

Parenting Foundations

WALT MUELLER, CPYU President



YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

“I am leaving because I want to be a normal 22-year-old who is able to relax and have some private time out of the spotlight.”

Singer Zayn Malik on his decision to leave the band One Direction, posted on the group's Facebook page, March 25, 2015



Parenting in today's world is not an easy task. Here are five elements that are essential foundations to parenting as you travel through the few short years you have with your children.

Your approach to parenting should be biblical. From the moment they are born, our children need parents who tune themselves in to the most reliable source of parenting information and instruction. God has given us the Bible to guide us through these difficult and confusing days. Your approach to parenting should be informed and guided by God's Word. Study the Bible with diligence on a regular basis. Prayerfully ask God to use your times in His Word to reveal Himself and His will. Discover how the Bible speaks to the molders and shapers of contemporary youth culture. Uncover the character traits and attitudes that God calls us to exhibit in our families and other relationships.

Your approach to parenting should be realistic. Why is it that so many of us feel like failures when we or our children make a mistake? My guess is that we are disappointed because we expect ourselves and our children to be perfect—a very unrealistic expectation. The reality is that because of our sinful natures, we are broken people raising broken people. But our gnawing sense of imperfection should not keep us from endeavoring to be good parents. Realistic parents pave the way for family closeness and help their children find their identity in Christ by parenting with grace. They aren't paralyzed by feelings of fear, shame, and inadequacy when they or their children make mistakes.

Your approach to parenting should be preventive. We all share a concern for our

children's physical well-being. We tell our kids to stay out of the street, to look both ways, don't take candy from strangers, and to keep away from hot stuff. Parents who expect to lead their kids through adolescence into spiritual health should also take preventive measures. Our children should be equipped to face life and all of its challenges. They need us to pass on the valuable information we have learned about life. We need to speak openly about the dangers and results of choosing to walk through life in opposition to God's will and way.

Your approach to parenting should be redemptive. How will you respond to your children when they make a mistake or do something wrong? All teens will make sinful choices, and the determining factor in whether or not a sinful choice turns into a situation that gets better or worse will depend on your response. Let me suggest that your goal should be to redeem these situations by turning a mistake into an opportunity for your teen to learn about what it means to have a heart for God. Treat your child as you think Jesus would treat you if you were the offending party.

Your approach to parenting should be prayerful. Parents, we need to pray for answers—answers to the questions that we have about raising our children and answers to our children's questions about who they are and what they should believe. You see, our children grow in the wisdom and nurture of the Lord in spite of us, not because of us. Sure, they learn a lot from the example we live and the words we choose, but the fact of the matter is that it is ultimately God who gives faith to our kids and leads them to spiritual health.★

Colleges with the Most Generous Financial Aid

Sources:
Peterson's, U.S. Department
of Education, and *Time*
Money calculations



1. Vanderbilt University
2. Rice University
3. Duke University
4. Davidson College
5. Grinnell College
6. University of Chicago
7. Kenyon College
8. University of Richmond
9. Washington and Lee University
10. Harvey Mudd College



VANDERBILT
UNIVERSITY

QUICK STATS

One in six teenagers who spend time online say they have been contacted online by someone they did not know in a way that made them feel scared or uncomfortable.
(“Teens, Social Media, and Privacy” from the PewResearchCenter)

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among children and young adults aged 10 to 24. In 2012, more than 5,000 teens and young adults died by suicide.
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

FROM THE NEWS:

FATHERS AND COLLEGE SUCCESS

When God established the family, he made it so that children would have both a mother and a father. For children to flourish, it's important that Dads are active and involved in their children's lives. Recently, W. Bradford Wilcox of the American Enterprise Institute presented findings on just how important a dad is to his child's success in college. Wilcox found that those college students who have grown up with involved fathers are 98% more likely to graduate from college than those whose fathers are uninvolved. Wilcox says there are four ways that active fathers make a difference in college graduation rates. First, they stimulate their children to pursue an education. Second, they provide financial stability to pay for schooling. Third, they keep their kids from getting involved in pursuits that could jeopardize the opportunity to get to college. And finally, Dads encourage their kids to pursue challenges. Dad, are you an involved father?

TRENDS: E-CIGARETTES

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention raised the alarm regarding the growing popularity of electronic cigarettes among teenagers. These e-cigarettes are especially popular among children and teens as they are erroneously believed to be safer than conventional cigarettes, and they come in a variety of flavors, which makes them especially attractive to kids. The CDC has found that in 2013, more than a quarter million middle and high school students who have never smoked regular cigarettes, had indeed used an e-cigarette. That number is three times more than had done so just two years earlier. In addition, researchers have found that those never smoking youth who had used e-cigarettes are nearly two times more likely to have intentions to smoke conventional cigarettes than those who had never used an e-cigarette. Parents, e-cigarettes are addictive and dangerous. Teach your kids to care for their God-given bodies by choosing not to smoke at all.



