

Your Passion Becomes Their Passion



"Like father, like son" and "Like mother, like daughter" may not apply very often to you and your teenagers. But you're having more of an influence on your kids than you may realize. We've always known that parents' faith is important for kids' spiritual development. Now some landmark research shows just how crucial your beliefs are.

The National Study of Youth and Religion recently found that three out of four religious teenagers consider their own beliefs to be similar to those of their parents. What's more, 77% of teenagers who belonged to a congregation said they expected to be part of a similar congregation at age 25.

Teenagers aren't likely to come right out and admit that their parents are serving as role models. Sometimes you probably feel like your kids don't even want to associate with you. But another major NSYR finding is that most teenagers desire to have stronger relationships with their parents. They just aren't sure how to make it happen. So that's where you come in!

It's up to parents to take the lead with faith discussions in your home. When you're passionate about your beliefs, that passion will be contagious. Academic studies and real-life examples prove that parents who strive to live out a devoted Christian faith raise kids who tend to do the same. Read on for tips and ideas about developing and passing along this passion.

Helpful Hints

NSYR researcher **Christian Smith**, author of *Soul Searching*, offers this advice for parents of teenagers: (*italic statements Pastor Lee*)

1. **Don't be afraid of your kids or afraid of teaching them.** Don't worry about not seeming "cool" when you relate substantial truths. Teenagers desire to be challenged in their faith walk.

They respond more to "LOVE" / "I Care" than "Cool".

2. **Work on your overall relationship with your teenagers.** Organized youth groups are important, but kids benefit the most from significant bonds with mature, loving adults. Kids long to have respected grown-ups spend time with them "through the stuff of their ordinary lives," Smith says.

3. **Play an active role in youth ministry.** For better or worse, you're the most important "pastors" your kids will ever have. Instead of handing off all the responsibility of spiritual development to your church or a youth group, look for ways to get involved with these faith-formation efforts.

"I purposefully plan events throughout the year that are family friendly so you can have an excuse to spend time with your kids." And yeah I can always use your help any Friday night, I need warm bodies standing around to keep and eye on everyone.



Pulse

Here are some more results from the NSYR:

- Half of the teenagers surveyed said faith is "very important" or "extremely important" in their lives.
- Only 8% of teenagers said they're "spiritual but not religious."
- Teenagers who say their parents love, understand, or pay attention to them are **more likely to be religiously devoted** than are their peers who say their parents don't love, understand, or pay attention to them.
- Of the teenagers who attend worship services, 70% rate their congregation as a "very good" or "fairly good" place to discuss serious issues or problems.



(National Study of Youth and Religion; *Soul Searching*)

Great Questions to Ask Your Kids

Although adolescence is a crucial time for faith formation, the process is never complete. Use these questions to talk with your kids about their under-construction beliefs:

1. How important is your faith to you? Would you say it's your No. 1 priority? Why or why not?
2. What aspects of believing in God are the easiest and the hardest for you, and why?
3. Do you know someone who's passionate about God? If so, what do you admire most about him or her?
4. Are you being a spiritual example, or mentor, for anyone right now? Explain.
5. If you could change one thing about our relationship, what would it be, and why?



Focus on Prayer

Pray that:

1. God will strengthen your own faith and keep you focused on your relationship with him.
2. God will help you be a good spiritual example for your family and a trusted mentor for your kids.
3. Your teenagers will desire to grow closer to God and to you.
4. Your teenagers will remain passionate about their faith throughout their lives.

Verse of the month

"Praise the Lord! How joyful are those who fear the Lord and delight in obeying his commands. Their children will be successful everywhere; an entire generation of godly people will be blessed."
(Psalm 112:1-2)

As our heavenly Father, God is worthy of our honor, respect, and love. This mirrors the ideal relationship between earthly parents and their children. Parents aren't perfect (just ask your teenagers!), but moms and dads who strive to live godly lives leave a lasting legacy for their kids—and for many generations to come. Obedience, whether it's to God or to parents, results in joy and growth. Because God promises eternal "success" to those who trust in him, a spiritual heritage is the best gift you could ever give your kids.

What's Up With Kids

Great News, Mom and Dad!

It's not car keys, cash, an endless supply of entertainment, or invites to killer parties that make today's teenagers the happiest. It's not even hobbies or popularity. According to the latest research, it's spending time with family!

Yes, it's true. Research conducted by the Associated Press and MTV (yes, MTV!) found that chillin' with the fam ranked first on the happy-meter. Spending time with friends finished second, followed by spending time with significant others. Did you catch that? The top-three sources of happiness for kids today are based on relationships! Honorable mentions include "sports" in 10th place and "achieving success" in 20th.

