THE PARENT LINK
August 2013 FOR PARENTS OF TEENS
the GATHERING

HELP KIDS INVEST TIME WISELY

Adolescence offers many kids their first opportunity to manage their own schedules. Unfortunately, with all the obligations they must juggle, "free time" can become a foreign concept. Teenagers' waking hours are packed with school, homework, sports, clubs, work, and church activities. So much for the myth that the teen years are a time to just hang out!

Time-management guru Stephen R. Covey said, "The key is in not spending time, but in investing it." Because the world's priorities are often skewed, it's up to parents to model healthy, godly ways to manage the gift of time.

Alex and Brett Harris, twin brothers who wrote *Do Hard Things* (Multnomah), compare adolescence to a diving board. Both are supposed "to launch us, with purpose and precision, into our futures," they write. "We will either make a successful dive into adulthood or deliver something closer to a belly flop—a failure to launch."

Remind your teenagers that time-management is an important form of stewardship, or the wise use of God's resources. Instead of trying to "out-busy" one another, kids (and adults) can strive to use their time and talents productively and to make themselves available for fellowship with God and with one another.

THE VIEW

Take a quick look at the lives of today's teenagers:

- Only 8% of teenagers get the 9¼ hours of sleep that's recommended for their age group. (National Sleep Foundation)
- Today's teenagers spend an average of 7½ hours a day consuming media. In addition, kids spend an average of one hour and 35 minutes every day sending and receiving texts. (Kaiser Family Foundation)
- 90% of preteens report feeling stressed because they're too busy. (KidsHealth.org)

TIPS >>>

Psychology professor Robert Emmons and his research team found that being busy isn't a bad thing, in and of itself. Instead, problems arise when kids face "conflicting strivings." When activities revolve like spokes around a hub, such as faith in Christ, teenagers are likely to thrive. Day-to-day goals that center around faith allow young people to experience more harmony, less stress, and even less illness.

To help your teenagers discover if their goals and activities are harmonious and productive, lead them through this exercise:

1. Ask kids to consider what they typically try to accomplish on most days.
2. Next, have kids come up with 10 "strivings" that fit their day-to-day goals.
3. Have kids rate each of their strivings on a scale from 1 to 10, from "least meaningful" to "most meaningful."
4. Then help kids identify and cut out activities that don't align with their most important strivings.

Teenagers may not be consciously aware of how their strivings conflict, yet they crave meaning and coherence. Kids hate being conflicted, fragmented, and stressed. They want to know that the stuff packing their schedule is worth doing—and worth doing well. And they need help from parents to figure that out.

PONDER THIS

- What would you list as your top priorities? Are these evident by how you spend your time?
- How would you rate your stewardship of God's gift of time? What would you do with more hours in a day?
- What time-management advice would you most like your teenagers to follow, and why?

Make Kids' Busyness Work

Expert Insights for Parents of Teenagers

By Tenelle Porter and Justin L. Barrett

By surveying teenagers before and after they attended a Christian camp, we made these discoveries about their time management and priorities, or "strivings":

- Kids who'd already made a commitment to Christ had fewer conflicting strivings than those who hadn't. Christian teenagers were more "single-minded," with daily goals that reinforced each other rather than worked against each other.

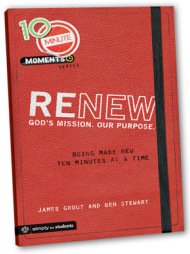
- Teenagers who needed clarity and meaning for their life jumped at the chance to commit their lives to God, once their eyes were opened about what's really important.

- When kids commit to a relationship with God, it simplifies and "untangles" their spaghetti-mess of conflicting goals. A deeper commitment to God doesn't make life harder or more complex. The fruit of the changes God makes is all good. These include unifying day-to-day goals and diminishing inner conflicts.

- Although teenagers make stupid decisions at times, they will choose what's best for them if given a chance. After all, kids crave meaning as well as coherence. And those who struggle the most are also the most likely to make a commitment to follow God.

- Even the most apathetic teenagers are striving for something, and these strivings have big effects on kids' stress level, quality of life, and overall well-being. Notice what's stressing a teenager and you'll shed light on her strivings. When you give kids with conflicting strivings a unifying purpose in life, they'll thrive like never before.

