

CPYU PARENT PAGE

THE CENTER FOR PARENT/YOUTH
UNDERSTANDING

Helping **parents** understand **teenagers** and their world



WALT MUELLER, CPYU President



YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

“99.9 percent of all the comments are so nice and so empowering and motivating and supportive [but] there’s that, like, one, tiny, like, .01 percent that are just, like, so angry at their life that they want to hate on you.”

YouTube star Lauren Riihimaki (a.k.a. LaurDIY), on the INSTANT Interview Stage at Vidcon, June 23, 2017.



In our own brokenness, we as parents will oftentimes employ parenting strategies built on the assumption that we are the ones who can instill or even inflict change in our kids. But as parenting expert Paul Tripp reminds us in his book *Parenting: Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family*, it is vital that we recognize that the source of our parenting power does not lie within ourselves. Tripp writes, “You have no power whatsoever to change your child.” Rather, “parenting is about your humble faithfulness in being willing to participate in God’s work of change for the sake of your children.” It is God and only God who can bring about change in your children.

If as parents we think that we have a power that we really don’t have, we will do things that we should not do and we will fail to do the things that are vital to do. Paul Tripp lists three commonly used tools of parental power that we *think* will bring change in our kids. Sadly, I’ve been guilty of using all three.

First, there’s the tool of *fear*. This is the tool that leaves us believing that if we issue big enough threats, our kids will develop a big enough fear that will lead to change. While threats can be temporarily effective, they lead our kids to change their behavior because they become scared, rather than being motivated by an internal desire to do what is right as a way to honor and glorify God.

Second, there’s the tool of *reward*. This is a tool that relies on manipulation to bring about the desired end of changed behavior. In this case, it’s the promise of getting something that results in behavioral conformity. . . temporarily. Rather than leading our kids into learning what is right, acknowledging that it’s right, confessing that they’ve been wrong, and committing to a new way of living, we are conditioning them to pursue a cost/benefit analysis that will never result in heart change.

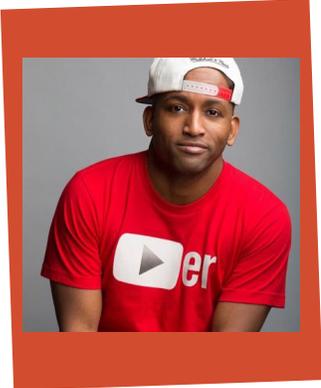
Finally, there’s the tool of *shame*. Saying things like “After all we’ve done for you, and this is the way you’re going to treat us” is nothing more than a power play we use to shame and guilt our children into doing what is right. Tripp says that “making your child feel horizontal guilt (this guilt is about you) is very different from giving your child insight into his heart that causes him to feel vertical guilt (this is guilt with respect to God) and the desire to change.”

While our attempts to strong-arm our kids into change might flow from pure motives, they will only lead to short term behavioral conformity rather than long-term heart change. Instead of depending on our power, good parenting “lives at the intersection of a humble admission of personal powerlessness and a confident rest in the power and grace of God.” Be a humble and faithful tool in the hands of God, prayerfully relying on Him to bring about change in your kids. ★

TOP 7...

Trendsetters
(Creators who hit the sweet spot before it was a trend)

Source:
Time Inc.'s Instant Platform:
New Fame List



1. Loren Gray

2. Swoozie

3. Teala Dunn

4. Jojo Siwa

5. Rudy Mancuso

6. Renny

7. Ari Fitz



QUICK STATS

28% of young people killed in motor vehicle accidents from 2000-2013 were killed in accidents where the driver had an alcohol level above the legal limit.
(Pediatrics)

In a study of more than 1,200 college athletes between 2010 and 2014, 23% of women and 17% of men reported having at least one concussion during their college careers.
(Columbia University Medical Center)

FROM THE NEWS:

LESS DRUG USE BECAUSE OF ELECTRONIC ADDICTION?

Late last year, there was good news on the war against drugs. While we do have a growing problem with marijuana, opioids, and prescription drugs, overall drug use by teenagers is trending down. But researchers are now asking the question, "Are teenagers using drugs less because they are increasingly occupied with their computers and smartphones?" In other words, are they simply trading one diversion and addiction for another diversion and addiction? David Greenfield, founder of The Center for Internet and Technology Addiction, says that today's young generation of digital natives has been carrying around a portable dopamine pump for the last ten years. And every time they focus their eyes on screens they are giving themselves a chemical release that feels really, really good. While the research on tech addiction is still in it's infancy, we would be very wise to set smartphone limits for our kids. What we don't yet know for sure can hurt them. Let's be safe.

TRENDS: SPORTS SUPPLEMENTS

Many of you probably have children and teens who are involved, perhaps even over-involved, in organized sports.

In today's world, playing organized sports is filled with pressure to compete and perform at the highest levels, all while improving your own game in the hope that you might receive accolades and scholarships. The pressures are huge. This has led many kids and their parents to seek an edge through the use of sports supplements. Medical professionals are issuing warnings about the dangers of sports supplements. First, they are largely unregulated.

