

What your teen needs is you

December 2006



"The one thing your teen desperately needs for Christmas is YOU."

The single most asked question by parents to their teens during the holiday season is, "What do you want for Christmas?" Of course, teens will easily pull out their "must-have" list. Parents then spend hours searching for gifts online or hours looking in stores and standing in lines at the mall. If you read between the lines of your teen's Christmas list, there is one thing that is on the top of their list, even if they aren't aware of it. The one thing your teen desperately needs for Christmas is YOU. Your immediate response may be, "You are CRAZY! That is actually the one thing I am certain that they don't want!" Parenting alone is beyond busy. Now add the rest of your life...work, church, volunteering, friends, etc. At times it seems impossible to accomplish it all. Teens' schedules aren't any better. The problem is our teens are picking up our bad habits that allow the busyness of the day to rob the joy of taking time for each other. As the New Year is quickly approaching, there is a formula that parents need to keep in mind:

Time Spent + Interest = LOVE

Teens don't just need quality time, they also want it. When you get home from an exhausting day, do you sit in front of the TV to relax or do you engage in conversation and interaction with your teen? The first response is easy, but the second response is hard, yet necessary. Showing interest is giving your undivided attention to your teen. Find out what interests them, and talk about it. The commitment you make to the time and interest you show your teen will translate into love. So this Christmas, give the gift that will cost you some time and leave a lasting impression. Merry Christmas!

Take the first steps in making your family time a priority. Here are some ideas for creating family time this Christmas season.

1. Schedule family time NOW. You will not make time for your family during this busy season without scheduling it in advance. This week figure out time for your family to spend with each other.

2. Turn off the "world". Get your family to turn off the TV, computer, or ipod. This will get them out of their own world and become a part of your family's world. You would be amazed how much time your family will have when you take control of these "time stealers."

3. Get your serve on. Find a service project you can do with your family. Check with your church about the needs of a family or individual.

4. There's no place like home. With your teen on Christmas break, try to get home earlier from work each day. This will take some effort on your part, but it is a worthy goal.



These polls just might surprise you.

If you (teen) had one wish, which of the following would you wish for to create a better life for you and your family?

- 46% - More time spent together with family.
 - 27% - More money to buy items such as TV's or cars.
 - 14% - A bigger house.
 - 7% - More time in spiritual pursuits - going to church.
- (horatioalger.org)



Do you (parent) spend more or less time with your children/teens than your parents did with you?

- 61% - I spend more time than my parents did.
 - 19% - I spend about the same amount of time.
 - 17% - I spend less time.
 - 3% - I am not sure.
- (cf.thebostonchannel.com)

The Parent POV

(point of view)

We all know spending time with our teens is important. Think about these questions to determine how well you know your teen, what he/she would like to do as a family, and what you as a parent would like to do as a family.

1. Have your teen write down five of their favorite things to do while you write down what you think his/her answers will be. Now compare both lists. How did you do? What does this tell you about how well you know your son/daughter?

2. Do you think you take genuine interest in what your teen likes to do? Why or why not?

3. What is one thing you would like to see your family do together this coming year?

4. Do you think your family spends enough time together? Why or why not?



Focus on Prayer

Pray that:

1. God will give you rest and relaxation as a family this Christmas break.
2. God will give you a genuine desire to know, understand, and value what your teen enjoys in his/her life.
3. God will help you make finding time this coming year to spend with your family a top priority.
4. Your teen will see your family as a place of safety, support, encouragement, comfort, and love.

Verse of the month

"Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand. This too is a grievous evil: As a man comes, so he departs, and what does he gain, since he toils for the wind?" Ecclesiastes 5:15-16 (NIV)

Let's face it, we work very hard for what we have. The problem comes when we labor for the wrong things in life. Having all the money in the world doesn't compare to a child that is living for the Lord. I know many parents would give up everything for their teen to make right and Godly decisions. As Christian parents, quit toiling for the wind. While working and having a job is a crucial part of life, so is working on how much time you spend with your family. Every moment you spend with your teen, whether special or mundane, WILL make a huge deposit in their life. Take the role of discipling your teen proudly. This is the most noble job a parent can have!



Did you know...

