into the stress-filled world of their peers.

- Spend time with your teen. If you get so wrapped up in your own life that you fail to invest time in your relationship, they will look to have their God-given relational needs met in the context of their peer group. Pulling away from them is like pushing a default button that sends them out of the home to look elsewhere for guidance and direction. If you’re absent or too busy, you forfeit your positive influence.
- Encourage your teen’s involvement in friendships with other adults who share your faith and values. Youth pastors, neighbors, grandparents, a favorite aunt or uncle, etc. can all be listening ears when the kids want to talk to someone other than mom or dad. When your kids seek out people like this, don’t be threatened. These significant others can play a valuable role in affirming and cementing the lessons you have already taught. Thank God for these significant others.
- Never forget that you are still vital. Make yourself available even at the most inconvenient times, always being ready to take advantage of the moment to build your relationship, listen to, and talk with your teen. I realize now that even though it may not have always seemed like it, I had never stopped being one important part of their lives. ✨

Most Popular Superheroes

Based on number of video views on YouTube since 2008
Source: YouTube Trends Blog



1. Batman
2. Thor
3. Superman
4. Iron Man
5. The Avengers
6. Wolverine
7. Spider Man
8. Captain America
9. Justice League
10. Deadpool



QUICK STATS

Researchers found that among boys who play at least 3 sports, almost 23% say they have engaged in binge drinking (5 drinks in a row), and almost 9% admit to extreme binge drinking, which is consuming at least 10 drinks in a row.

(University of Michigan)

New research out of Northern Ireland found that the heaviest consumers of alcohol were teenagers under the lowest levels of parental control.

(University of Glasgow)

FROM THE NEWS:

ONLINE SEXUAL VICTIMIZATION

As part of our Digital Kids Initiative here at CPYU, we strongly advise parents to monitor their kids' use of social media and digital technology. Just as we must be concerned about where our kids are going and who they are with in the real flesh and blood world, we should know where they are going and who they are with when they are online. Michigan State criminal justice professor Thomas Holt has found that when our kids are online, about one in four are pressured by their friends to talk about sex when they didn't want to. Holt warns that engaging in these conversations can be the first step towards sexual victimization and sexual harassment. The best parental response begins with constant monitoring and conversation. Our conversations should focus on God's grand design and plan for the gift of our sexuality, along with regular reminders of the kinds of online activities that bring honor and glory to God. Parents, are you monitoring your kids?

TRENDS: AVERAGE COST OF A WEDDING

In recent years, many of our leading Christian thinkers and theologians have helped us understand a biblical view of marriage. It's important that we understand this institution that was created by God and given to us as a way to flourish as human beings. This is especially necessary in a world where the culture is radically redefining marriage. One of the greatest concerns we should have is the shift in how young people are preparing for marriage. It seems that more time and money is being spent on the ceremony and reception, rather than on premarital counseling. Some recent research shows that in 2015 dollars, the average cost of a wedding in 1950 was \$7,500. By 2010, couples were spending an average of \$28,000 on a wedding. What do your kids believe about marriage? Are you preparing them to have a healthy marriage, or are you preparing them to spend their time and money on the wrong things?



LATEST RESEARCH: HARMFUL EFFECTS OF MARIJUANA

One of the drug-related trends that concern us most here at CPYU is the way that attitudes are changing regarding the use of marijuana.

There is a strong movement towards not only legalization, but acceptance of marijuana as a harmless form of recreation. However, research is showing that using marijuana is not a harmless endeavor. A new study shows that the age at which an adolescent starts using marijuana affects which parts of the brain will be impacted. The Center for Brain Health is reporting that kids who began using marijuana when they were sixteen or younger had arrested brain development in the pre-frontal cortex, the part of the brain responsible for reasoning, complex thinking, and judgment. Those who began using marijuana after the age of sixteen showed the opposite effect, demonstrating signs of accelerated brain aging. Parents, don't believe the marijuana hype. Teach your kids to care for their God given bodies by avoiding drugs of all kinds.

