

iLIGHT

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God's Creation: very good and complete

God's Bible Promises for kids

Happiness is not getting what you want, it's being grateful for what you've already got.

"Be satisfied with what you have."

Hebrews 13:5

The one who holds the whole universe will never let you down.

"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will guide us from now on."

Psalms 48:14

from: Daly, R., "God's Little Book of Bible Promises for Children", Autumn House, Grantham, Great Britain, 2000

Any Sabbath School teacher looks forward to sharing a lesson covering the Genesis account of creation. The sequence of days offers a natural progression to build upon, and the various elements of the creation are at the same time familiar and diverse, providing the perfect material to keep kids engaged. Furthermore, there is such a wonderful abundance of songs, preps and crafts on this topic that the stage is set for a memorable time of worship and learning.

Indeed, there are many important aspects to explore in the story of the making of our world. The few lessons in the curriculum can barely begin to uncover the message about the character of Our God that lies at the heart of this treasured text. Our goal should be greater than accomplishing a review of the list of created things or facilitating the mnemonic recollection of which day corresponds to

what. In this brief article, I would like to highlight two aspects of the creation that should not be overlooked in our classes: its goodness and completeness.

Goodness. The word "good" is used 7 times in Genesis 1. The choice of this number is already signifying that God's plan is perfect in its beauty. It is not a consequence of the 7-days structure of creation week, because the word good is not used once per day but rather with reference to individual components of the creation (light, land and sea, vegetation, luminaries, birds and fish, terrestrial animals). Then, the seventh time, it is qualified as "very" good, and it refers to the whole system. This arrangement looks like the grand finale of a fireworks show: every single element is good, and when they are all together, they are very good. Every part of God's creation was good, well planned and well executed, fully expressing the

CARING FOR KIDS



What do children truly need to grow up happy? To feel that they fit in and matter? To believe that they are loved? They need you—you and other caring adults to genuinely be there for them as they're growing up. They need to know you care, not just on special occasions, but *every day*.

How do you do that? By accepting, guiding, and loving them in simple, yet meaningful ways.

You don't need a lot of time and money; you don't have to be a parent, teacher, or coach. Sincerely Showing children you care can make a difference, helping to bring out the best in them—and in you.

Be nice

Say yes a lot.

Tell them their feelings are okay.

Set boundaries that keep them safe.

Be honest.

Be yourself.

Listen to their stories.

Hug them.

Forget your worries sometimes and concentrate only on them.

Notice when they're acting differently.

Suggest options when they seek your advice.

Play outside together.

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divine intention. The goodness of the whole depends on the goodness of the parts. God cares for the details and for the big picture. He does not settle for defective or refurbished parts. We can convey this message to our kids in multiple ways. Verbally, by repeating the phrase “and God saw that it was good,” after each respective element and stressing the “very good” at the end of the creation. Visually, by preparing a 7 piece puzzle or collage with one damaged or smeared piece, and showing the difference in the overall effect with the good and bad components. Tactilely, by providing a 7 piece construction set, where 1 part does not fit or is damaged. Similar illustrations can be prepared using the sense of smell, taste or hearing, by adding a dissonance, wrong ingredient or bad odor to an otherwise balanced system.

Completeness. Genesis 2:1-2 uses the verb “complete/finish” at the end of creation week. Only when there is a plan, a target, or a design, can we know that something is completed. An important part of contracts is to specify the goals to be met. If you want your kitchen painted white, you know when the job is done: when it is white. God's creation is not open-ended or an aimless exploration. And it is not unfinished. At the end of creation week, all that was planned is in place and ready to work. We can illustrate this to the kids by interrupting a video

clip just before its climax, or by setting up a task (e.g., jumping over a line) and stopping just before the last step (e.g., take 4-5 steps and then freeze before the line, or in mid-air if you can). With completeness comes a sense of accomplishment. It is therefore not surprising that Genesis 2:1-3 intertwines the concept of completeness with the institution of the Sabbath rest. There is no real completion without celebration. Enjoyment is an essential component of every work. What an important reminder for the crazily paced modern culture! The divine pattern demonstrates the right proportions between working and pausing, producing and contemplating. We can convey to the kids this lesson about enjoyment and contemplation by raising their expectations about a covered image or painting, and then uncovering it just for a split second, without leaving enough time for them to see it properly.

May God use us effectively to show with creativity and dedication His eternal power, love, and wisdom illustrated in the creation of our world. ♦

Are you interested in the topic of creation and faith and science? Find resources on the GRI website, www.grisda.org, and follow Geoscience Research Institute on Facebook and Instagram.

Ronny Nalin
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JESUS

wants all of me

Similar to God

Who do you look like? Do you look more like your father or more like your mother? Maybe you look like a grandparent or another relative. Some people look like famous people.