* Up to 67 percent of America's teens say they actually want to spend more time with their parents. That's according to an online survey of 1,250 adults and teens conducted by Opinion Research Corporation. (Boys and Girls Club - bgcgg.org)

* According to a study by the New York Times, married and single parents spend more time teaching, playing with and caring for their children than their parents did in the 1960s. (nytimes.com)

* While nearly a quarter of teen respondents said their parents don't seem to have enough time to spend with them, the majority of the parents surveyed did not report having struggles with finding enough time to spend with their kids. This disconnect may be the result of parents underestimating the amount of time their kids want and need from adults. (Boys and Girls Club - bgcgg.org)

* Family dinners have decreased by 33% over the past 20 years, and family vacations have decreased by 28%. (playingforkeeps.org)



Music alternative

This Pennsylvania based punk rock band, **Last Tuesday**, has been busy touring all over the world. "Fans of Reliant K, Taking Back Sunday, Midtown, and Jimmy Eat World will not be disappointed with this band." Their newest album, "Becoming What You Believe," is challenging the lives of the band members as well as those who listen. Even with the notoriety that is quickly pursuing them, the group still tries to focus on the most important things. Lead singer Steve Gee states, "I am finding myself wanting to share to the hundreds of kids who will get this record, that I am a Christian."

(familychristian.com)

TRENDS

Does your teen have a credit card?

A recent Junior Achievement poll says more than 10% of the teenagers surveyed had credit cards. That number of teens owning their own card grows as they get older from about 5% of teens ages 13 and 14, to nearly 10% by age 17, to close to 20% for teens 18 and older.

(connectwithteens.com)

musicspotlight



Albums:

"Maximum Panic at the Disco" - 10/2006

"A Fever You Can't Sweat Out" - 9/2005

Background: This 4 member, pop-punk band burst out of Suburban Las Vegas in 2005, fresh out of high school. "Crafting pop-influenced songs with theatrical touches, quirky techno beats and perceptive lyrics, Panic! at the Disco posted some demos online and soon caught the attention of Fueled by Ramen." They became the first band to sign to the label though they had never played a live show. Playing on successful tours such as Nintendo Fusion Tour, Lollapalooza and in U.K.'s Reading and Leeds festivals, the band increased notoriety and found its way to MTV's TRL and Top 40. Their first album has sold over 1.3 million copies and there is talk of Grammy nominations according to billboard.com. (sonicnet.com)

What Parents Should Know: Their lyrics contain some foul language and deal with such topics as infidelity, addiction, sex, and mocking "faux" religion.

Parent/Teen Q&A: There is a quote in the song, "I Constantly Thank God for Esteban", "Give us this day our daily dose of faux affliction. Forgive our sins, forged at the pulpit with forked tongues selling faux sermons." Q: What kind of message do you think Panic is sending to their fans with these words? Does this raise any questions in your mind about what they say? Why or why not?



filmwatch

Do you want your teen seeing the following new releases?

TITLE	RATING	RED FLAGS	GENRE	STARRING
DOA: Dead or Alive	PG-13	For pervasive martial arts and action violence, some sexuality, and nudity	Action	Jaime Pressley, Devon Aoki
Van Wilder: Rise of the Taj	R	For pervasive crude sexual content, some nudity, and language	Comedy	Glen Bary, Lauren Cohan, Anthony Cozens
The Nativity Story	PG	For some violent content	Drama	Keisha Castle-Hughes, Oscar Isaac

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Way of the Master Training Time: 9AM Big Church Time 10:30AM	4	5	6 Student Worship Gathering Time: 6:30-8:00PM	7	8	9
10 Way of the Master Training Time: 9AM Big Church Time 10:30AM Student Ministry Workers Christmas Party (For all college, youth, and children's ministry workers) Time: 6PM Where: Youth Hall Entertainment: Al Fike, Christian Comedian Cost: Free	11	12	13 Student Worship Gathering Time: 6:30-8:00PM	14	15	16 EMERGE Christmas Party Time: 6PM Cost: \$5 What: Video Scavenger Hunt FOOD, Videos, MORE FOOD, Fun times, MORE FOOD
17 Way of the Master Training Time: 9AM Big Church Time 10:30AM	18	19	20 Student Worship Gathering Time: 6:30-8:00PM	21	22	23
24 Worship Service Time: 10:30AM	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!	26	27 Leave for Clarity Winter Retreat Time: 9AM	28	29 Return from Clarity Winter Retreat Time: 5PM	30
31 Worship Service Time: 10:30AM						