

Putting violence and fear in perspective

November 2006



"Now, not only do schools have fire drills, but they also have to practice "lock-down" procedures in case of any sort of a threat."

It seems our teens are not safe anywhere they go. From the highly publicized October shooting at a Pennsylvania Amish school to the senseless violence that happens at our area malls and stores, our world is spinning out of control. Parents of teens today grew up in a society where it was safe to play outside and where the school grounds were a safe place. Now, not only do schools have fire drills, but they also have to practice "lock-down" procedures in case of any sort of a threat. While this is a concern to parents, there are a few things to keep in mind. God has shown us in the Bible (Matthew 24) that our world is only going to get worse. What is happening in our world is disheartening, but not surprising. As Christians, we must take action, get out into the trenches, and share the love of Christ to a hurting world. We also must put these violent circumstances in perspective. According to the Department of Education, the chance of being killed in a school is less than one in a million. While the media will obviously draw attention to a tragic event, students and parents need to understand that schools are typically a safe environment. Parents must be proactively involved in the school or community in which your teen participates. This allows you to be informed about what is being done to establish and maintain a safe environment. While we know the world is not safe, it's comforting to know that Christ promises to be "our Rock, our Fortress, and our Deliverer." (Psalm 18:2a) This reminds us where our trust should be placed...Who we should rely on to keep our teens safe!

Here are some suggestions on being proactive to ensure your school is doing everything it can to keep teens safe.

1. Stay involved in your teen's school.

Get to know your child's teachers and help them get to know you and your child. Communicate with the teacher throughout the school year, not just when problems arise. Volunteer at school functions.

2. Ask Questions. Make an appointment with your school's principle to discuss the different security measures that are enforced and the school's safety plan. Ask how many times a year your school practices emergency drills.

3. Join or start a School Safety Team. The team should include school and community officials, parents, and teens. According to the National Crime Prevention Council, the crime rate can decrease by as much as 30 percent through violence prevention initiatives.

4. Talk to your teen. Reinforce to your teen to notify a teacher if he/she sees anything suspicious or out of place. It's important to talk to your teen about their fears and anxiety at school.



Here are some interesting polls about school shootings and zero tolerance. Do you agree?

What factor is most responsible for school shootings?

- 15% - Mental illness/the copy cat syndrome.
- 18% - Easy access to guns and/or violent media.
- 32% - Poor parenting and problems at home.
- 20% - "God" is missing from the classroom.
- 15% - Trouble with teachers and classmates.

familyeducation.com

Should all schools adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards any type of violence?

- 50% - Yes, violence of any type cannot be tolerated.
- 42% - No, zero tolerance does not take individual circumstances into account.
- 7% - Not sure...this one is tough.

about.com



The Parent POV

(point of view)

Here are some questions to help start the conversation with your teen about their thoughts and opinions on school violence. Their answers just might surprise you.

1. Do you feel safe at your school? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever witnessed a fight at your school? What did the teachers do to break it up? What did the students do to break it up?
3. Have you ever been threatened at school? If you were, who would you go to on the school campus?
4. What do you think could be done to keep your school safer? Do you think your ideas could really happen? Why or why not?



Focus on Prayer

Pray that:

1. God will place a hedge of protection around your teen as they continue to live in a world spinning out of control.
2. God will give you a supernatural peace and assurance that He will take care of your teen at home, at work, at play, or at school.
3. God will meet the needs of the families affected by the recent school shootings in our country.
4. God will bless and give wisdom to your teen's teachers and administrators as they teach, encourage, and assist you in the growth and maturity of your teen.

Verse of the month

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. II Chronicles 7:14 (NIV)

"If" is a very big word in this verse. Sure, many of us say that we pray, but how many times this week have you just gotten on your knees, called to the Lord, and truly sought His face? This prayer is an earnest plea, a request that burns within us to see God move in our nation and in our people. It's amazing to see what happens when we seek God. As we seek Him, we turn our heads away from the things of this world, and focus our eyes on Him. IF we do these things, THEN He will hear from heaven. What a humbling, awesome thought that God hears us when we pray! An even more humbling thought is that He freely forgives His children by His grace. Let us lift our nation, our schools, and our homes to God. Only then will we see true healing.



Did you know...

* 35% of parents with children/teens said they fear for their safety when they're at school. That percentage was the highest since March 11, 2001, when 45% of parents voiced such concern after a shooting at a suburban San Diego high school killed two students and injured 13 others. (usatoday.com)

* Although one-third of parents said they're anxious about their child's safety, 88% said their adolescents expressed no worry about safety at school. (usatoday.com)

* There were a total of 27 reported school-related violent deaths in the 2005-2006 school year. (schoolsecurity.org)

* Federal funding for a grant program that helps U.S. schools pay for programs to prevent substance abuse and violence has declined significantly. Funding was \$439.2 million in 2001 but has fallen to \$346.5 million this year, with \$310 million recommended for 2007. (cnn.com)



