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**Country Music Association
Children's Issues Exploratory Research**

Prepared by:
GSD&M
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BACKGROUND, RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND

The Country Music Association and The Advertising Council are working together to develop a public service effort that will directly benefit children in America. The purpose of this study is to better understand what parents and children feel are the biggest problems facing kids in America and explore areas the country music industry could support to effect change for the better.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Primary

Identify the most pressing issues and challenges which parents face in raising children in the nineties; as well as identifying the issues which children feel need addressing in order to have a more fulfilling childhood.

Secondary

- Explore the image and equity of the country music industry in order to understand areas that make sense for the country music industry to support as well as feel sincere coming from the country music industry.
- Explore reactions to various positioning concepts in terms of importance/need, action-ability, and appropriateness from the Country Music Association.

METHODOLOGY

Method

- Parents: Two focus groups lasting approximately two hours in length: one group among Mothers and one group among Fathers.
- Children: One 'focus group' conducted among a classroom of fifth grade children from Matthews Elementary School (a local public elementary school in Austin, TX).

Respondent Specifications: Parent Focus Groups

- At least half are Country Western music fans:
 - listen to country music most often
 - listen at least once a day to country music
- Have at least one child under 18 living in their household
- Good mix of ages of children in household
- Mix of education, age and household income
- Security screen for marketing/advertising and country music industry
- One group of Mothers: at least half work full-time
- One group of Fathers: all work full-time; majority should have children <18 living in the household

Respondent Profile: Children Focus Groups

- Primarily ten and eleven year olds
- Ethnically diverse
- Half from divorced homes

Market:

Austin, TX

Timing:

Children: October 9, 1998
Parents: October 29, 1998

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Parent – Child Issues in the 90s

- **When asked about the issues kids and parents face today, the issues that consistently arose were the key social issues of sex, drugs, alcohol, and tobacco use.**
- **Equally present were the pressures that parents face in raising their children to adequately deal with those issues**—work-related stress, shortage of time to spend with kids, overall exhaustion and the resulting lack of good communication and loving relationships.
- **The amount of time and the level of communication a parent has with their child was thought to directly impact a child's susceptibility to peer pressure and resulting problems** with sex, drugs, alcohol, or any other social problem they will face. Parents were quick to identify time and communication as the key issues that would ultimately be most beneficial in solving all of the other social issues that their children will need to deal with for the following reasons:
 1. **Parents feel that if a parent spends time with a child and listens to a child, that child will feel valued.** Consequently, they should feel more secure and be less susceptible to peer pressure and the appeal of sex, drugs and alcohol.
 2. **Developing open lines of communication with your children is also critical in providing them with an alternative viewpoint to the values portrayed in “their world”.** If kids cannot talk to their parents openly about issues they face then the parent is easily cut-out of this circle of influence. Many parents feel the best thing they can give their kids is an experienced, honest view of an issue the child is facing.

Challenges in Developing Communication:

- **Parents talked about the challenge and importance of spending time with their children:** Time is seen as critical to developing the trust needed for real communication. You have to ‘build-up’ to real communication.
- **Parents talk about the challenge of listening effectively to your kids:** Parents talk about how difficult it can be to come home after a long day and listen, *really listen*, to your kids. Listening is an active process that is critical in developing open communication between a parent and a child.
- **Parents talked about the need to be more honest:** Many parents feel that being honest is critical to forming a chain of communication with kids—it increases receptivity to the message and the likelihood that a child will actually come to a parent with problems. Today, these parents try to be more honest with their own children about their personal experiences with a given issue, drugs, premarital sex, et cetera
- **Parents appreciate and are looking for opportunities to discuss important issues:** Parents appreciate in-school programming, public service advertising and general programming that act as catalysts for discussing sensitive subjects.
- **Parents are worried about activities replacing “real” interaction:** Activities are increasingly seen as a substitute for real conversation/interaction—activities can become a crutch.