When God created human beings, He said He would create them similar to God Himself. What a privilege, huh? To be

similar to the great and powerful God is a very great honor for us. But the truth is that today this similarity between God and humans is much less, all because of sin.

Will we ever return to having the “image and likeness” of God? Hopefully one day we will!

“Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.”

Genesis 1:26

From: Ferreira de Oliveira, S. *Talking with God*. Editorial Safeliz, Madrid, Spain, 2015

PABLO (5 YEARS)



Mummy, don't speak so loud, you're going to wake up the stars.

From: <http://www.enfandises.com/en/bibliotheque/cat-29-mom/phrase-22071.html>

IN SYNERGY

ADRA and Children Global Citizenship Education

How many times do you eat a day?"
 "... Once. Only once. In the evening." Meet Marie-Julina, a single mother who is raising her five children. "There was a time when we could eat three times a day. Now there is nothing to eat, because we don't grow crops anymore. There is no rain and we don't have money. Our children face the same reality. I'm really worried because they eat only once. They look for cactus fruits the whole day and they must wait for the evening to be able to eat. I have no sources, I just weave mats, I cut wood, I do chores for other people hoping I can make money. I don't get to choose work. They may ask me to cut wood, or get water or do laundry so I can make money for my kids. Some days you don't get anything and you go to bed without eating because you earned nothing."

Marie-Julina's community is affected by recurring drought that makes growing food impossible. In order to survive, they pick nuts from the ground and eat them for supper. She worries for the future of her young ones. She has no money, and so deciding how to get food is always a burden.

"The impact of hunger on education systems is gravely underreported. Being severely malnourished, to the point it impacts on brain development, can be the same as losing four grades of schooling. Around 151 million children under the age of five were estimated to be stunted

in 2013. Stunting can affect a child's cognitive abilities as well as their focus and concentration in school. As a result, stunted children are 19% less likely to be able to read by age eight. Conversely, good nutrition can be crucial preparation for good learning." (Global Citizen, Barriers to education)

To end hunger requires people to organize themselves for action. Throughout the Scripture God speaks of our purpose to rebuild, restore and renew all that is broken. (Isaiah 61)

JOIN. Support programs to end hunger and improve nutrition. Make your voice heard and join campaigns and petitions to end hunger.

ACT. Come together in your community and make collective action to improve access to food. Research (or support research) in order to solve the problem. It's important to know causes. Research



helps identify the root causes of hunger and strategies to end it.

PRAY. Pray for the end of hunger in our world.

Link to Marie-Julina's story: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vd4YgjBLX-Fg&feature=player_embedded&fbclid=IwAR24er6UWUjMxGtq29kpYfEZ_1G7tpf-suUvkOGa_ThmBTqjMgatHLdtKLEY

Maja Ahac
 ADRA Eurpoe
 Advocacy Coordinator



Church as an inclusive community

Inclusion is a word used very frequently in recent years, especially in context of education. Inclusive education of pupils with special educational needs becomes a global standard and a requirement in the educational systems of most countries. However, social inclusion is a phenomenon with much deeper content. In fact, it is a concept of human coexistence based on values that can be called Christian.

Inclusive approach to people with special needs is usually defined in four dimensions, which are: culture, conditions, relationships and practice. Let's ask just a few simple questions to verify how inclusive we really are.

The **culture** of our community shows which values are important to us. Does every child have the same value for us - regardless of his (or her) differences from others and regardless of any difficulties in his (her) upbringing and education?

Are we able to create **conditions** for each child to feel being accepted and welcome in our community? Can every child participate in every activity together with other peers even if he (or she) has a certain kind of disadvantage? Is our Church really barrier-free for everyone?

And - if there is a need to adapt the **practice** of our worship service, children Sabbath School or other church

activities to the possibilities of children with special needs, are we able to cope with such a challenge? Are we able (and willing) to look for all available sources of support in such cases? And do we also seek and develop the potential of children who are disadvantaged in some ways?

Finally: is our Church a community with friendly **relations**, where even the children are learning to love each other and accept each other just as they are? The strongest educational impact on children has usually the example of adult authorities - especially their own parents. We should remember that whenever we communicate and deal with those who are perceived as "different" or "disadvantaged".



Thanks to our respectful and affiliate approach to such people, children can learn to see their neighbor in every human person.

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Teach the children to see Christ in nature. Take them out into the open air, under the noble trees, into the garden; and in all the wonderful works of creation teach them to see an expression of His love.

Child Guidance, p. 534



Nature's Cleanup Crew



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Incredi-Biblical

"Go to the ant... consider its ways and be wise."

