

MOMS & POPS STUFF

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TAXI DRIVE TIME

These are ideas for you to use during that drive time between school, practices and meetings. Take advantage of that "trapped" time to pass on your faith.

Backpage Discussions

Clip a newspaper article, maybe a human interest story, that is more often found in the backpages of a newspaper. Prepare some questions to bring this story "home" to your child. For the drive, give this story to your child and talk about it. Your child may or may not learn what you originally intended but he/she will definitely learn something and will have gained a wider view on the world.

You Bring Me Joy

Before picking up your teen, buy a bottle of Joy dish washing soap and glue a picture of your child on that bottle. Leave it on his/her seat in the vehicle. After your teen gives you the expected strange look, give him/her 7 reasons why he/she gives you joy. If you are really up to it, sing those reasons. You may also want to glue those reasons on the bottle.

Question Box

Put together a box or tin or whatever that has slips of paper with questions inside. During one ride, pull out one question which **both** of you will answer. Limit this to one question per ride and possibly one question per week or less. This will keep the value of the question box.

Some questions to add to your box:

- C Who is the best example of a Christian you know? Why?
- C What tells you when a child is responsible enough to trust a lot?
- C What really gives you the creeps?

Proverb Probe

Give your child a 3x5 card with a Proverb written on it in your handwriting. Using your handwriting is important as it is something very personal about you which they can cherish forever. Ask your child the following questions about the Proverb.

Proverb 15:21 - "Stupidity brings happiness to senseless fools, but everyone with good sense follows the straight path." - How can stupidity bring happiness? Name situations which you know of where it did. Why is stupidity left for senseless fools? Why was the description senseless fools used here? What value is there in following a straight path? Is there ever happiness on the straight path? Describe the difference. Why do so many choose the foolish happiness to the straight path happiness? Which one will get you further ahead in life? Which one will cause less harm to you? Which one will cause less hurt to those who love you?

EDUC8N

This is an idea to help you encourage your child with their academic achievement since that is an important issue for both of you.

Questions about the School Day

Since following your child to all of his/her classes during the day is not an option, use these questions to help you figure out some of your concerns. Hopefully one or two of these questions are new ones you can use to mine further information.

- C How are you keeping your locker clean?
- C How many pencils do you have? Do they still have erasers?
- C Do you have all the markers, colored pencils, glue sticks, etc., you need?
- C Is your calculator working or is it time for new batteries?
- C Who are you sitting with or working with in every class?
- C Have you been tardy to any classes lately?
- C How easy is it to get from class to class in your hallways.
- C Who are you sitting with on the bus?
- C Can you see the board from where you sit in every class?
- C What's the best part of your school day?
- C What's the hardest part of your school day?



The following are website recommendations. These are chosen based on their value as determined by our staff. These are not paid endorsements nor can we vouch for the ethics of their entire website.

Time to Talk (www.timetotalk.org) -

From The Partnership for a Drug-Free America is a resource site to help parents talk to their children about drugs.

Family Devotions from Josh McDowell (www.josh.org/devotions/family_devotions.asp) - Josh McDowell has put together daily devotions for you to do as a family. There is a new one available every day so you can actually try to do this daily with your teen.

Fantastic Math Tricks

(www.angelfire.com/me/marmalade/mathtips.html) - Math tricks are fun and a great way to help learn math. Learn these tricks

Teen Hope Line (www.teenhopeline.com)

- With a click, teens can talk to a trained adult to talk and pray about real issues. The site has other helpful resources for teens including a giant prayer chain they can join.

Campus Explorer

(www.campusexplorer.com) - A large search engine listing various colleges across the U.S.

#1 Song on This Date in History

(www.joshhosler.biz/NumberOneInHistory/SelectMonth.htm) - Do you want to know what the number one song was on your child's birthday or any other special date? This site has it all.



Where the Money Goes

One common parent-teen argument is why there isn't enough money for him/her to have everything that everyone else has. Here's a concrete way to teach your teen where your money goes and why you as a family can't afford everything that everyone wishes for.

Ignore the bank teller's disdain, you will only be doing this once. Also gather together all of the bills which that paycheck will be paying for. All of them. Don't forget the groceries and gas also as well as your tithe. Call a family meeting

around a table. Pile all of the ones in on pile and the bills into another pile. Take a bill, explain the reason for the bill, show the amount of the bill, and take as many ones from the pile as is needed to pay the bill. Do this with all the bills. Then discuss together what to do with the leftover money (if there is any). Your teen cannot get a more clear picture of the dilemma you go through every time you get a paycheck.

Anonymous Christmas Giving

As a family pick out a family you know of who is in need and shop together for a gift or two for each of the members of that family. Wrap the gifts together too. Then one night stealthily leave these gifts at the front door of that neighbor. Be sure to really play this part up as he planning and the maneuvering to deliver these gifts may become the largest memory of all for this Family Project. Continue this memory year after year even if the family you have chosen has a change in circumstances.