II. Perceptions of country music/country music industry

Country music feels very accessible. It seems to have a unique advantage over other genres in this respect. The music captures “real life stories” which people can easily relate to their own personal experiences. In this sense, country music has credibility when it comes to empathy with *every day* people. Listeners like this feeling of kinship and the ability to project themselves in a particular story or song.

When thinking of positioning ideas, it makes sense that the country music industry would empathize with the difficulties of raising a family and overcoming personal obstacles.

III. Reactions to Positioning Ideas

Title: ***TUNE-IN TO YOUR KIDS***
Theme: Listen to your children
Summary: Musicians need a great ear to succeed. The same holds true for parents. Country music reminds us that listening to your kids can help strengthen families.

Parents felt this was a compelling issue that will be most beneficial to children by strengthening the chain of communication between parents and children. Good listening, and overall communication, is seen as the key to solving multiple social issues children face. This is an issue that needs addressing, that no one else is talking about, and that fits well with the Country Music Association.

Title: ***STORYTELLERS***
Them: Communication
Summary: Country music is all about telling stories. What better way to build/teach kids values than by sharing stories.

Like “Tune-In”, the appeal of this concept was in strengthening the quality of communication between parents and children—talking with kids rather than at them. Many parents felt this idea worked in tandem with “Tune-In”; but forced to prioritize, parents felt they could use more help becoming better listeners. Again, this is an issue they felt needs addressing, that no one else is promoting, and that fits especially well with the Country Music Association.

Title: ***KEEP THE SONG ALIVE***
Them: Save the music
Summary: Country music reminds parents that music can enrich life at home and encourages them to support arts-education in public schools.

Save the music is a very appealing cause due to the fact that all children could benefit from the financial backing of arts-education programs by the CMA. While this is a worthy effort for the CMA to support, it appears to place the onus entirely upon the CMA with little call-to-action for the parents. It also represents one very specific issue rather than addressing the higher calling of better communication which has the potential to benefit children on many levels and across multiple issues.

Title: ***PARENTS ARE HEROES***
Them: Role Models
Summary: Only one in five Americans believe parents serve as good role models. To change this perception, country music will highlight ways parents can shape their kids lives.

The need, expected action, and relationship with the country music industry were all questionable with this positioning idea. Parents need a more clearly defined role in order to take action and make substantial changes that will benefit children.

Title: ***COUNTRY GOES TO THE CITY***
Them: Removing barriers
Summary: Country music is perceived as rural and hometown. Country music will broaden its horizons by helping urban kids get a fresh start.

The idea of country music helping urban kids seemed entirely contrived and self-serving. In addition to feeling like an attempt to gain a new market, most parents felt removed from this issue and questioned what they were expected to do. The feeling was that the country music industry would be most effective at rallying parents to take action in their own home and serving people that would be more receptive to their message.

Title: ***IT'S ALL ABOUT HARMONY***
Them: Accepting diversity
Summary: Country music is not perceived as culturally diverse. CMA encourages parents to help their kids see beyond prejudices and disabilities.

The idea of country music supporting diversity was seen as hypocritical and insincere. More importantly—in terms of identifying an issue that will benefit children the most—many parents feel that tolerance is a less important issue than the issues explored in the other positioning concepts.

Overall positioning recommendation: *TUNE-IN TO YOUR KIDS*

From the moment parents and kids began talking about issues they face in the nineties, it all came down to two central factors—time and communication between parents and children. These parents felt that the better the relationship between a parent and a child, the more valued the child will feel. The more valued the child feels, the less susceptible he/she is to peer pressure and negative influence. The more a child can turn to a parent for advice, the better informed his/her decisions will be.

As parents become busier and increasingly stressed they feel a need to be reminded and encouraged to remember the importance of communicating with their children. The positioning idea which was found most appealing reminded parents to listen to their children more effectively. “Tune-In to your kids” was seen as a positive first step in building better communication between parents and their children.

DETAILED FINDINGS

I. PARENT-CHILD BEST SPENT TIME

In order to understand the occasions where parents and children have an opportunity to bond with one another, parents were asked to talk about what they enjoyed doing most with their children and kids were asked to write about what their parents do that makes them feel good.