Proverbs 6:6

As someone growing up in the new millennium, you've inherited a pretty polluted planet. For example, in order to create a single computer chip it's necessary to purify silicon with high levels of energy and toxic chemicals. This, in turn, creates unwanted by-products like chemical waste. We then try to figure out what to do with these unwanted by-products that keep collecting around us, poisoning the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the earth where we grow our food. We know that we have to do *something* before our

planet becomes completely toxic.

Here's the good news: scientists are learning some lessons from nature. Researchers at the University of California have discovered that the marine sponge creates a skeleton for itself made of silica molecules. It does this with exact precision, in normal temperatures using organic chemistry and sunlight. And without producing any hazardous waste! By studying our environment, scientists are figuring out how to use nature's simple processes to create computer chips and other important things while rescuing Planet Earth from more poisonous waste.

Isn't it amazing that answers to some of our biggest questions are found in nature? If we spend time considering the things God has made, we will discover that God has thought of everything. And in discovering God, we discover solutions to our problems.

Info Splat

The shell of an abalone (shellfish) is as strong as steel, but only half as dense. Scientists believe that studying the abalone shell may help engineers build airplanes and vehicles that are lighter, which could save on fuel costs.

React now!

Have you taken the time to observe nature lately? What could God be trying to teach you?

From: Bockmann, M. et al.: *Elasti-Brain*. 365 Devotions to Stretch your Mind and Shape your Faith. Review and Herald Publishing Ass., Hagerstown, MD, USA, 2008

SECRETS FROM THE TREASURE CHEST



Why do girls always watch you?

– Jason, 14

Girls watch guys for the same reasons guys watch girls—because we're all very, very weird.

Actually, watching is a great way to learn. That's how I discovered something fascinating about girls when I was a junior. While I was trying to muscle my way through challenging situations, my female schoolmates were quietly using their brains. They usually ended up with a solution. I usually ended up with sore muscles.

Girls watch guys because they're trying to figure them out. They want to understand them, believe them, trust them. They're also trying to determine how they can best fit into their lives. After all, God created men and women

to someday live together in a happy, loving, caring home.

There was this one girl in school I liked. Her name was Kay. For fun, I used to write her name as Kay Mills, just to see what it looked like. See what I mean? Even juniors know that someday they may marry one of those creatures sitting across the aisle from them, strange as it may seem at the time.

So we watch each other. And we learn, and grow, and mature.

I remember the first time I saw my wife's name combined with mine. I liked it. Still do.

Since girls are watching you, why not give them something pleasant to look at? Show them with your actions

that you can be as trustworthy and believable as they want you to be. Then they'll want to be friends, and *you'll* have something to watch.



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From: Mills, C.: *Secrets from the Treasure Chest. Questions Kids ask about Life*. Review and Herald Publishing Ass., Hagerstown, MD, USA, 1996

Depression

Supporting Children in the Darkness

The Basics

Depression is a serious mood disorder that can feel painful and isolating for those in its grips. Depression affects how kids feel and behave in all environments—at school, at home, at church, and with friends. Since it can also be accompanied by other mood or behavior problems, parents and ministry leaders may at first feel overwhelmed when trying to help a depressed child. But don't give up! By sharing the problem and caring in practical ways, you can help relieve the oppressive symptoms of depression.

• Understand the symptoms

Depression can be better understood by paying attention to four aspects of a child's functioning:

Thoughts: The child views him- or herself as worthless or as a failure, has problems concentrating, and/or has thoughts of suicide.

Feelings: The child feels sad or irritable nearly every day for several weeks, and/or doesn't enjoy activities that used to be pleasurable.

Behavior: The child acts restless and fidgety, or acts sluggish, tired, and unmotivated.

Body functions: The child experiences weight gain or loss, and/or sleeps too much or not enough.

• Understand the causes

There is no one cause of depression. Sometimes stressful events such as moving, divorce, birth of a sibling, or a death in the family can trigger depression. Many mental health professionals agree that there are also genetic, biochemical, and hormonal factors involved. Plus, negative thinking can cause or perpetuate feelings of worthlessness and isolation.

• Watch for coexisting mood problems

In children, depression often occurs with other mood disorders, such as anxiety disorders, separation anxiety, bipolar disorder, conduct disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or other emotional or behavioral problems. A mental health professional can help the family address all of the symptoms the child is experiencing.

Care Tips

Childhood depression often goes unidentified, especially in preschool children. When you suspect that a child in your ministry is struggling with depression, no matter what the child's age, address your concerns right away.