No independent oversight is given to production and dispensing. Second, there is the potential for muscle damage, including strains, pulls, and tears. And finally, kids rarely follow the recommended dosages, with increases in dosages happening regularly. Parents, relieve the idolatrous sports pressure. We're giving them too much. And, teach them about stewardship and care of their bodies.



LATEST RESEARCH:

MILLENNIALS AND FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE

There's been a lot of talk lately about the generation known as the Millennials. The people who fall into this generational designation have been born between 1982 and 2004. Researchers and

observers have been noting many marks and characteristics that set the Millennials apart from previous generations. Critics have been especially concerned about how doting parents have mis-shaped Millennials, thereby leaving them entitled and largely irresponsible in adulthood. Recent research from the Institute for Social Research Transition into Adulthood

has found that about 40% of 22-24 year-olds are getting significant financial assistance from their parents. Much of that money goes towards housing and start-up capital. Parents, it's a good thing when we support adult children, helping them to overcome economic difficulties when they are taking strides to move forward and become completely independent. But we should never enable lazy adult children.

COLLEGE TRANSITION INITIATIVE

a resource of CPYU

www.CollegeTransitionInitiative.com



College and The Digital Footprint

by Walt Mueller



Once again, we've been reminded that what we post can hurt us. . . especially when it comes to the college admission process. Last month, Harvard University rescinded admission to at least 10 high school seniors who were slated to arrive on campus this fall with the rest of the incoming Class of 2021. Each member of the group posted offensive material on a privately formed Facebook group that at one time was titled "Harvard memes for horny bourgeois teens." *The Harvard Crimson* reported that the students posted a variety of images that mocked the deaths of children, the Holocaust, sexual assault, and targeted minority groups.

Harvard's action reminds us of our need to not only teach right and wrong to our children and teens, but to train them to use social media in ways that reflect that which is good, true, right and honorable. Of course, we don't want them to keep from posting offensive material simply to avoid getting caught or having to pay consequences like rescinded college admission down the road. Rather, we want them to steer away from posting immoral and offensive content because they want to glorify God in all that they do and say.

Podcast

Youth Culture Matters is a 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

Some of God's greatest wisdom for parents comes to us through the Apostle Paul and the letters he penned some 2,000 years ago. Near the end of his letter to the Philippians (4:4-7), Paul strings together three instructions that are incredibly relevant and helpful for parents raising children and teens in today's confusing and sometimes frightening world. Paul reminds us that as Christians - confused and anxious Christian parents - we are to rejoice, be gentle, and relieve our anxiety through prayer.

**“LET YOUR
GENTLENESS BE
EVIDENT TO ALL. THE
LORD IS NEAR.”
PHILIPPIANS 4:5**

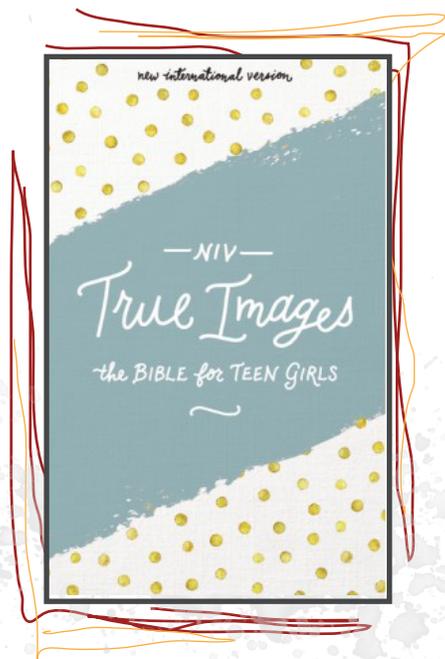
The commands to rejoice and then to seek God's help in prayer remind us of our need to rely on God as we ride the parenting roller coaster. But what we often so selfishly forget is our need to go out of our way to bring honor and glory to God by treating all people - including our kids - with gentleness. In the New Testament, “gentleness” is marked by concentrating on the needs of others, even when we think we haven't been treated justly. And what parent hasn't experienced unjust responses from a child?!?

When God calls us into the blessing of Christian parenthood there is a fundamental forfeiture of our own personal rights. While we are instructed to teach and model right and wrong to our children, we are also called to be “gentle” by becoming yielding, kind, and courteous to our kids. Christ did the same for us! And as we obediently follow in His footsteps and commands, we will be actively teaching our children to grow up to become gentle in ways that are not only pleasing to God, but a testimony to the watching (and very self-centered) world.

HELPFUL RESOURCE ←

Updated for this generation, the newest edition of the *NIV True Images Bible* is packed with tools and insights to help teen girls see themselves through the eyes of their Heavenly Father and to navigate their lives with confidence, love, and grace.

Facing today's contemporary issues can be difficult, but this Bible gives teen girls a fresh perspective on faith-related issues and provides tools to thrive in a complex world. Teen girls will ask the big questions, take valuable lessons to heart, and help others do the same.



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