

CPYU PARENT PAGE

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"Solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."
- Hebrews 5:14 (NIV)

MEDIA AND YOUR KIDS

BY WALT MUELLER

TOP 10 MOST PIRATED MOVIES ON BitTorrent (SOURCE: TorrentFreak.com)

1. *Legion*
2. *Edge of Darkness*
3. *Old Dogs*
4. *Sherlock Holmes*
5. *Avatar*
6. *Couples Retreat*
7. *The Hurt Locker*
8. *Tooth Fairy*
9. *Daybreakers*
10. *Agora*

YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

"Curbing the viral spread of videos isn't benefiting the company's bottom line, or the music it's there to support. The sooner record companies realize this, the better — though I fear it may already be too late."

- Damien Kulash, lead singer of OK Go, speaking of his record companies policy regarding the online posting of music videos, *RollingStone.com*, February 22, 2010

The kids you're raising are living in a media world very different from the media world you inhabited when you were their age. Since the days when we were teens, the number of media outlets and delivery technologies have multiplied exponentially. It's a trend that continues to snowball leaving us all – regardless of age – out of touch at some level. Today's kids have more media *and* they're using more media. Tomorrow's kids – literally *tomorrow's* kids – will have and use even more. But for now, three overarching trends deserve our attention.

First, media use is on the rise. . . and the rise is enormous. Our kids are using an average of 7 hours and 38 minutes a day! These numbers reveal just how great a potential *and* very real life-shaping influence media has on the emerging generations of kids we've been called to lead to the Bread of Life and Living Water.

Second, they're going mobile. Researchers report that 20 percent of media consumption (2 hours and 7 minutes a day) occurs on mobile devices including cell phones, iPods, or handheld video game players. Advances in mobile media platforms enables the media to "go with" the kids, thereby giving them even more opportunity to consume media's messages throughout the course of the day. . . wherever they are.

Third, they're going it alone. In today's bedroom, 71 percent of 8- to 18-year-olds have their own television, 49 percent have cable or satellite TV access, and 24

percent have premium channels. Consequently, vulnerable kids are left to sort out everything they see and hear for themselves.

If we are called to teach them to integrate faith into all of life and a large and growing segment of their "all of life" is time spent with media, what should we do? Here are two simple suggestions that I believe will go a long way in nurturing faith in a media-saturated world.

First, get your own media use in order. This involves taking inventory of how much media you're using along with how you're using it. Begin by asking God to challenge and change your media use habits if they're not pleasing to him.

Second, teach kids how to evaluate everything they see and hear through the framework of a biblical worldview. We must teach them skills for listening and watching critically and carefully. We want to nurture them to a place where they engage media through the eyes, ears, and minds of a Christian worldview. In this way, they will learn to discern the positive and negative aspects of media.

Over the last few years of culture-watching, I've become increasingly convinced that addressing issues related to developing media and media consumption must be at the forefront of our parental agendas. Media is here and here to stay. What will you do in response?

CPYU TREND ALERT: BLOW ENERGY DRINK

The popularity of highly caffeinated energy drinks among children and teens continues to grow. The latest news is almost hard to believe. There's a new player in the energy drink market that comes in the form of a granular rocky mix that is added to a glass or bottle of water. What's frightening is that this energy drink mix is sold in a small vial, measured in grams, and packaged with a mirror on which to grind the rocks into powder before adding it to the drink.

Once added to the water, it packs a punch that's equal to two Red Bulls and three cups of coffee. And here's the scariest part. . . the energy drink is called Blow. In case you don't know it, Blow is slang for cocaine. Parents, this new energy drink warrants your attention not only because it can have harmful physical effects, but because it glamorizes the use of illegal drugs. This one might be hard to believe, but it is very, very real.

LATEST RESEARCH: SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Here are some interesting and helpful insights from the Fuller Youth Institute about the factors necessary for the spiritual growth of children and teens. Supportive, safe, and open youth group environments are critical to mature faith development. Youth group environments that are perceived by kids to be open and safe places to express doubt, questions, and problems are a predictor of a positive spiritual transition from high school to college. In addition, churches that foster intergenerational

relationships provide key links from adolescence to adulthood and from adolescent faith to adult faith. Having multiple relationships with older folks in the church is a huge factor in positive spiritual growth. And, two important ways that parents can have significant impact on their children's faith transition are by creating supportive relationships with their kids, as well as by regularly discussing issues of faith with them. Do your kids have these connections?



FROM THE WORD

As our children grow, they move from total dependence to a life of independence. In the beginning we tend to their every need. By the time they are teenagers, they should be well on their way to wisely taking responsibility for themselves. The same principle holds true when it comes to their spiritual lives. The writer of Hebrews tells us that just as we develop physically and move from sustenance on milk to sustenance on solid food, a sign of spiritual growth and maturity is moving from the elementary things of the faith to the meatier deep things that are marks of spiritual maturity (Hebrews 5:11-14).

What are you doing with your child to move him or her out of spiritual infancy? Hebrews

reminds us that fostering spiritual maturity requires us to wean our children off of spiritual "milk" by teaching them about the meatier things of God. In other words, we need to be teaching them the truths of God's Word so that they will develop the wisdom necessary to be able to not only grow in their faith, but to distinguish good from evil.

Because they are growing up in a world that bombards them with competing messages about how to live their lives, our children and teens need to develop skills in biblical discernment. If you want them to mature into a clear and Godly sense of right and wrong, you must live out *and* teach the Word.

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IN THE NEWS: THE POWERFUL ROLE OF MUSIC

The American Academy of Pediatrics recently released a policy statement on the impact of music, music lyrics, and music videos on children and youth. Here are some of their conclusions. Music plays an important role in the socialization of children and adolescents. Parents often are unaware of the lyrics to which their children are listening. The effect that popular music has on children's and adolescent's behavior and emotions is of paramount concern. Lyrics have become more explicit in their refer-

ences to drugs, sex, and violence over the years, particularly in certain genres. A teenager's preference for certain types of music could be correlated or associated with certain behaviors. Pediatricians and parents should be aware of this information. Furthermore, it is essential for pediatricians and parents to take a stand regarding music lyrics. This is good advice from the AAP. Parents, are you paying attention to what your kids are listening to?