- **Confront aggression.** Some children who experience depression act out aggressively—either verbally or physically. The attack might be targeted at him- or herself (self-deprecating remarks and/or cutting or scratching), another person (kicking, hitting, or antagonizing others), or objects (slamming doors, punching walls). You are responsible for creating a safe environment for *all* of the children involved in your ministry. Don't accept aggression. Firmly tell the aggressive child that his or her behavior is unacceptable, and suggest appropriate ways to act. If the aggression continues, remove the child from the situation until you can create a safety plan with the child's parents.
- **Confront isolation.** Depression can be deepened by feeling lonely or cut off from others. So create a ministry of acceptance and inclusion. Teach your kids how to make introductions, welcome newcomers, and practice hospitality. Help shy children become involved in activities. Partner children with kids they don't know to encourage new friendships.
- **Confront suicidal thoughts.** One of the scariest experiences you may have as a ministry leader is hearing one of your children mention suicide. Many people shy away from talking about suicide because they're afraid they might plant an idea in a child's head. This is a myth—asking about self-harm won't make a child suicidal if he or she isn't already. Directly ask, "Are you feeling like hurting yourself or committing suicide?" Express genuine concern for the child, and don't agree to keep secrets. Get help immediately by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

What not to say

- "Maybe you need to get right with God." Yes, sometimes depression is the result of guilt and unconfessed sin. However that's not always, or even *often*, the case. You run the risk of communicating to the child that his or her sadness is the result of a bad relationship with God. And this will only discourage the child further.
- "You don't need medicine if you've got God." We'd never say that to a diabetic, would we? But for some reason, some Christians mistakenly see depression as strictly a spiritual problem and not as a medical condition.
- "Just think positive." This statement doesn't take into account the child's feelings and worries. Positive thinking is something to work toward, but it isn't an automatic fix. Listen non-judgmentally, and include the child and family in formulating practical solutions.

What to say

- "Sometimes I get really sad, too." A depressed child needs to know that it's normal for everyone, even adults, to feel sad. You can model healthy emotional responses by telling a child of a time when you were very sad and how you handled those emotions.
- "Jesus felt sad" The Bible says that Jesus was very sad once (Matthew 26:36-38). A depressed child can find comfort in knowing that even Jesus struggled with strong negative emotions.
- "I love you, and God loves you, too." This may seem simplistic, but sometimes kids who struggle with depression lose sight of the fact that people really do care. Even more important, this statement also reminds the child that God is present and loving.





Redeeming the time (1)

Every time we hear or read about *education* we simply seem to automatically associate the concept with formal education (done in any kind of school or training). Actually, most of the dictionaries I've looked up in, many define education mainly as: "1. The act or process of educating or being educated; 2. The knowledge or skill obtained or developed by a learning process; 3. A program of instruction of a specified kind or level." (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language), or as: "1. The knowledge and development resulting from the process of being educated; 2. The action or process of educating or of being educated." (Webster New World Dictionary). As mentioned last month, we will extensively deal with systems of education, analyzing their strengths and weaknesses, and introducing different kinds of formal and non-formal training, etc.

This time, though, let's deal with the first form of education ever entrusted to the human beings – the family education. "The system of education established in Eden centered in the family. Adam was 'the son of God', and it was from their Father that the children of the Highest received instruction. Theirs, in the truest sense, was a family school... In the divine plan of education as adapted to man's condition after the Fall, Christ... ordained that men and women should be His representatives. The family was the school, and the

parents were the teachers." Education 33

If you already feel tempted to jump to another article imagining that I am going to speak about homeschooling, you are acting precipitately. This time I set out to underline the value of the most decisive training a child might ever get: time with the parents. "Redeeming the time!" This is the topic for everybody who knows that "time is money".

Among the 24 different Bible translations of Ephesians 5: 16 I looked up in, half of them read the verse as "redeeming the time" and the other half as "making the use of every opportunity" or "making the best use of (your) time" or "make every minute count".

The sentence "these are evil times, so make every minute count" (Contemporary English Version), which is both a warning and a piece of advice, has the potential to save our families and our churches, so much the more through time dedicated to the children. Somebody foolishly arranges our daily agendas in such a way that we simply pretend not to have time left for the children. The speed is increasing, the incentives are too numerous, or at least we claim that. Just imagine: the parents return home after a long, exhausting working day and dream about having a relaxed evening, only for them. Of course, they can't completely avoid the regular "check-up" and rashly inquire their kids about the day at school

(grades, conflicts) and about their needs for tomorrow, after which they quickly plunge themselves into their preferred reading, TV show etc. They probably do not know that this is the "guaranteed" way to lose their kids forever! God forbid!

Most parents / teachers simply do not understand that the child is not an apple tree, or any other sort of plant. We can't get rid of our educational duties as parents simply by approaching parenting with an agricultural mindset: "set up" the child once in a life time, "irrigate it" regularly (feed daily), "sprinkle it with insecticide" when needed (give moralizing lessons), "shape its crown" (bring them to church for another superficial exposition of the moral code) and consequently they simply... grow up. Then when they reach the school age, you, as a responsible parent look for the best and cheap state-run school in your area to take care of your children and to make them fit for life.