The happiness survey, more than 100 questions long, pried into almost every area of kids' lives. It measured everything from money to spiritual experience to pets. Want the best news yet? Of the 1,280 young people polled (ages 13-24), 73% said Mom and Dad make them happy. Told you it was good news!



(SimplyYouthMinistry.com)

MUSICSPOTLIGHT



Background: Teenage recording artist Chris Brown began singing at age 11. Two years later, while Brown was working in his dad's gas station, a local production team discovered him. His 2005 self-titled debut album featured the hit single "Run It!" Brown's newly released second album, *Exclusive*, scored another No. 1 hit with "Kiss Kiss." Now 18, Brown also has an acting career. He appeared in the dance movie *Stomp the Yard* and in TV shows such as *The OC*, *My Super Sweet 16*, and *The Suite Life of Zach and Cody*.

Albums: *Chris Brown* (2005), *Exclusive* (2007)

What You Should Know: Brown's music addresses relationships, often with inappropriate and sexually explicit lyrics.

What Brown Has to Say: When asked how he keeps the fun in success, Brown says, "I think just by being myself. You don't have a whole bunch of dummies around you. Keep the people that you like around you, and just be yourself."

Discussion Questions: Is it good to hang out only with people who you like and have stuff in common with? Why or why not? In your life, who keeps you grounded? Are you able to "just be yourself" around your friends? Why or why not?

Background: Deitrick Haddon began leading worship at age 11, when he gave a sermon at his father's church. He led the choir at age 13 and later led the singing group Voices of Unity. In 2002, Haddon launched his Christian R&B solo career with *Lost and Found*. It reached No. 1 on Billboard's Top Gospel charts and earned much radio time on gospel and mainstream R&B stations. While continuing his own musical career, Haddon, 25, also produces for other artists, including his wife, Damita.

Albums: *Lost and Found* (2002), *Just the Hits* (2005), *7 Days* (2006), *Voices of Unity* (2007)

What You Should Know: Haddon's energetic praise-and-worship music has many influences: bluesy, soul, big ballads, and dance gospel.

What Haddon Has to Say: "Every time I do something, I seek to do it better and do something I believe God is calling me to do," Haddon says. "I just do what God gives me; I don't try to be anybody else. I don't let the industry or people dictate what I do."

Discussion Questions: What do you think God wants you to do with your life, and why? How can you know God's will and plan? When you're making decisions, how much do you let other people sway you?

FILMWATCH

Movie: Prom Night (released April 11)

Genre: Horror/suspense

Rating: PG-13 for violence and terror, some sexual material, underage drinking, and language

Synopsis: Donna's senior prom is supposed to be magical. But when the night turns murderous, only one man could be responsible. To survive their prom night, Donna and her friends must escape the rampage of an obsessed killer. (This is a remake of the 1980 horror film.)

Discussion Questions: What types of feelings do you have about the prom or other school dances? What might make them "magical"? What might make them difficult? How can you avoid some of the challenges kids often face at these big events?



April 2008

		1	2	3	4	5
			MS		(n)Fusion	Parent Seminar
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
HS			MS		Cool Beans	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
HS			MS		ATF	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			MS		(n)Fusion	
27	28	29	30			
HS			MS			

(n)Fusion- Friday Nights 7-11pm

Small Group Bible Studies:



Sunday Nights (HS / College & Career) 6-8pm



Wednesday nights (Middle School) 6:30-8pm

5- Disturbing Behavior Parent Seminar 9am-12

11- Cool Beans Coffee House 7-11pm

18-19- Acquire the Fire

*See attached calendar of events for more dates.

For more information check out our website:

www.nfusionyouth.com

Contact Info

Copies of this newsletter are available at the information desk located at the rear of the Sanctuary.

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(n)Fusion
Student Ministry
2008 Calendar of Events

January

February

3- Super Bowl Party

14-17th – College for a Weekend at Liberty University (*HS 10-12 grades*) \$50 student

March

April

5- Parent Seminar (Disturbing Behavior)

18-19- Acquire the Fire

May

23-26- Church Family Campout

June

8- Aloha Luau (2008 Graduates)

21- Annual Teen Block Party

25-28 – Creation Festival (Family Event)

July

6-11 – Fisher Camp (Middle School Students)

10-12 - Kings Fest (Kings Dominion)

August

10- NHBC Pool Party

September

5- “Back 2 School” Bonfire (Capellaro’s Home)

October

24-26 – ScareMare Fall Retreat (*date subject to change*)

November

December

12- Christmas Party

*dates and events are subject to change.

Weekly Friday Nights (n)Fusion 6-11pm Sunday School- 10am Sunday evening- HS & Youth Adults Bible Study Wednesday Bible Study -6:30pm
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Other events and activities may be added as they arise.