



ALLOW TIME FOR FAITH GROWTH

Amid all the activities your teenagers have planned for this summer, where does faith development rank? When the sunshine beckons, church attendance and personal time with God often suffer.

But summer can be a great time for families to talk about God and deepen relationships with Him. Use travel time for in-depth conversations about kids' beliefs. Attend Christian concerts and outdoor worship services. Visit different churches to spark teenagers' thoughts about what they believe and why. Together, help with vacation Bible school or a local outreach project to put "feet" to your faith.

Practicing "spiritual disciplines" is another way to grow as followers of Christ. Devote a portion of your summer to modeling and practicing the following God-connecting disciplines with your kids:

- Solitude—Go on an iPod-free hike, allowing time for silent prayer.
- Simplicity—Keep your schedules simple and get rid of extra "stuff."
- Abandon—Serve without expecting acknowledgment or praise.
- Submission—Trust God as Almighty, and treat people as treasures.
- Worship—Expand your worship to everyday experiences.
- Fellowship—Establish faith traditions and make Jesus your top priority.

THE VIEW

- In a survey about summer, 40% of preteens and younger teens said they'd likely be bored, and only 10% expected to be overscheduled. A majority of older teens, meanwhile, said they relish the freedom and independence that summer brings.

—kidshealth.org

- Because of the recession, many teenagers have extra time on their hands during summer. Last year, only 25% of U.S. teens had summer jobs, and competition is tough again this year. Instead, more kids are now taking summer classes.

TIPS >>>

This summer, help kids solve the truth of their unique identity.

Youth ministry pioneer Dan Webster uses a Four-Window Model to help teenagers get a lasting taste of who they are, what they should do with their life, and how their talents can find their sweet-spot out in the real world:

1. **Observation.** Realize that a story is unfolding right before your eyes and slow down enough to see it. Pay closer-than-normal attention to your teenagers and to what they notice. This conveys interest and value.
2. **Exploration.** Adults with an explorer's heart push into new territory, understanding on ever-deeper levels the

terrain of a teenager's life. Inspire kids to learn about themselves by trying new opportunities and adventures. Then discuss their reactions and identify their interests and strengths.

3. **Affirmation.** This unleashes the power of telling kids what's right with them, rather than criticizing. See beyond what might need to change and communicate the upside truth of the person God has created them to be.
4. **Revelation.** God knows our teenagers better and loves them deeper than we ever could. We need his help to show kids they're fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). God can help us identify and call out what he's put into each of them.

PONDER THIS

- What were your most memorable summers, and why?
- If you could do anything with your teenagers this summer, what would it be?
- What steps can you take this summer to help your kids explore their true identity in Christ?





Define Summer ‘Success’

Expert Insights for Parents of Teenagers

By Walt Mueller

School’s out, and kids are enjoying summer vacation—or are they? Teenagers struggle to balance jobs, athletics and other activities, camps, volunteer work, mission trips, and lessons. These are all good things...as long as there’s still time to relax and do things together as a family. But summer busyness can lead to madness.

The primary goal of these chaotic schedules is all too often parent-driven, as we try to better our kids and improve their ability to be “successful” in their futures. Unfortunately, the end result of parental pressure and pushiness isn’t always what was intended. Some kids stress out. Others start

to believe that their parents’ love for them depends on their performance. Stress builds, relationships weaken, rebellion flares, and depression may result.

Developmental expert Cliff Schimmels says: “The one prayer I pray most frequently as a parent...is that the Lord will give me the wisdom to know how much to expect of my children. If I expect too little of them, they may waste their gifts. If I expect too much, I may destroy them with an unrealistic burden.”

Now that three of my own kids are grown, I’ve had a chance to reflect on how we raised them. I should

have said no to the summer busyness in our family more often. A well-placed “no” can be a great big “yes” to family time, a truly restful summer vacation, and a wonderful opportunity to spend a few months teaching kids about the true meaning of success.

True success in life is faithfulness and obedience to God. Our desire for our kids should be the same as God’s desire for them: that they become like Christ in all things. What must we do to make that happen? We must know the truth from God’s word, talk about it, live it with our teenagers, model it, experience it together, and prayerfully trust God to change our teens’ hearts and minds.

—SimplyYouthMinistry.com

RESOURCE



In *KidUnique* (Simply Youth Ministry), Dan Webster shows parents how to make a life-changing impact on teenagers’ lives. Parents can put the ideas into practice with a 31-day experience with their kids.