For many parents and kids, the time spent in simple, unstructured activities without any schedules to keep or places to go are the most cherished. For some, this happens at bedtime when parents can read their children stories or de-brief about the day. For many, the weekends represent a time when the whole family can pile in bed or linger over breakfast and give each other much needed attention after a long, busy week. Kids feel good when their parents simply, *play with me, spend time with me, pay attention to me*. As people feel a sense of getting busier and busier in their daily lives, these moments take on a heightened importance. It's a time to secure family bonds and reassure each family member of their importance and value.

I really love bedtime at our house because we read books and we have quiet time where we can just be with each other and talk about the day. --Donna, boy-2, boy-9

Sunday mornings both kids come in the room and pile-in bed and we talk. It's really enjoyable. Lots of joking and talking and it's really warm and pleasant.--Karen, boy-6, boy-15

Every Sunday we get together for lunch or dinner and we all talk about what we've done. It just gives us time together. --Kelly, married 22 years, girl-9, boy-20

Every Sunday we have a big breakfast together. We make time for it. We have a pretty hectic schedule and it's hard to just be together at one time.--Lonnie, 23, 16, 11, and 8 year old boys

On Saturday mornings we all pile up in our very big, king-size bed and have pillow fights and eat silly things. --Mike, son-5, son-3

"I feel good when my parents...Do things with me! like: cook me food, love me...talk to me ...I really like my mom and dad when they love me." --Walt, 10

"I feel good when my parents...fix pancakes on Saturday morning ...and play games with me..."--Stella, 10

"I feel good when my parents...chase me through the house and tickle me until my eyes fill up with water. ...and drink hot chocolate." --Stefanie, 10

For some working parents, especially working mothers, a special outing or planned activity provides much needed time to de-stress and bond with your children. While kids deeply appreciate the attention that comes from a "special trip". Sometimes it takes a trip away from the home or a special family project to mentally escape from the demands of daily life. The activities planned on these outings serve as mediums for spending time with your kids—the time spent together is much more important than the activity at hand. Kids feel like they're the center of attention and value the special time with Mom or Dad. These occasions also demonstrate respect for the child by considering what the child wants to do.

Our favorite thing is going to family camp for vacation, Lady Lodge. We sleep in log cabins, we fish, there's no TV, and we spend a lot of time together. It's a real bonding experience. For me, any time I spend with my kids is good—it doesn't have to be structured, we don't have to be doing anything. I'm away from my mental list of things to do and I can just concentrate on them. --Mia, girl-6, girl-10

I work in a very high stress environment at Dell and I have to be the Mom and be the Dad. My son just got into Cub Scouts and we just went on a camp out...I took my son on a hike, just me and him, for maybe an hour or two and we just talked and had a good time together. And on our way home I asked him 'what was his favorite part of the trip' and he said, 'well, it was our hike Mom' ...and that's what it's all about.

--Cindy, single mom, son-7

I like doing things with them that I did when I was little. Right now we're building a tree house or we'll camp out in the backyard and see how they react to it. It's like having a second childhood. I tell them stories about things I did when I was a kid and so then they want to do it. They seem to enjoy it.

--Don, girl-9, boy-7

We do a lot of outdoor activities like bike riding with my son or hiking or camping with my daughter.--Lionel, girl-13, son-9

"I feel good when my parents...take me to the movies...take me to New Braunfels...take me swimming.." --Marilu, 11

"I feel good when my parents...Take me and my other two brothers places like to the mall, movies...or take me and my brothers out of town." --Jake, 10

The time spent supporting a child's interests is also a favorite activity among parents. The child, in turn, feels valued from the support. From band concerts to school plays to sporting events, a parent is a child's number one fan. Parents enjoy supporting their children and it also provides an escape from the parent's busy day. If a parent shares an interest in an activity it can also provide an opportunity for a parent to share their knowledge or experience with their children. It is a very clear way to communicate to a child that they're cared about and supported.

