

#STAYCONNECTED



Build and maintain a close relationship with your kids. Take the time to really get to know them and their world. Be deeply involved in their lives. Spend time with them. What are their interests, likes and dislikes; hopes and dreams; disappointments, joys and fears? What does this crazy world look like through their eyes? Your kids are your window into their world. This takes communication: actually talking to each other, and especially listening. Eat dinner together...at a table. Get to know your kids' friends. Learning about their closest friends means learning much about them. The friends they choose now will determine the direction of their lives.

"Personal relevance trumps cultural relevance every time."

-Marv Penner, Director of Youth Specialties Canada



accountability and high doses of grace.

In a world that screams "Do whatever you want!" at our teenagers, with seemingly little consequence, it is important that parents establish and provide consistent boundaries. A fence is needed - a set of high standards that guides the way they live out their lives and helps them to make wise, godly decisions. What are movies we watch, apps we have, music we listen to, school, church, extra curricular activities, family time, money, to name a few? Set them together and hold each other in check. Don't forget that high standards and expectations are only effective when balanced with a delicate mix of consistent accountability and high doses of grace.

it is less restricting than it is freeing.

In a fenced playground. Sure, they want freedom to run and jump and climb, but what allows them to really play is the boundary that has been established. The fence provides guidance and safety -

#STAYWITHINTHEBOUNDARIES

Today's youth culture moves at a head-spinning pace. Just as we manage to catch up on what we're sure are the latest trends, we find out we are "sooo yesterday" - again. How can parents possibly keep up? How do we stay relevant - "connected to the matter at hand" - in a world that morphs every night while we sleep? How do we...



#STAYCURRENT
and
#STAYSANE ?
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DEUTERONOMY 6:6-8

#STAYINTHELOOP

While not everyone can be an expert in youth culture, it's important to not bury our heads in the sand when it comes to what's going on in the world of our kids. Walt Mueller and the team at the Center for Parent & Youth Understanding (gpyu.org) do an excellent job of keeping up with daily youth culture topics and trends - explaining their impact on the lives of our children and youth, evaluating them in light of the truth of the gospel and giving us tips on how to help our kids successfully navigate these issues. Paying attention to social media, magazines targeted to teens, popular TV shows, local and global news also helps us get a glimpse into culture. Ask your kids about local youth culture trends. They are, after all, your in-house experts.

#STAYONTOP

Research continues to tell us that parents are still the #1 influencers on kids' lives. That means you

- not the culture, not the media, not even friends - are your kids' greatest lasting influence as they grow into adulthood. Let's make the most of this tremendous opportunity for godly guidance and lasting imprint on the lives of our children. Point them to Jesus at every turn as you help them develop good morals and values.

Don't shy away from talking about difficult issues at home - everyone else out there is chiming in - they need to hear your voice.

#STAYTRUE

Study the truth of God's Word and help your kids to do the same. It is the one constant in an ever-changing world. Seek God's heart, his wisdom and discernment as you navigate the culture with your kids, looking for ways to intersect the trending with the Truth. Let's be careful never to water down, soften or massage the truth to fit the culture, but allow it to be a strong filter through which everything seen, heard or thought is processed. Pray for your kids daily as they journey and learn to make good choices on what is often a cluttered path. Trust God to "smooth out and straighten the road that lies ahead" of them. (Proverbs 3:6 VOICE)

"Never question the relevance of truth, but always question the truth of relevance." - Craig Bruce, Canadian Businessman

#STAYREAL

Someone has said "Children are great imitators, so let's give them something great to imitate." Our kids are in dire need of an authentic faith modelled for them - a real, non-compartmentalized faith that is lived out in real, everyday life. They need to see, learn and experience that their faith really matters in their everyday routine.

Helping our kids learn to integrate their faith into all aspects of their lives, rather than something they only do or talk about at church, is critically important.

The church should play an important role in helping kids weave their faith into life, but parents definitely have the home field advantage, with 28X more hours available to them. The home is a primary place where faith is nurtured, developed, and integrated - how are we doing?