Poor fellow, this is not education! That might sound like a good method of getting good fruit (best case scenario), but it is definitely not the pedagogical method that will turn kids into healthy Christians. If parents want to raise Christian children, they can't simply treat them like biological creatures, and nothing more.

Next time we will analyse a biblical principle of 'redeeming time' with the children. Keeping Education in mind, of course.

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS FOR BUSY FAMILIES

Filled With Wonder

Bible Connection

Psalm 8 or Psalm 19. We are surrounded by thousands of wonderful details of God's incredible creation. Being filled with wonder increases our faith in God.

Things you need:

- A collection of interesting natural objects, such as flowers, seeds, a piece of wood, animal skin, stones, shells, bones, etc.
- Pictures of amazing landscapes and scenery from the Internet, old calendars, books, etc.

Worship activities

1. Read the Bible verses and talk about

any moments of wonder you have experienced recently. Children often have a natural sense of wonder and curiosity. Remind them of a time when they watched an ant, a bee, or another creature.

2. Let each person choose one of the natural objects or pictures you have collected.
3. Allow two minutes for everyone to explore their object carefully and to notice everything wonderful about it. They can write down these details if they wish.
4. Then let everyone introduce their item of wonder to the rest of the family, describing its special characteristics and talking about how



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perfectly it has been created.

5. Talk about what fills each of you with wonder. Is it something beautiful, tiny, huge, dramatic, mysterious, or unexpected?

Prayer

Write a psalm of praise together. Use the wonderful objects you have explored to inspire your praise-psalm prayer.

Experiment #1: Bridges instead of Walls

This simple experiment teaches us that connecting with other people despite our differences is much more productive than staying isolated or relating only with like-minded people.

Materials: 7 small transparent cups, water, food coloring (red, blue, yellow), paper towels.

Time: 5 minutes of preparation, 20-30 minutes for the final result to appear.

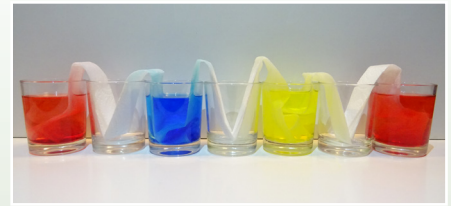
Safety gear: No safety gear needed.

Values: Diversity, acceptance, tolerance, connection.

Procedure:

1. Fill 4 of the cups with water. Add a few drops of red food coloring to two of them, blue to one, and yellow to one. Line up the cups in the following order: red, yellow, blue, red. Explain: *These cups represent us and other people who are different from us. They can be physically different, of different age, of different culture, or just have different ideas and opinions. Sometimes we want nothing to do with people who have a different "color" so we build separating walls.*

2. Place the three empty cups, upside down, between the colored cups, separating them. Explain: *But, what if we replace the walls by bridges?*
3. Turn the empty cups over and place paper towel strips connecting each cup with the adjacent ones (see image). Explain: *When we try to connect with other people despite our differences, beautiful things can happen, but true connections, true friendships, take time, so we need to be patient.*
4. Wait for 20-30 minutes. Colored water will slowly move from the filled cups to the empty ones, forming a beautiful rainbow. Explain: *When we share our love, gifts, and ideas with other people and are open to theirs as well, we can enrich each others lives and the church. By doing this we do not lose our identity (the red, blue and yellow cups are still there) but together, we can create something wonderful which in this case (the rainbow) reminds us God's promise and commitment to the whole human race.*



The Science Behind The Experiment:

Capillarity. Water molecules tend to stick to materials such as the microscopic fibers in the paper towel. They stick well enough that they can climb up against gravity and move through the paper to the next cup.

Noemi Duran

Geoscience Research Institute
Director of the European
Branch Office



YOUTH AND CHILDREN

GYD – Global Youth Day

March 13, 2013, Global Youth Day (GYD) event was launched to mobilise the world youth to become the hands and feet of Jesus. Grounded in the last words of Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan, "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:25-37), the theme of the Global Youth Day is "Be the sermon."

We find ourselves in 2019 already, 6 years have passed since we had the first GYD, and every year more young people is getting involved in going out on the third Sabbath of the month of March to show the community in every place in the world their love for Jesus, and their commitment to society.

Youth Ministries partners with Children Ministry in this wonderful activity, to help both, youth and children grow up with the concept of Service and Mission, as a way of living.

After seeing all the news reports, testimony videos, and worldwide activity from more than 150 million

digital social media impressions last year, we know God has been ministering to those in need through our tireless young people committed to being the hands and feet of Jesus. Seeing how His power moved through the streets of our communities last year means we can only imagine what He'll do this year! Make big plans and share them with us and with the world.