Music alternative

Pettidee (Dewayne Petty), has always had a love for music. He has lived through being molested, hustling on the streets, and an addiction with drugs and alcohol. He felt God's calling on his life in 1998 and surrendered his life to Christ. Throughout his career as an artist and producer, he has worked and performed with many different artists, including the Christian hip-hop group GRITS. "Thug Love", his latest album, is available in stores now. For more information about Pettidee and to listen to some of his songs, go to www.myspace.com/pettidee.
(cdparty.com)
(myspace.com/pettidee)

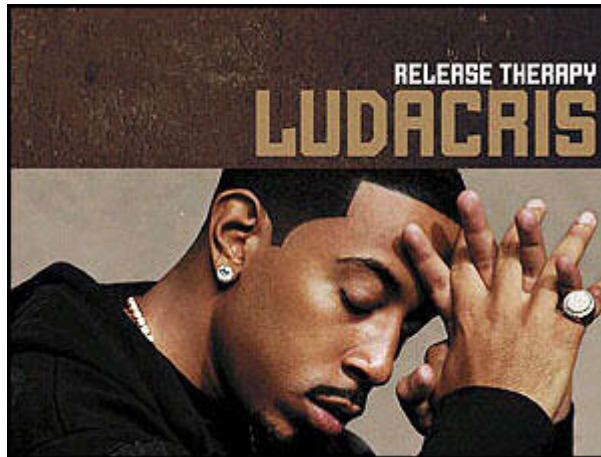
TRENDS

Teens were asked their favorite brand of tennis shoes? Here are their top six answers:

- 31% - Nike
- 13% - Adidas
- 9% - Puma
- 10% - Converse
- 7% - New Balance
- 4% - Reebok

(about.com)

musicspotlight



Albums:
"Release Therapy" - 9/2006
"The Red Light District" - 12/2004
"Chicken-N-Beer" - 11/2003

Background: Early in his career, Ludacris (Chris Bridges) DJed at a radio station. "He used the opportunity to hone his craft on the mic, learn about the industry, and make a name for himself throughout the Atlanta area, which had become the South's rap mecca starting in the mid '90's." He pursued his rapping career and released his first album in 2000. Ludacris continued to release hit songs that remained on the charts and his popularity grew. He has been heard performing with such artists as Missy Elliott and Jermaine Dupri, as well as touring with Outkast. He has had success with his acting career, receiving two SAG nominations. sonicnet.com

What Parents Should Know: This album contains a Parental Advisory warning. The foul language is too numerous to count, and there are several references to drugs and violence. It is sexually explicit throughout. What is surprising and confusing is his song, "Freedom of Preach" where he quotes pieces of Scripture and deals with forgiveness and doing what is right in God's eyes.

FYI: If you would like to do further investigation on Ludacris, check out the following websites:
www.myspace.com/ludacris
www.defjam.com (click on "artist" button on the top of main page and then click Ludacris)

stranger
than
fiction



filmwatch

Know which movies are targeting teens this month!

| TITLE | RATING | RED FLAGS | GENRE | STARRING |
|-----------------------|--------|--|-----------------|--|
| The Return | PG-13 | For violence, terror and disturbing images | Horror/suspense | Sarah Michelle Gellar, Kate Beahan, Peter O'Brien, Adam Scott, Sam Shepard |
| Hood of Horror | R | For pervasive strong violence and gore, sexuality, nudity and language | Comedy, horror | Snoop Dogg, Ernie Hudson, Danny Trejo, Pooch Hall |
| Stranger Than Fiction | PG-13 | For some disturbing images, sexuality, brief language and nudity | Comedy | Will Ferrell, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Dustin Hoffman, Queen Latifah, Emma Thompson, Tony Hale |

NOVEMBER 2006

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--------|---|---|----------|--------|--|
| | | | 1 The Peak Time: 6:30 - 8pm Place: Youth Hall | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 Way of the Master Training Time: 9am Place: Youth Hall Donuts and Juice! | 6 | 7 | 8 The Peak Time: 6:30 - 8pm Place: Youth Hall | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 Way of the Master Training Time: 9am Place: Youth Hall Donuts and Juice! | 13 | 14 | 15 EMERGE Night 6pm - 9pm FEATURING: The Chris Allen Band Cost: FREE Smoothie King is doing drinks for \$1 DON'T MISS IT! | 16 | 17 | 18 The Ultimate Battle of the Sexes: A High School Only Activity 6pm - 9pm Cost: \$5 Youth Hall Come find out which gender really is better... |
| 19 Way of the Master Training Time: 9am Place: Youth Hall Donuts and Juice! | 20 | 21 Tuesday Night Worship Church is cancelled for Wednesday, make sure you join us for worship on Tuesday. Same time! | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 Way of the Master Training Time: 9am Place: Youth Hall Donuts and Juice! | 27 | 28 | 29 The Peak Time: 6:30 - 8pm Place: Youth Hall | 30 | | |

Upcoming Events ~ More Information

Winter Retreat

Payments DUE 11/15/06

Contact the Student Ministry Office for Balance Owed

If there are issues, let us know we'll work them out.