

CPYU PARENT PAGE

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"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it."

- Matthew 7:13 (NIV)

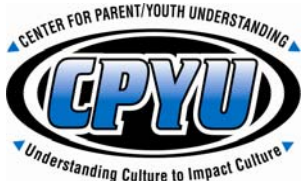
TOP 13 MOST INFLUENTIAL ADVERTISING MEDIUMS (SOURCE: eMarketer)

1. TV
2. Magazine
3. Internet
4. Newspaper
5. Radio
6. Outdoor Billboards
7. Social Networking Site
8. In-Theater
9. DVD
10. Blog
11. Video Game
12. Mobile Phone
13. Virtual World

YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

"The worst part about [being famous] is that you have to watch everything you say. You have to be very careful."

- 16-year-old Disney star Demi Lovato, *New York Daily News*, February 2, 2009



THE NECESSITY OF LIMITS

BY WALT MUELLER, PRESIDENT, CPYU

If your kids are like mine, perhaps they've complained about the fact that compared to other parents, you're far too strict. But don't allow their complaining convince you to back down on two of the most important gifts you've got to give.

First, healthy families are families with rules and boundaries. Children in these homes grow up learning right from wrong, thereby giving them more of an opportunity to become responsible and obedient. And as they learn to live responsibly within the limits of their freedom, their parents will gradually expand those limits until they are able to live independently.

The Institute for Youth Development reports research findings that show the importance of establishing clear rules and boundaries. "When supportive, caring parents do not have clear rules and consequences, teens are more likely to engage in risk behaviors. Households with 'hands-on' parents (25% of teen households) have teens at half the average risk of all teens. Yet, teens from households with 'hands-off' parents (18% of teen households) are at four times the risk of teens from households with 'hands-on' parents."¹

I once heard it said that raising children and teens is

like holding a wet bar of soap: too firm a grasp, and it shoots from your hand; too loose a grasp, and it slides away. A gentle but firm grasp keeps it in your control. One of the greatest gifts we can give to our children is reasonable and loving boundaries.

Second, healthy families are marked by consistent discipline. Without limits that are enforced consistently, our kids won't know how to discipline themselves and will grow up to have trouble functioning in the adult world. What they need more than anything else are parents who encourage their good behavior and correct their unacceptable behavior.

When we give our children the gift of consistent, loving discipline, we are helping them to learn self-control. Later, that same self-control will help them make responsible choices in life. The dictionary defines *discipline* as "training that corrects, molds, and perfects moral character." When your kids look back on their growing-up years, they will thank you that you took the time to teach them that there truly *is* right and wrong in a world that works so hard to teach them otherwise.

¹"Parenting Keys for Success," *The Youth Connection*, October/November 2003, 6

CPYU TREND ALERT: ATHLETES AND EATING DISORDERS

Articles about disordered eating often focus on teenage girls and young women. In recent months there has been more and more mention about how the epidemic is now spreading through our male teenage population. Dr. James Glazer, a sports medicine doctor at the Maine Medical Center in Portland, is sounding the alarm regarding a trend among young male athletes. Dr. Glazer is warning that we have a generation of male athletes who are developing unhealthy eating behaviors in a quest to develop a leaner phy-

sique and the supposed competitive advantage that will bring. Dr. Glazer's initial concern was sparked by a growing number of deaths among competitive wrestlers who have long engaged in the process of cutting weight. Now, he's seeing increasingly problematic eating behavior among men engaged in non-competitive recreational sports like cycling and Nordic skiing. This should be monitored and it deserves our response.

LATEST RESEARCH: SEXUAL RESTRAINT

It is God's will that his wonderful gift of sex be celebrated within the confines of a marriage between one man and one woman. But it's no secret that according to contemporary values, God's will for sex is archaic. Consequently, we have our work cut out for us if we are going to teach our kids right from wrong as it relates to their sexuality. A new study points to traits that mark sexually restrained young people. These include a greater level of religious beliefs and involvement with religious activities by teens

and their families, greater participation in youth groups, and less sexual experience by age 15. Sexually restrained kids have old-country values if they are foreign born, they have fewer friends who drink or use illegal drugs, they have more negative feelings about having sex or using birth control, and they have a strong sense of guilt about having sex, particularly a worry about upsetting their mom. Parents, remember: the most powerful prerequisite to healthy sex is what you teach your kids.



FROM THE WORD

In Matthew 7:13&14, Jesus clearly lays out the most basic and fundamental choice facing all humanity, including our kids. Our primary overarching goal as parents should be to explain the choice to our kids, point them to the life-giving option, and to live that option out in our own lives with commitment and grace. In effect, we wind up speaking as an ambassador for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Theologian John Stott helps us to understand what it is we need to communicate to our kids about this fundamental choice. First, there are two ways: the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked. One way is hard, and the other is easy. Our kids need to know that taking the right road is costly.

Second, there are two gates. The wide gate leads to quick and easy entry onto the road

they shouldn't take. The gate leading to the hard way is narrow. It must be looked for and it must be found. It's an easy gate to miss. To get through it, we must leave everything behind.

Third, there are two destinations. The choice here is very clear: the wide road leads to destruction while the narrow road leads to life. . . . a life of fellowship with God here on earth, and eternal life after life on this earth is over.

And finally, there are two crowds. The easy road is crowded and well-traveled. The harder road is sparsely populated by a minority movement. The pain of harassment and ridicule is very real for travelers on this road.

Which road are you pointing your kids to? Each of them – and us – ultimately makes a choice.

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IN THE NEWS: COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND GAP YEAR

If you've got a high school senior living in your home, chances are you've been spending a good amount of time with them considering what to do once they graduate from high school. With many of our kids looking to further their education by enrolling in college, it's important that you consider matters of financial stewardship and how that relates to funding your child's college education. With the economy becoming increasingly unstable and the cost of a college education going through the

roof, here are a couple of suggestions to consider as you plan for next year. First, why not consider lowering costs and student debt by enrollment for a year or two at a community college? The quality of community college education is increasing as these schools fill the void for affordable education. And second, why not consider encouraging your child to take a gap year between high school and college. A gap year is a great way to grow in their faith while serving the Lord in missions work.