Have a wonderful experience this next GYD, March 16, 2019, and please, don't forget to "Be the Sermon".



Jonatan Tejel

Inter-European Division
Youth Director





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TURBOCHARGE

your Children's Ministry

Don't Feed the Bears... Feed the Leaders

We are called to lead children, to point them toward a relationship with a loving, living Savior. There's no greater privilege, no greater call. To carry it out, we're privileged to work with adult volunteers.

Maintain frequent two-way communication. If you can personally call each one of your volunteers once a month, do it. If that's unrealistic, learn how to send customized e-mail messages.

Never stop training. Every ministry, regardless of size, should have no fewer than two training events per year. When you can, divide the events according to areas of service or age groups. Don't make it easy and convenient for you—make it easy and convenient for your volunteers. Make training fun! In our elementary area, we don't call them training sessions. We call them dance parties. Volunteers come

to learn the motions to new and existing songs that we use, and we take the opportunity to share anything else we need to. They love it. Value their time. Be prepared! Make sure that when they leave, there's no question it was worth it to them to give up an evening or afternoon.

Prove your love. Hold social appreciation events at least once a year with the sole intention of honoring your volunteers. Love them. Play games, have fun, eat, and get to know each other as real human beings, not roles. This isn't rocket science: Training events are for training, and appreciation events are for appreciation..

Cast your vision. At least once a year, gather your volunteers to celebrate what God has done in the past year and cast vision for the next year. This is a vital component of keeping people engaged. They'll

lose passion over time and forget why they're doing it... unless you remind them.

Maintain as much personal contact as possible. Nothing says "Hey, you don't matter much to me" like seeing your children's pastor fly by in the hall, not even acknowledging your presence. Stop. Say hello. People are more important than programs. Tell your volunteers how glad you are that they're there.

Pray. The two best ways you can minister to your volunteers are to pray for them and equip them to pray for each other.

One last thing. If the tasks on your list or your number of programs make it too difficult for you to nurture your volunteers and build relationships, *then cut the tasks and reduce the programs.* Don't let the "good things" suffocate the "best things." God loves people more than he loves programs.

From: Hudson, D. & Werner, S.: *100 Best Ideas to Turbocharge your Children's Ministry.* Group Publishing, Loveland, Colorado, USA, 2013

52 WAYS TO PARENT HAPPY CHILDREN

The Listening Child

Parents often give their children instructions without realizing that they are too complicated for them to follow. It's important to be careful and thoughtful about the way you ask your child to do things, so that you don't confuse them. A little bit of thought will help you to give your child instructions that they can follow and obey easily, so you'll both be happy.

Get their attention. Make sure you have your child's focused attention before you start. Move close to your child. Don't talk to them or call instructions from a distance, because you need to know that they're giving you their full attention. If your child is totally absorbed in another activity, they're not able to listen to you.

Give them plenty of time. If possible, allow your child plenty of time to do what you're asking them to do. When they feel pressured, because you're stressed and

late, they'll become stressed and anxious, too. Their anxiety can make them more forgetful and make it harder for them to concentrate on what they need to do.

Make sure they feel loved. Talk to your child, warmly and cheerfully, using their name, so they're feeling relaxed and wanting to listen to you. Crouch down to their level. Look into their face. When they feel loved by you, they'll be more likely to obey you.

Smile! Say something that makes them feel happy, because feeling good will help them listen to you and remember what you're saying.

Speak respectfully. Be polite and ask nicely, as if you were speaking to a guest in your home. Issuing commands without making a warm connection with children, and yelling at them, can distress, alarm and confuse them.



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Keep it simple. Give your instructions simply and clearly, using as few words as possible, especially for younger children.

Show appreciation. Thank your child for their obedience, and praise them for remembering your instructions and carrying them out carefully. This will encourage them to pay attention to you, and they'll be happier to follow your instructions in the future.

From: Holford K.: *52 Ways to Parent Happy Children.* Autumn House Publications, Grantham, Lincolnshire, UK, 2016



ACTIVITY REPORT



PULSEmeet 2019

330 youth leaders and pastors gathered together at the third PULSEmeet youth leadership training congress in the town of Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany, from 6 to 10 February, 2019. This event is organized by the Inter-European Division of the SDA Church Youth Ministries department with the aim of providing continuing education for youth leaders, youth pastors and everyone with the passion for Christian Youth Ministry.

Jonatan Tejel, EUD Youth Ministries director and responsible for the morning devotions at PULSEmeet described it as being “designed to offer quality training, professional encouragement and spiritual inspiration.” He added that “PULSEmeet is also an international platform to reflect, discuss, and pray with youth leaders and practitioners from all over Europe. It deals with the challenges and opportunities to reach young people with the Gospel, to empower and disciple youth in various ways to live up to their God-given potential, and to help the emerging adult to be fully integrated into the life and the mission of the local Adventist communities of faith.”

