

## Help Your Kids Know What's True



Ever since your children were born, you've been teaching them right from wrong—first to keep them physically safe and then to help develop their character. By adolescence, some of those teachings no longer seem black and white. Outside factors such as friends, media, and teachers compete for your kids' attention and hearts.

When doubts creep in, teenagers begin to re-evaluate what they've been taught. Everything gets scrutinized: their upbringing, their moral beliefs, and even their faith. Kids may question if Jesus is the only true path to salvation or if all people really worship the same God.

According to our society, declaring something to be an "absolute truth" is a sign of close-mindedness. But if everyone can proclaim their own truths and set their own rules, then moral chaos results. In fact, with such relativism, anything goes.

Although teenagers initially may be enticed by a lack of rules—or rules they can set themselves—the Bible is clear that this path leads to death (Proverbs 14:12).

As Christians, we know that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). In the Bible, God's true Word, we read that faith in Jesus is the only way to salvation. The Bible also provides the Law, which serves as our rules for living (The Ten Commandments).

You can't shield teenagers from exposure to other belief systems. But you can help them develop a strong, unshakable faith. Read on for ideas about instilling in your kids the firm foundation of eternal truth.

**Youth minister Greg Stier insists that "doctrine" isn't a dirty word. Teenagers (and parents) might view it as impractical, irrelevant, and divisive, he says. But it's really "the pathway upon which we come into the presence and power of God." Stier offers these suggestions:**

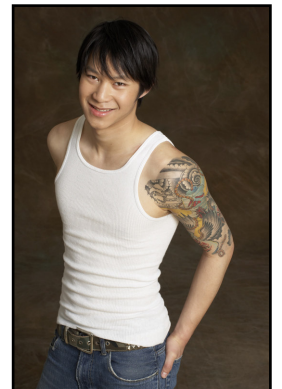
- 1. Remember that doctrine simply means teaching.** Don't get so occupied with spending quality time with your kids that you neglect to find out exactly what they believe.
- 2. Focus on the four "Go" truths that every teenager should know.** These are God, God's Word, God's Son, and the Gospel.
- 3. Teach teenagers that it's okay to reject false doctrines.** For example, make sure kids know that Jesus was sinless, that the Bible is 100% accurate, and that good deeds won't get them into heaven.
- 4. Equip kids to live out their beliefs in real, relevant ways.** Biblical instruction without practical application leads to the breeding of hypocrites.

## Pulse

**Statistics provide a sobering view of teenagers' beliefs about truth. But they also show that young people want to learn more about the topic:**

- 63% of teenagers don't believe that Jesus is the Son of the one true God.
- 58% believe that all faiths teach equally valid truths.
- 70% don't believe that an absolute moral truth exists.

(The Barna Group)



When 25,000 Christian teenagers were asked which topics they'd most like to learn more about at church, a top answer (50%) was "If Jesus is the only way to heaven, are all other religions wrong?"

(Group magazine)

## Great Questions to Ask Your Kids

**What types of beliefs have your teenagers been exposed to? Can they articulate their faith? Find out by using these discussion starters:**

1. How do people get to heaven? Can you get there by being good? Why or why not?
2. Will people of other religions be in heaven, too? How would you defend this answer to someone who believes otherwise?
3. Should everyone be allowed to set their own morals and rules? Is it okay to impose your beliefs on someone else? Why or why not?
4. When you're making decisions, where do you turn for advice? How do you know if you've made a correct choice?



## Focus on Prayer

### PRAY THAT:

1. Your teenagers will have a deep faith in the one true God and will reject false beliefs.
2. God will protect your teenagers from doubt and help them take a stand for their Christian faith.
3. Your teenagers will desire to read and study Scripture and rely on it for encouragement, strength, and decision-making.
4. God will use your teenagers to tell other people about God's truth.