(*Group* magazine)



In *10 Minute Moments: Renew* (Simply Youth Ministry), James Grout and Ben Stewart offer 30 devotions that help teenagers refocus on God. Kids will examine real-life experiences of renewal and discover how God offers renewal for them, as well.

BIBLE FOCUS

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Ephesians 5:15-17, NIV

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

MAINSTREAM MUSIC

JAY-Z

Background: Rapper Shawn Carter, better known as Jay-Z, is one of the most influential hip-hop artists ever. He's also a successful producer and entrepreneur, with a reported net worth of $500 million. Jay-Z holds the record for the most #1 albums by a solo artist on the Billboard charts. He's married to R&B singer Beyonce, and they had their first child last year. Jay-Z is brutally honest about his pre-music life, and his songs contain plenty of cursing and course subject matter.

Albums: *Magna Carta…Holy Grail* (2013), *The Blueprint* (2001), *Reasonable Doubt* (1996)

What Jay-Z Says: "I'm not really the type of person who can sit and talk about how they feel. You know, I'm bad at that and so is my whole family. We were raised to hold a lot in, so for me making music is like therapy. It gives me a chance to express my emotions and the things I have going on."

Explore: He's on music services such as Spotify, Pandora, and Last.fm.

CHRISTIAN MUSIC

RELIENT K

Background: This band, named after a car, has been around for 15 years and sold more than 2 million records. Their pop-punk style and tongue-in-cheek humor have kept them popular. Relient K has had crossover success, touring with secular bands. Their latest album has created controversy because many songs were co-written with secular artists and include what some people say are simplistic lyrics.

Albums: *Collapsible Lung* (2013), *Five Score and Seven Years Ago* (2007), *Mmhmm* (2004)

What Relient K Says: Guitarist Matt Hoopes says, "You're not promised that you won't have to deal with tragedy and pain and loss…. But there's that balance of hope and trust and really, actually having to put that into practice and really, actually having to say, 'I believe this,' even through this storm."

Explore: They're on music services such as Spotify, Pandora, and Last.fm.

MOVIES

Movie: *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*

Genre: Action, Fantasy

Rating: PG-13

Synopsis: A young girl finds out she's part angel and must help rid our world of demons. But to defeat them, she might have to join them.

Our Take: This film, based on a hit series of YA books, will likely be popular with teens. It messes with the truth of angels and demons, so prepare to debrief afterward.

Movie: *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters*

Genre: Adventure, Fantasy

Rating: PG

Synopsis: Percy and his friends must brave the Bermuda Triangle-like Sea of Monsters to find the Golden Fleece and save the world.

Our Take: The books and films posit that gods and demigods are real, so some discussion is probably in order.

VIDEO GAMES

Lost Planet 3—Your character explores a harsh, wintry planet full of strange, deadly creatures who are desperately trying to survive. There are rumors this game might receive only a T rating, rather than an M. (Rating pending; Xbox 360, PS3, PC)

Saints Row IV—This open-world game has you complete missions in a sandbox, just like the "Grand Theft Auto" series. But this series is, unbelievably, even more sex-filled and twisted than the "Grand Theft" series. (Rated M; Xbox 360, PS3, PC)

MORE INFO. ON LATEST MEDIA (Games, Movies, & More) TRY... Pluggedin.com

AUGUST 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bible Study 9:30am Church Worship 10:30am Sunday night 6:00-7:00pm			the GATHERING 6:15-7:45pm SERIES: My Story			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Bible Study 9:30am Church Worship 10:30am Sunday night 6:00-7:00pm @ LOCUST HILL			the GATHERING 6:15-7:45pm SERIES: My Story FINAL DAY: Water Park Sign-up!!!			ROAD TRIP: Waterpark in Atlanta... Leave Enoree 7:30am Return approx. 9:30pm. MUST BE SIGNED-UP
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Bible Study 9:30am Church Worship 10:30am Sunday night 6:00-7:00pm			the GATHERING 6:15-7:45pm NEW SERIES: How to SHOUT w/o Screaming			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Bible Study 9:30am Church Worship 10:30am Sunday night 6:00-7:00pm			the GATHERING 6:15-7:45pm SERIES: How to SHOUT w/o Screaming			

the GATHERING

Need more information about The Gathering Student Ministry of EBC?
PLEASE Contact Dwain @ dsimmons@enoreebaptist.com or 864-834-7403