

It's All About Me, Me, Me.

WALT MUELLER, CPYU President



YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

“This is the future - people broadcasting themselves. YouTube’s already the biggest broadcaster in the world.”

Actor Ricky Gervais, defending his decision to release new videos on YouTube, rather than via traditional television broadcast, on *The Daily Show*, April 18, 2013.

Boxer Muhammad Ali used to dance around the ring proclaiming to anyone within earshot, “I am the greatest!” It was funny because Ali had become a caricature of himself who was at heart an entertainer. But Ali’s show has morphed into reality for a generation of children and teens who are encouraged to dance through life loving and serving the idol of self.

Our kids are growing up in a culture of narcissism. Narcissus is the youthful Greek mythological character who couldn’t take his eyes off his own reflection. Self-absorbed, his world revolved around nobody or nothing but himself. In the end, his self-love led to his death. Researchers at San Diego State University who have tracked narcissism have gone so far as to label this generation of children and teens the most narcissistic generation ever. If you don’t believe it just spend some time with pop culture, listening and watching as it promotes the self-absorbed lifestyle of me, myself, and I entitlement. It’s “all about me” because. . . after all. . . “I am the greatest!”

As parents, we must desire to see our kids live out and communicate the selfless Kingdom of God instead of the kingdom of self. Here are some initial steps we can and must take to counteract narcissism’s powerful and pervasive influence.

First, understand the importance of reminding them that they have been made to worship, serve, and glorify God. . . not themselves. Some of the most timely and foundational words in Rick Warren’s

best-selling *Purpose Driven Life* are the first four words of the book: “It’s not about you.” Jesus turns narcissism on its head when he tells his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). Take every opportunity to point out the centrality of God, not self, in all of life.

Second, don’t give them too much. Our kids are raised in a culture that tells them “it’s all about you.” The result is a lifestyle of selfish indulgence marked by greed and entitlement. As people charged with the task of leading them to spiritual maturity, our goal should be to see their eyes and energies focus less and less on self, and more and more on God. Don’t give them an unhealthy overabundance of experiences or things.

Finally, pray for a healthy measure of crisis to enter the lives of your kids. Narcissism plays and advances well in a culture that feeds the beast of self-absorption from a deep well of luxury and wealth. Sometimes it’s not until the well runs dry through poverty, want, or crisis that our kids understand their thirst for what it really is – a longing not after self, but after God. As John Stott reminds us about the prodigal son, “he had to ‘come to himself’ (acknowledge his self-centeredness) before he could ‘come to his father.’” While we hate to see our kids hurt, sometimes their idolatrous obsession with self must be broken down before they can be built back up in Christ. ✱

} April 2013 }

1. Pink - Just Give Me A Reason

2. Sean Kingston - Beat It

3. Rihanna - Stay

4. Daft Punk - Get Lucky

5. Demi Lovato - Heart Attack

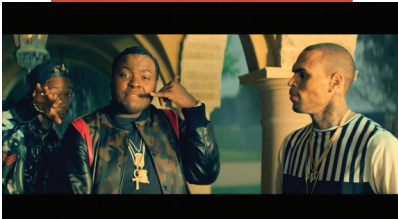
6. will.i.am - Scream & Shout

7. will.i.am - #thatPOWER

8. Pitbull - Feel This Moment

9. Daddy Yankee - Limbo

10. David Guetta - Play Hard



QUICK STATS

Nearly twenty million Americans are diagnosed with sexually transmitted infections each year, about half of those are young people between the ages of 15 and 24. (CDC)

44% of births to high school educated adults are outside of marriage. (Institute for American Values)

FROM THE NEWS:

SUPERVISED DRINKING

The state of Colorado is considering legislation that would allow eighteen-year-olds to drink alcohol in restaurants and bars under parental supervision. The justification for the bill is that it would teach young adults how to drink responsibly under the supervision of responsible adults. Surprisingly, many establishments that serve alcohol are opposed to the legislation, thinking that it will put too much pressure on servers to make difficult choices, and because of the fear of legal liabilities. Here at CPYU, we're concerned for other reasons. We wonder. . .

are teenagers able to make good decisions related to alcohol based on their cognitive stage? What kind of damage does alcohol and other drugs do to the still-developing brains of young adults? We know that alcohol is marketed aggressively to teenagers and young adults as the cool and fun adult-thing to do. But is Colorado making a wrong choice? Track this story and find out what's happening in your state.

TRENDS: MEDIA MULTITASKING AND FAMILY CLOSENESS

Thirty years ago, experts warned that family time was being compromised because families were turning on the TV during meals or watching too much TV together.

Experts said that this primitive form of multi-tasking was serving to break down the family. With the many advancements we've seen in technology and the proliferation of new media devices, multitasking is now something entirely different. For example, television time is now divided not so much between TV and family members, but between the TV and other devices. According to the latest "Video over the Internet Consumer Survey," 77% of respondents said they use their computer or laptop while watching TV, an increase of 16% over last year. While technology is helpful, it can also become a hindrance to family closeness. We suggest that you model Godly media use priorities. Put your devices down and spend some time communicating with your kids.