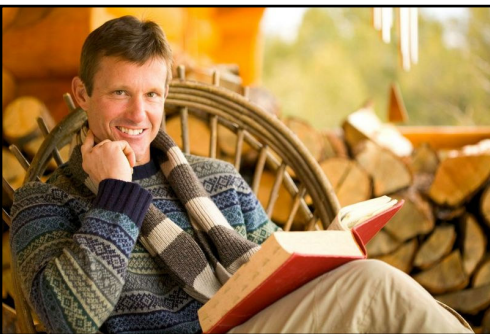
### Verse of the month

**"For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father, who is over all and in all and living through all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)**

These days, it's considered politically incorrect to call another faith wrong. Instead, we're told to be inclusive and accepting. But unless people believe in the Triune God, believe that the Bible is God's Word, and believe in salvation only through faith in Jesus, they aren't really Christians. It may sometimes seem that there's freedom in allowing and exploring many truths. But real freedom comes from knowing there's just one Truth.

## What's Up With Kids

**At SimplyYouthMinistry.com, youth-culture author Walt Mueller offers this advice about knowing what's true:** In a world where there are many "experts" sharing conflicting opinions on the purpose of life, how to live, and how to raise and relate to kids, it's good to know there's a compass we can trust, handed to us by the One who created life, teenagers, parents, and families. That compass is the Bible. In 2 Timothy 3:16, Paul lists four valuable uses for Scripture:



- 1. The Bible offers sound instruction.** It's the only true source of knowledge about God's world. Like the instruction manual for a complicated appliance, God's Word helps us understand and bear through the complexities of life, including our changing kids and their confusing world.
- 2. A growing knowledge of the Bible helps us evaluate and test everything else that claims to be true.** All worldviews and advice should be measured against the blueprint of the Bible.
- 3. The Bible serves as a diagnostic checkup and trouble-shooting guide.** As we look at our own lives and approaches to parenting, the Bible helps us see where we've gone wrong while offering clear guidelines and instruction on how to correct our course.
- 4. The Bible is a road map that helps us stay on course in all our tasks and activities.** It lays out a clear path for right and godly living. Teenagers desperately need godly parents whose disciplined and regular study of Scripture pays liberal dividends in Christlike love and direction.

# Energy Drinks?



## Energy Drinks by: Diane Fisher (Warren Coalition)

Due to the recent heat wave that we are experiencing, it is vital that we take precautions to keep our families safe and healthy. We know that we should wear light colored clothing, stay out of the sun and heat for any length of time, and drink plenty of liquids—primarily water. What many do not know is that caffeinated drinks and alcohol can contribute to dehydration, and should not be consumed for the purpose of hydrating our bodies, or while working or exercising. A group of beverages that is raising concerns because of the amount consumed among teens is energy drinks.

Many energy drinks make misleading claims about performance enhancement, added vitality, and even weight loss. These messages are primarily targeted at teens and young adults, which angers health professionals. Distributors want to come to schools, sporting functions, and colleges to give away products and pamphlets for free. This marketing works, as sales continue to increase as much as 75 percent annually, in spite of the cost of the drinks. Advertising can be misleading, particularly when they "are used as a substitute for proper rest, nutrition, and exercise," says Roberta Anding, spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. "They're really stimulant drinks."

It's important to look at the ingredients of the many energy drinks. The primary ingredients are caffeine, guarana (another source of caffeine), and sugar. Many add herbal extracts and dietary supplements, such as ginseng, ephedrine (which many companies have taken out because of the risks), and taurine (an amino acid). These should not be regarded as "natural alternatives". The Food and Drug Administration does not regulate them. Therefore there's not enough information about the ingredients or the long-term consequences. Some health experts say that our young people already consume unhealthy amounts of caffeine, and don't need a product that raises that intake.

Energy drinks need to be taken seriously because of the powerful stimulating properties. These can increase the heart rate and blood pressure (sometimes to the point of palpitations), dehydrate the body, and prevent sleep. Energy drinks should NOT be used while exercising because the combination of fluid loss from sweating and the diuretic quality of the caffeine can severely dehydrate the user. Westfield High School and others in Fairfax County banned all energy drinks on school fields for athletes. The county said several students, some in respiratory distress, were taken off the field by ambulance after consuming the energy drinks, according to a CBS report. I have spoken to a number of teens locally who experience heart palpitations, light-headedness, and more after drinking a number of energy drinks. Moderation is key and not allowing our children to have caffeine at an early age.