BIBLE FOCUS

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

1 Timothy 5:17 NIV

Remember to pray for Pastor Tony

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

MAINSTREAM MUSIC



MATISYAHU

Background: Matisyahu blends reggae and alt-rock with traditional Jewish themes. His hits include “King Without a Crown” and “One Day.” He recently shaved his beard and has appeared without a yarmulke but says he hasn’t abandoned his faith. If kids lack a foundation of truth about Christianity (as most studies show), this sort of music can turn their faith into a hodge-podge. They’ll mix KJ-52’s Christianity with Matisyahu’s Judaism with the Beastie Boys’ Buddhism and come out with a shallow mess.

Albums: *Spark Seeker* (2012), *Light* (2009), *Youth* (2006)

What Matisyahu Says: “Vocal rest is awesome. It is like any kind of fast. Firstly, it is a purification of speech. It made me realize how not careful I am with the things I say. It also makes you find new ways of communication and new methods to connect with people.”

Explore: The video for “King Without a Crown”—with helpful lyrics—is here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChV5BZ8SmS0

CHRISTIAN MUSIC



BELLARIVE

Background: Bellarive just released their first full-length album, following last year’s critically acclaimed EP, *The Being Human Project*. Gungor fans will love Bellarive—not because they sound particularly alike but because they both meld art with music to create an intriguing whole. From the use of harmonies to multiple instruments, this definitely feels like a collective band.

Albums: *The Heartbeat* (2012), *The Being Human Project* (2010)

What Bellarive Says: “The Creator is continuously stirring the souls of all his children toward himself. We believe that God creates his children with specific design to reveal and bring glory to himself in unique ways. For the six of us, that gift is creating music.”

Explore: Videos of Bellarive’s live experiences are at www.bellarive.com. You can also see videos on YouTube.

MOVIES

Movie: *The Dark Knight Rises*

Genre: Action, Thriller

Rating: PG-13

Synopsis: A mysterious masked man comes to Gotham to take on Batman. Other than the inclusion of Catwoman, plot details of the trilogy’s final installment are under wraps.

Our Take: Director-writer Christopher Nolan has made some of the most compelling movies of the last 10 years. His reboot of this franchise has been incredible, and this wrap-up should be no different.

Movie: *The Amazing Spider-Man*

Genre: Action, Adventure

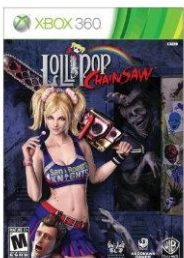
Rating: PG-13

Synopsis: In the reboot of this film franchise, a spider bite gives Peter Parker incredible powers. This time he searches for his parents’ secrets, which lead him straight to a faceoff with The Lizard.

Our Take: *Spider-Man* has always been one of the “safer” superhero franchises—with little cursing, no sex, and nonbloody violence. I’m not sure yet if this one will be different, but Marvel’s track record is pretty good.

For more media discussions and ideas, go to www.MinistryandMedia.com.

VIDEO GAMES



Lollipop Chainsaw—This game is getting a lot of buzz, mostly because the main character is a scantily clad, zombie-hunting cheerleader. So it’s a mixture of objectification and extreme violence—exactly what teenagers should *not* be exposed to. (Rated M.)

The Walking Dead: The Game—This title, based on AMC’s hit TV show, is being released in episodes throughout the next year. Just like the show, though, the game is incredibly violent and bloody. (Rated M.)

JULY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hume SD	Hume SD	Hume SD Mercy B-day	Hume SD Independence Day	Hume SD	Hume SD	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Ellie B-day			Pool Party #3 ms 5-7p & HS 7-9p Tegan B-day			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Empalme Mexico Trip	Empalme Mexico Trip	Empalme Mexico Trip	Empalme Mexico Trip	Empalme Mexico Trip	Empalme Mexico Trip	Empalme Mexico Trip Amanda B-day
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
			Pool Party #4 ms 5-7p & HS 7-9p		Alisa B-day Haley B-day	Girls of Grace
29	30	31	1	2	3	
UCYC	UCYC	UCYC	UCYC	UCYC	UCYC	

August:

8.5: Promotion SONday 9am

8.5: Camp Celebration Night 6pm

8.8: First Wed. PULSE of School Year

www.pulseyouthgroup.org