LATEST RESEARCH: DISTRACTED DRIVING

The National Highway Safety Administration recently released new data on what they call “distraction-affected crashes.” The news is troubling. The organization defines distracted driving as any driver that texts, uses a cellphone or smartphone, eats and drinks, talks to passengers, grooms oneself, reads, uses a navigation system, watches a video, or adjusts some kind of car stereo system or audio player. Perhaps it's not surprising that the most dangerous of these distracted driving activities is sending and receiving text messages. Sending and receiving texts requires visual, manual, and cognitive focus and attention, which serves to seriously distract drivers from safely driving their vehicle. Now here's what's especially scary: the data says that 71% of teens and young people say they have composed and sent a text message while driving. 78% have read a text message while driving. Warn your kids about texting and driving.

COLLEGE TRANSITION INITIATIVE

a resource of CPYU



Campus Life: For Who?

by Walt Mueller



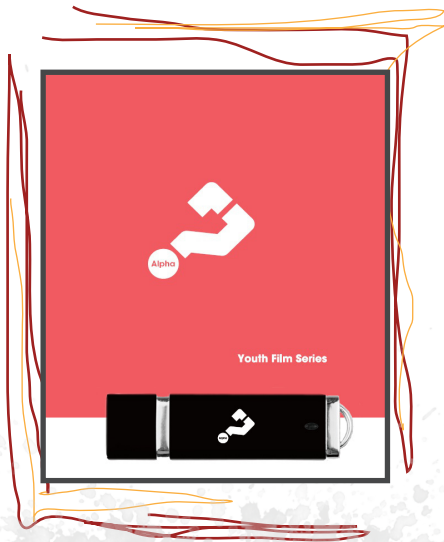
When I was in high school, my academic path and courses were all in line with what was called the “College Prep” track. In today's world, many of our college-bound high school students fall under the same label. But “college prep” is about much more than academics. Preparing for a campus experience or post-high school life in the working world is really about prepping for a life in which every nook and cranny and every minute are lived under the authority of God and to the Glory of God. It's not about living to advance one's self, but about living to advance God's Kingdom.

Theologian R.C. Sproul oftentimes tells people that this “big idea” of the Christian life is captured in the two word Latin phrase, *Coram Deo*. The word *Coram* is best translated as “before” or “in the presence of.” The Latin word *Deo* is simply translated “God.” The big idea of the Christian life is the prayerful and passionate pursuit of living out every square inch and every second of our lives before or in the presence of God.

Whether your son or daughter is on an academic track preparing them for college, the military, the working world, or a vocational trade our job is to model and teach an understanding of the Christian life that sees Christianity as a total life system, not just another extra-curricular activity. By doing so, we teach them that their greatest passion and pursuit is a life lived under the authority of God and to the glory of God. Teach them that “whatever you do” (1 Corinthians 10:31), do it all for the glory of God. Teach them to live *Coram Deo!*

Website

Did you know that CPYU offers tons of free resources on their website for parents, youth workers, pastors and others who work with children and teens? Visit WWW.CPYU.ORG to browse the site and explore!



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



FROM THE WORD

As teens and twentysomethings begin to explore and question their faith, many of them seek answers outside the confines of the church. This is especially true of kids who head off to college and feel that the church no longer has anything to offer them, or that they can develop their own personal spirituality or faith without the help of or involvement in the Body of Christ.

While the Church was set up by God with Christ as the cornerstone, it is still a human institution filled, and operated by, imperfect humans. There is no perfect church. Kids will often-times notice the flaws and use those as a reason to withdraw from fellowship with the larger, gathered Body of Christ. But despite that, the writer in Hebrews is clear. As Christians we are not to abandon the church and seek to go it alone. We are called to be a part of the church and to fellowship with other believers for the purpose of encouraging one another and growing. In fact, God has given us each spiritual gifts for use within the Body of Christ.

We need to help our children understand the importance of this. There is nothing magical about attending church or youth group. It won't protect us from going astray. But, fellowshiping with other believers in the context of a local congregation is an important part of our spiritual life and development. Sitting under sound biblical teaching on a regular basis leads to spiritual maturity.

Local church involvement is what God desires for us. We need to be actively involved ourselves. And remember, your kids are watching.

“LET US NOT GIVE UP MEETING TOGETHER.”
HEBREWS 10:25

HELPFUL RESOURCE ←

Today's youth are a savvy, diverse, and fast-paced generation who are seeking for relevant truth and personal acceptance in a world that seems to offer both in things like money, fame, sex, drugs, sports, media, education, and careers. For many young people, Christianity is so ten years ago - a boring religion that my parents believed, but is no longer relevant in this 21st century culture. How can we make the timeless message of the Gospel applicable and interesting to our postmodern youth? This film series from Alpha Youth is a refreshing answer to that question. The Alpha Youth Film Series is available in DVD format, or also in digital video format preloaded on a USB Flash Drive. Discussion questions and worksheets are also available.

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