We love going to our son's band concerts. We enjoy spending time watching them do their sports or music concerts.--Lisa, boy-4, boy-13

We enjoy supporting our kids in their music and athletics. We never miss a game. It's an escape. We support their talent and get away from the day.--Laura, boy-12, girl-18

We like to do music together. We disc jockeyed their Halloween party. We teach them about Frank Sinatra and Grease musicals and all kinds of music.--Kristine, son-6, 10-girl

"I feel good when my parents...Tell me I did good. Do something because I want to do it. Laugh at my jokes." --David, 11

Net Learning:

Regardless of the occasion, the source of enjoyment comes from the opportunity for parents and children to 'connect' with one another. Parents want their children to come to them with their thoughts and concerns. Children need to feel cared for and valued by their parents if they're going to share their feelings. Whether it's a Saturday morning pile-up in bed, a family camping trip or attendance at a band concert, all of these 'favorite moments' serve to build the trust and sense of being valued among family members.

I like when they come to me and tell me about something that they've discovered for themselves. They're real excited to show somebody. I like watching them expand their horizons and having them share discoveries with me.--Chris, granddaughter-5, daughter-8, son-11, girl-26

"I feel good when my parents...Spend time with me....Pay attention to me....Respect me.--Pedro, 10

II. PARENTS-CHILD ISSUES IN THE 90S

Parents were asked to create a collage prior to attending the focus groups that captured their thoughts and feelings on what it means to be a parent and what issues they face as a parent in 1998. The collages were then discussed at length to better understand the issues which parents are grappling with in terms of raising children. The children at Matthews Elementary were also asked to compile lists of the "Top 10 issues that concerned them most" and the "Top 10 things kids and parents need to work on."

The issues that consistently arose among both parents and kids were the key social issues of sex, drugs, alcohol, and tobacco use. These are issues that all parents say their children will have to deal with sooner or later and many kids say they have to deal with every day. Many parents also reflected concerns over body image and self-esteem for girls, teenage pregnancy, crime/guns in schools, pornography on the internet, environmental issues and quality of education for their children. Kids were more focused on the issues of violence and gangs in school.

Equally present were the pressures that parents face in raising their children to adequately deal with those issues—work-related stress, shortage of time to spend with kids, and overall exhaustion.

Parents feel increasingly pressed for time and overwhelmed by the responsibilities they have to meet and schedules they have to keep. Something has to give and, unfortunately, it is often time and attention to the family or children that is sacrificed. Kids feel this pressure as "spending more time with my family" and "being treated right" were among the Top 10 issues they feel are important to deal with.

The amount of time and the level of communication a parent has with their child was thought to directly impact a child's susceptibility to peer pressure and resulting problems with sex, drugs, alcohol, or any other social problem they will face. Parents were quick to identify time and communication as the key issues that would ultimately be most beneficial in solving all of the other social issues that their children will need to deal with for the following reasons:

1. **Parents feel that if a parent spends time with a child and listens to a child, that child will feel valued.** The more valued they feel, the more secure they feel. Many parents feel that children "fall prey" to drugs or sex because of insecurities and a lack of self-esteem. Ergo, if a child feels loved and good about themselves, they'll be less likely to take drugs or go to bed with someone, etc.

The more time you spend with your kids the more secure they'll be and the less susceptible they'll be to peers. --Don, girl-9, boy-7

Kids whose parents didn't care about them or spend time with them were very insecure and would get into a lot of trouble. They didn't feel good enough about themselves to say no. --Chris, granddaughter-5, daughter-8, son-11, girl-26

When my children were little I thought they were so dependent—they needed me every two hours...My Mother said don't worry, when they get older it will be easier. Well, they grew up and what I found is that they're getting needier by the minute. What they need from me is time and talking. If we could talk about drugs and sex or whatever...if we could foster open communication it would all work out. If they can't turn to me, that's when things will fall apart. --Mia, girl-6, girl-10

2. **Developing open lines of communication with your children is critical in providing them with an alternative viewpoint to the values portrayed in "their world".** Parents recognize that children are heavily influenced by many other sources of information, including peers, music, movies, MTV, the internet, et cetera. They feel it's unrealistic to try and control all of the possible sources of 'negative' information, but that you can provide an alternative perspective so that they can make a better-informed decision. If kids cannot talk to their parents openly about issues they face then the parent is easily cut-out of this circle of influence. Many parents feel the best thing they can give their kids is an experienced, honest view of an issue the child is facing.