The theme this time was “My Church, My Home, My Mission.” Guest speakers developed this motto in their plenary sessions: Together with Jesus, Gary Blanchard (Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) World Youth Director); Connecting Together and Re-Thinking Together, Stephan Sigg, (SDA Swiss Union and Swiss German Conference President); Walking Together, Troy Fitzgerald (Pastor at Walla Walla University Church, USA); Worshipping Together, Adriana Pereira (Music professor and director of the Department of Music at Andrews University, USA); and Building Together, Dejan Stojkovic (Youth Director of the SDA British Union Conference).

This PULSEmeet also had a strong focus on the iCOR initiative (see <https://icor.church>), which is designed to help local church leaders (pastors elders, church



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boards, youth leaders...) develop the local church culture so that they become safe spiritual homes for people from all generations. Several resources (iCOR Information Brochure, iCOR Study Guide and iCOR Church Board Guide) and a whole track of workshops was offered for those interested in learning more about how to implement this initiative in their local church.

A total of 70 workshops were offered over two days in five main areas: youth ministry (workshops dealing with general youth ministry issues); case studies (workshops presenting projects that are working in several unions, to give practical ideas that could be adapted to each leader’s context); iCOR (workshops dealing with the iCOR initiative and values, which fosters value-oriented growth in churches); AMiCUS or student ministry (workshops dealing with student and university related topics, such as how to deal with tough questions or apologetics); and pastoral (workshops useful for pastors and elders attending).

Saturday morning was a special

moment of recommitment to the Lord in the communion service led by Gary Blanchard.

Saturday afternoon gave way to innovation and creativity with the Think Tank led by Álvaro Doladé (Co-founder of Flying October Spain). In a process of design thinking, youth practitioners were divided in groups and given the task to come up with ideas to make their church relevant for youth. The 10 ideas that resulted from the one-hour Think Tank can be found on: <http://2019.aypulse.org/event/think-tank/>

The event ended on Saturday evening at a climax, with attendees fully encouraged and empowered in their ministry as youth leaders. Joachim from Germany shared that “PULSEmeet was an encouragement by God,” and Lucian from Romania concluded, “The message was amazing. I was impressed by the seminars that talked about reaching people through strong convictions. The last sermon was also amazing.”

See the full article on: <https://news.eud.adventist.org/en/all-news/news/go/2019-02-13/pulsemeet-2019/>



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Alexandra Mora
Inter-European Division
Youth Ministries Assistant



Keep in Mind

EVENTS FROM THE INTER-EUROPEAN DIVISION

2019



March 7-11

KID U Training Course
Madeira, **Portugal**

March 16

Global Youth Day

March 21-25

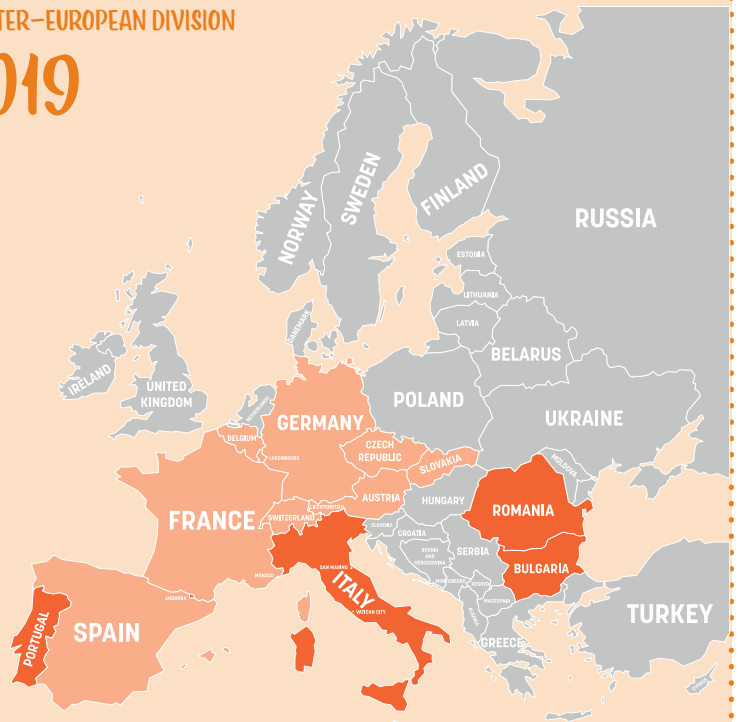
CHM Evang. Project
Andorra

May 2-7

Communication Congress
Varna, **Bulgaria**

September 18-22

People 7.0. Forward Together
Interministries Summit
Organized by
Children's / Family / Women's Ministries
Lignano Sabbiadoro (Venice), **Italy**