This is a small glimpse into the youth culture to help you parents have some insight as to what is going on. All information comes from Wild Frontier's *Stuffnet*.

I Won't Grow Up

"If you're 18 you want to be 21. If you're 16 you want to be 18. If you're 14 you want to be 16. If you're 11 you want to be...well, 11. In a world where young people are growing up faster than ever before, it seems that reaching the next stage may no longer be the most desirable thing. We're finding that tweens today are very aware of the pressures they are about to face, and while they may covet some elements of getting older, they are remarkably content with the stage of life they are in right now. Less than half (45%) of tweens wish they were older than they are and 73% of tweens say they are happy with their life right now."

--*The Tween Intelligence Report*, IG's Trend Central, September 12, 2007

Tween Numbers

- C 71% of tweens are happy with their life now and 42% consider themselves extremely happy.
- C 65% of tweens look to a parent as a role model.
- C 80% of tweens feel stress or pressure, with 37% worrying the most about good grades.

- C When asked if they'd rather be smart or popular, 72% of tweens would rather be smart, compared to 28% who want to be popular.
 - C 88% of tweens have been online in the past month and 31% send or receive email on a daily basis.
 - C 56% of tweens look to whether or not their friends have a product when deciding whether or not to buy it.
 - C Tweens' overall favorite store is Wal-Mart.
- The Tween Intelligence Report*, IG's Trend Central, September 12, 2007

New Teen Spending Numbers

- From mall research field trips in 10 cities across the United States which surveyed 980 students and 3,000 additional online surveys:
- C Fashion spending declined 24% during the Spring 2007.
 - C The fashion category is still 42% of the total teen budget for the fall 2007 season despite moderation in spending habits.
 - C Shopping appears to be trending toward shopping at discount stores versus traditional department stores.
 - C 83% say they own at least one video game console. 51% own at least two video game consoles.
 - C 62% say they plan to own a next generation video game system.
 - C After only three months of availability, 3% own an Apple iPhone. 9% expect to buy an iPhone in the next six months.
 - C 44% say they believe they have spent more money this year at restaurants than last year.
- Piper Jaffrey survey, Yahoo! News, October 10, 2007

The Naked Generation

"We are the Naked Generation, as I like to call it, the ones who snicker at the fact that Britney Spears' outfit at her much-maligned Video Music Awards performance was embarrassingly revealing but nod in quiet accordance at her ability to keep the world fascinated. We change the channel when reruns of The Simple Life show up on the E! network but grudgingly admire Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie's ability to self-brand their way to lives of luxury and international renown. But the majority of us didn't have 'socialite' already on our resumes, so we turned to the Web. The internet is more than just our stage; it's our dressing room, our cocktail lounge and, most notably, our PR department."

--Carolyn McCarthy, blogger for CNET News.com, September 21, 2007

The Complicated Problems of Being Overweight

- From a five-year study of 2,500 teens:
- C 44% of girls and 29% of boys were overweight, habitual binge-eaters, or had taken unhealthy measures to lose weight.
 - C Among overweight girls, 40% said they had a problem with binge-eating, extreme dieting or both.
 - C Girls who reported being teased by a family member at the start of the study were:
 - twice as likely as their peers to be overweight five years later
 - 41% more likely to have tried unhealthy weight-loss tactics
 - C Girls who frequently sat down to meals with their families and said that family meals were a positive and enjoyable experience were less likely to have weight-related problems.
- American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, Reuters News, October 2, 2007

Body Peace Project

Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" has partnered with Seventeen for a body image campaign called "Body Peace Project." As part of the program, *Seventeen* is encouraging girls to sign a "Body Peace Treaty" with vows such as: "Never blame my body for the bad day I'm having," "Remember that the sun will still rise tomorrow even if I had one too many slices of pizza or an extra scoop of ice cream tonight" and, maybe most notably, "Remind myself that what you see isn't always what you get on TV and in ads--it takes a lot of airbrushing, dieting, money and work to look like that." Fourteen celebrities have signed the treaty themselves and will be used in promotion.

Numbers from *Seventeen* online survey about the project:

- C 91% of teen girls feel anxiety or stress about some part of their looks when getting ready in the morning.
- C 51% of teen girls say that they know they should feel better about their bodies but the pressure to look perfect is too intense.

"88% of teen girls say that it's important for friends to help one another feel good about their bodies."

--*Advertising Age*, October 9, 2007, *Seventeen*, November 2007

Please feel free to submit ideas which you have done with your family. It is always good to provide a resource that is known to work and we do not claim to know it all. You will be credited for your submission and thanked profusely from us. Please submit your ideas to momspops@wildfrontier.org.