LATEST RESEARCH: DIVORCE AND FAMILY SPIRITUALITY

As the sexual revolution was unfolding back during the 1960s, there was a widely held notion that children of divorce are incredibly resilient. It was believed that a kid could bounce back rather quickly to a normal life after his parents had divorced. Over the years, research has shown that the exact opposite is true. Children of divorce are statistically far more prone to a host of social problems and issues. New research on divorce and spirituality show that children from intact families are twice as likely to be involved in worship during their adult years than are children of couples who divorce amicably. When the institution of the family falls apart, the children in that family are prone to be less interested in organized religion and religious services. We can't help but wonder if the crisis causes them to question the love, grace, kindness and existence of God. A child's concept of God and love for God are established and nurtured in the home! Parents, build your marriage!

CPYU'S DIGITAL KIDS INITIATIVE



Internet Filters and the Glory of God

by Walt Mueller

I am regularly asked by parents about Internet filters. If you're like me, you are hoping that there is a foolproof way to danger-proof your child's online experience. Here are some facts and suggestions regarding Internet filters.

- There are no 100% effective filters. Kids who want to bypass filters will find ways to bypass filters. The Internet is full of tutorials, circumventor sites, and proxy sites that help kids get around filters.
- Even though they are not 100% foolproof, filters can help keep kids from unwanted and accidental encounters with dangerous online material.
- Parents should continually monitor where their kids spend their online time.
- The real issue related to Internet content is your child's heart. We must shepherd our children's hearts in ways that train them to be their own filters as they endeavor to engage with the Internet to the glory of God.

If you are looking for filtering and accountability software, we encourage you to visit www.covenanteyes.com.

Webinars

Did you know that CPYU offers webinars? Visit WWW.CPYU.ORG to learn more and to register.

May 2013 Webinars:

Raising Up Youth That Believe
in Sexual Integrity

May 14, 2013

Senior Night: Preparing for the
Next Chapter of Your Life Story

May 19, 2013

Hope and Healing for Kids
Who Cut

May 23, 2013

FROM THE WORD

What do you consider to be the “necessary” aspects of your job as a parent? We would all agree that we need to provide our children with the physical sustenance that ensures that they will grow from childhood into a healthy adulthood. This includes food, water, shelter, medical care, immunizations, etc. We would also agree that it would be horribly irresponsible if we didn’t provide our children with an education that prepares them for independent living in the world. In addition, we might include some of the cultural requirements expected of parents in today’s world. . . things like getting our kids into extracurricular activities and a variety of social settings. When done correctly and with attention to balance, these things are “necessary” and good.

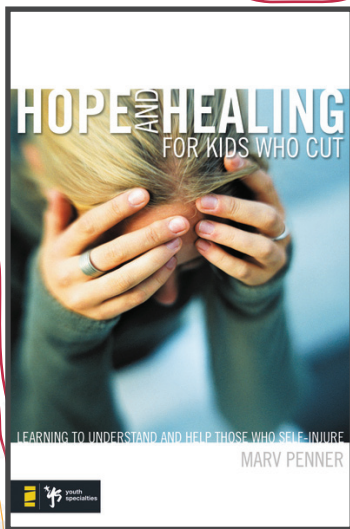
But do we consider the spiritual nurture of our children a “necessity?” And if we do, what level of importance do we give to spiritual nurture? The dictionary defines “necessity” as something that is required or indispensable. The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians that it was necessary for him to preach the Gospel. Preaching was an obligation that Paul felt and a necessity that he could not ignore or escape. Because of his God-given calling, Paul tells the Corinthians very simply, “Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!” (1 Cor. 9:16). In *The Message*, Eugene Peterson translates this verse as reading, “I’m compelled to do it, and doomed if I don’t!” That’s some strong language that captures just how important the communication of the Good News about Jesus Christ really is.

**“WOE TO ME IF I DO NOT
PREACH THE GOSPEL!”
I CORINTHIANS 9:16**

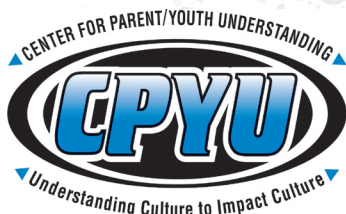
Because you have been given the gift of children, it follows that you have been called by God to nurture your children. . . physically, emotionally, relationally, intellectually, and spiritually. In fact, the spiritual nurture of our children should be primary, shaping and informing all the other aspects of nurture. Parents, get to know the Gospel. Consume it. Embrace it. Live it. And then, be a conduit of the Gospel to your kids.

HELPFUL RESOURCE ←

Self-injury has moved into the mainstream, as more kids are cutting to cope with their emotional pain, and more parents and youth workers are scrambling to help. Unless you are a trained counselor, you will most likely be unable to handle the kind and depth of counseling needed to help habitual self-injurers. But if we realize how we are uniquely positioned to discover the behavior, refer kids for help, and pray for and support those who cut, an understanding of self-injury is a crucial weapon in our ministry arsenal. Dr. Marv Penner’s book, *Hope and Healing for Kids Who Cut: Learning to Understand and Help Those Who Self-Injure* offers both an explanation and course of action that youth workers and parents alike will find immensely helpful.



Available in the
CPYU Resource Center at
www.cpyuresourcecenter.org.



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