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

www.SexualIntegrityInitiative.com

Improving Sexual Integrity Messages in the Church

by Jason Soucinek 

For years the church has simply responded to the culture's definition of sex. American culture says, "Do whatever you want, with whomever you want, whenever you want." So what has the church done? It's responded by saying, "Just wait." But this is only responding to the definition set forth by the culture and not giving the definition from Scripture.

The definition of sex found in Scripture is based on "oneness" with our spouse. This is seen in verses all the way from Genesis through Revelation. Sex is meant to unify. In fact, when it says in Genesis 2:24 the "two will become one flesh" it is literally saying the two will be fused together, creating this "oneness."

Procreation, pleasure, and protection all need to be part of the conversations surrounding sex in the church.

Often we are willing to talk about the power of sex as it relates to new life. But why are we afraid to talk about the pleasure associated with it? Pleasure is not something Scripture hides from and neither should we. Our God is a God of pleasure. We see this in the first verses in the first chapter of the first book in Scripture, Genesis 1, when God declares creation (and thus sex) was "very good."

Scripture also reveals sex has boundaries but these boundaries exist for our own protection. Because sex has the power to create life and fuse two people together, it requires protection. That is one reason we have marriage. It acts as a crucible.

Clear and consistent dialogue, not a list of restrictions, are needed for sexual integrity to be practiced more often.

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

As Christian parents, nothing should make us more joyful than for us to see our children walk with the Lord. But all too often we equate “walking with the Lord” with a checklist of behaviors that we’ve come to believe are marks of Christian commitment, growth, and maturity. Many parents assume that they’ve done a good job at nurturing their children in the faith if those children graduate from high school without ever using drugs, without ever getting anyone pregnant, and without an arrest record. While desiring right behavior is a noble and right desire, we can’t fall into the trap of equating behavioral conformity with spiritual growth.

“KEEP YOUR HEART WITH ALL VIGILANCE, FOR FROM IT FLOW THE SPRINGS OF LIFE.”

PROVERBS 4:23

The writer of Proverbs reminds us that the essence and center of who we are is our heart. It is out of our hearts that behavior flows (Proverbs 4:23). Our goal should be to nurture the hearts of our children “with all vigilance,” knowing that a God-centered heart is the well-spring that will shape their lives in powerful ways. As Timothy Lane and Paul Tripp say, “the heart is the steering wheel of every human being.” Consequently, we must shoot for the hearts of our children rather than their behaviors. Sometimes, the way that God shapes hearts is through great difficulty and even rebellion and wandering. But once God has our hearts, he has us!

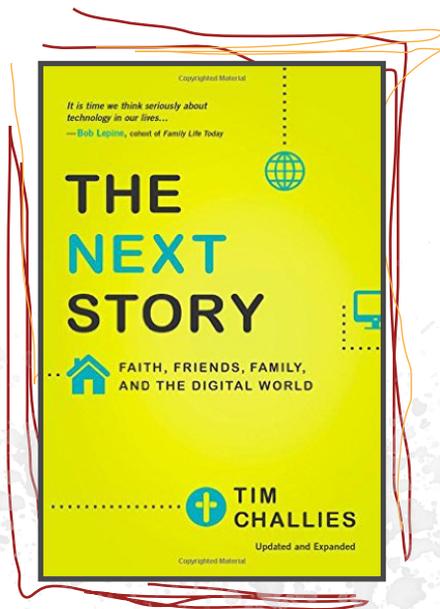
Parents, speak the Gospel to the hearts of your children and teens. Change that is lasting and true always comes from the heart.

HELPFUL RESOURCE ←

How do you live faithful to God in a digital world?

Even the least technical among us are being pressed from all sides by advances in digital technology. Yet even though we live in an “instant message” culture, many of us feel disconnected, and we wonder if our growing reliance on technology is really good for our souls.

Providing a framework you can apply to any technology, in *The Next Story: Faith, Friends, Family, and the Digital World*, Tim Challies explains how and why our society has become reliant on the Internet, social media, and emerging forms of digital technology. He shows what this means for your life and how it impacts the Christian faith. This expanded edition includes a new chapter on protecting your family from the negative effects of technology.



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