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ITALY

18-22
SEPTEMBER
2019

Seventh-day
Adventist Church
INTER-EUROPEAN DIVISION

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Parents and Pastors: Partners in Gen Z Discipleship

A recent Barna study shows it is very important to engaged Christian parents that their child develops a lasting faith. If the goal is to impart a vibrant, lasting faith to the next generation, the current state of affairs is not promising: Christianity has less of a hold on Gen Z than on any previous age group. Fewer U.S. teens than adults believe core theological tenets of the Christian faith—and teens who do make orthodox faith claims are not quite as sure about them as adults. Most of us form our values and assumptions before the age of 20, so it's vitally important to reassess our discipleship priorities and methods—and adjust as necessary. In this excerpt from Barna's major study of Generation Z, conducted in partnership with Impact 360 Institute, we take a look at the discipleship interactions that today's teens have with their parents and youth pastors.

Parents Want a Lasting Faith for Their Children

More than nine out of 10 engaged Christian parents (those who identify as Christian, regularly attend church and

have orthodox beliefs) say it is important that their child “is equipped to explain the Christian faith” and is “engaged in service”—likely as elements of the overall goal of strong adult faith.

Who owns the responsibility to develop their teen's faith? According to engaged Christian parents, they do. Three out of five say that they, the parents, are primarily responsible (59%) and more than one-third says that it's mostly them, with the help of church leaders (36%). They approach this in a variety of ways,

including attending church together (89%), praying together (59%), reading / discussing the Bible together (45%) and volunteering / serving with a ministry together (44%).*

Three out of five engaged Christians feel primarily responsible for developing their teen's faith. 36 percent says that it's mostly them, with the help of church leaders.

Gen Z were born 1999 to 2015. (Only teens 13 to 18 are included in this study.)

Millennials were born 1984 to 1998.

Gen X were born 1965 to 1983.

Boomers were born 1946 to 1964.

Elders were born before 1946.

No Faith identify as agnostic, atheist or “none of the above.”

Engaged Christians identify as Christian, have attended church within the past six months and strongly agree

with the each of the following:

- The Bible is the inspired word of God and contains truth about the world.
- I have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in my life today.
- I engage with my church in more ways than just attending services.
- I believe that Jesus Christ was crucified and raised from the dead to conquer sin and death.

*Continue reading at: www.barna.com/research/parents-and-pastors-partners-in-gen-z-discipleship

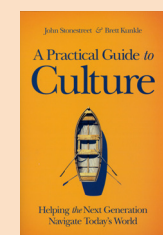
RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



DON'T QUIT

Jessica Bealer & Gina McClain

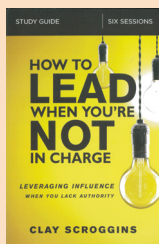
Making it in ministry isn't as easy as some might think. After all, it's not like you're a superhero. With every unsuccessful outcome, dropped ball, or negative interaction, you hear the same question in your mind, “Am I still called to be doing what I'm doing?” But don't hang up your cape just yet. The best journey is one where you have the confidence of calling and an intentional strategy that gives you practical hope through the difficult times.



A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CULTURE

John Stonestreet & Brett Kunkle

Cultural pressure is increasing, especially on our kids. But even in a world of addictions, ever-present screens, and gender-identity questions, youth can have clarity and confidence. We must help them attain it. In this honest and practical guide for parents and Christian leaders, the authors explore questions such as, why do so many kids struggle with identity? How can we steer kids away from substance abuse and other addictions? This inspiring book will enable you to help your kids influence the culture, rather than let the culture change them.



HOW TO LEAD WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN CHARGE

Clay Scroggins

One of the greatest myths of leadership is that you must be in charge in order to lead. Great leaders don't buy it. Great leaders lead with or without the authority and learn to unleash their influence wherever they are. With practical wisdom and humor, the author will help you nurture your vision and cultivate influence, even when you lack authority in your organization. And he will free you to become the great leader you want to be so you can make a difference right where you are.



UNFORGETTABLE STORIES

AutumnHouse Publishing

How do you teach children the importance of values like friendship, courage, and patience? This set of 20 stories will help them to understand and develop skills and attributes. Each story covers an important life value, starting off with the Word of God, and finishing with questions to think about in their own lives, plus a prayer to lead them into a deeper relationship with God.

The values covered in this book are: courage; perseverance; friendship; cheerfulness; patience; generosity; forgiveness; humility; kindness; self-control; gratitude; respect; compassion; truthfulness; reliability; and acceptance.



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