Some people make the grave mistake of mixing energy drinks and alcohol. Energy drinks are stimulants and alcohol is a depressant. The stimulant effects can mask how intoxicated they are and keep them from realizing just how much alcohol they have consumed. The stimulant effect can give the person the impression that they aren't impaired. Both alcohol and energy drinks are dehydrating, which can hinder the body's ability to metabolize alcohol and increase the toxicity. Talk about a hangover!

Energy drinks are not thirst quenchers or health drinks. Look at them for what they are—caffeinated sugar drinks, and limit intake. Consuming caffeine daily can lead to mild addiction. When caffeine consumption stops, withdrawal symptoms may occur (headaches and sleepiness). Read the ingredients and talk to your children about the risks associated with these drinks. In this extreme heat, good old-fashioned water gives you energy and hydrates you better than anything.

## Music Spotlight



### Alan Jackson Good Time

#### Pro-Social Content

"I Still Like Bologna" celebrates the simple things in an age of 50-inch HD plasma TVs. Jackson erects a special pedestal for a spiritual, patriotic, family-oriented "Small Town Southern Man." The buoyant love song "Never Loved Before" (with Martina McBride) gives nods to gentlemanly behavior. Fans can learn from the romantic regrets of a man trying to recover from his own unfaithfulness ("I Wish I Could Back Up"). "Sissy's Song" copes with a friend's death by imagining her in heaven, blissfully walking with Jesus. Speaking of the Lord, the singer believes He'd be a misunderstood common man "If Jesus Walked the World Today." Unfortunately ...

#### Objectionable Content

Depicting Christ as a tattooed "hillbilly" brand-conscious enough to drive a Chevy is a stretch. A misuse of God's name appears on "Good Time," a partyer's musical toast to beer, tequila and women. Rum compounds the problems on "Nothing Left to Do," which reduces sex to a rote exercise that ends with the guy asking for the TV remote. Therapy on "If You Want to Make Me Happy" involves lots of depressing music and bourbon.

#### Summary Advisory

This disc represents the best and worst of country music. Great moments, but faith and homespun values give way to alcohol and good ol' boy posturing.



## FILMWATCH

### Movie: You Don't Mess With the Zohan (released June 6)

**Genre:** Comedy

**Rating:** PG-13 (for crude and sexual content throughout, language and nudity)

**Synopsis:** Zohan (Adam Sandler) is an Israeli counterterrorist killing machine who decides he'd really like to become a hair stylist. He fakes his own death and makes his way to New York City, where he's a big hit with his female clientele. Zohan catapults to fame and fortune, but success and secret identities don't mix. When Zohan's past catches up with him, he must once again call on his military skills.

**Discussion Questions:** What do you think God is calling you to do? Do you have any gifts that you've kept secret or downplayed for some reason? Would you be willing to take some risks or leave a "safe" environment to pursue God's plans for you? Explain.

# June 2008

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Aloha Luau					(n)Fusion	
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<b>Creation Music Festival June 25-29</b>						
29	30					

(n)Fusion- Friday Nights 7-11pm

Small Group Bible Studies:

Sunday Nights (HS & College) 6-8pm- Apologetics class

Wednesday nights (Middle School) 7-8pm

8- Aloha Luau- Saturday 6-8pm at Andy Guest State Park

21- Xtreme Teen Revolution Block Party – 5-10pm downtown Front Royal at the Gazebo (bands, skating, food..)

25-29- Creation Festival

**Mark your Calendar!**

**July**

4- Friday, No (n)Fusion Friday Night (holiday)

5-11- Middle School Church Camp (Fisher Camp- Weston, WV)

10-12- Kings Fest @ Kings Dominion (not a youth group sponsored event)

13- Hard Core Music Night – 4-10pm (at New Hope Gym) *Music with an EDGE!*

[www.nfusionyouth.com](http://www.nfusionyouth.com)

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

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