When your kids are young it's a lot more black and white but when they get older the stimulus that begins to hit them becomes too varied for you to filter any longer and your role becomes to put these things in their proper perspective. You can't stop those other sources but if you can put it in perspective for them and let them know what the consequences are. I want my kids to be able to make decisions for themselves with the understanding that they're going to screw up but hopefully I've been able to give them enough information that they can make better decisions. The kids that I see doing well, their parents are involved in their lives but they're not living their lives. They demonstrate care but they're trying to give them room to make decisions.

--Chris, granddaughter-5, daughter-8, son-11, girl-26

I think peer pressure is a whole lot greater than it used to be. It might be because parents don't spend as much time with their kids as parents used to b/c parents stayed home more back then. I think the relationship between the kids and the parent has a lot to do with how your kids deal with the peer pressure. --Mike, son-5, son-3

MTV is more of an influence on my kids than her peers. My 13 year old told me the other day that she's bi-sexual. She said she'd seen it on this show on MTV and a doctor was saying that everyone is bi-sexual now. I couldn't believe it. I had to tell her, 'you know that's not exactly true' otherwise she probably would of believed this guy. --David, from NYC, girl-13, boy-15

There's so much from TV and the radio and sports...you're so overwhelmed it's just there and you don't think anything of it anymore. I was at a hayride and there were all these little kindergarten kids and they're waving and singing and the song on the radio was about some pimp singing how he doesn't spend no dough on the booty. You just don't think about it. It's hard to control.

--Lonnie, 23, 16, 11, and 8 year old boys

Mom and Dad don't know anything to the kid. Until they hear it from someone else and then come back and ask you they won't listen. If the kid brings up an issue you can reinforce it and get a word in about it. --Ross, sons-14 and 11

On the issue of developing better communication with your children:

Parents talked about the challenge and importance of spending time with their children: Time is seen as critical to developing the trust needed for real communication. Many parents now feel that the idea of "quality time" is a myth—you can't spend 15 quality minutes with your child and expect them to open up and trust you or listen openly to what you have to say. You have to 'build-up' to real communication.

People used to talk about "quality" time but that's not realistic. The more I read now it's just more time...just more unstructured time together. Quantity is more important. --Lisa, boy-4, boy-13

It builds up. When you pick them up from school and say 'how was your day' you're not going to get anything. You have to run errands with them and make dinner and then hours later they'll mention something and then it will all come out. --Karen, boy-6, boy-15

My son's friends would always come talk to me and I would ask my son why they would come to me and he said that they felt their parents were too wrapped up in their own world or they didn't have time for them. I feel I've done my job because my kids can come to me. --Kelly, married 22 years, girl-9, boy-20

Time and communication are the two most important things. The time I need to spend with my children. No matter how many presents I buy for them it doesn't matter, it's time. That's what we're all talking about. I think time and communication will overcome the drugs, it will overcome environmental issues, anything.... --Mia, girl-6, girl-10

Parents talk about the challenge of listening effectively to your: Parents talk about how difficult it can be to come home after a long day and listen, *really listen*, to your kids. Listening is an active process. Too often you can mistake being in the same room with someone as they talk for listening—when you're really not hearing a word they say. And you have to be ready to listen when your children are ready to talk, not when you want them to talk to you. If you don't actively listen to your kids, they won't feel like you value what they have to say or value them for that matter. In return, they will probably be less receptive to what you have to say. So listening is critical in developing open communication between a parent and a child.

It's hard. You really have to work at that [listening]. You get home and it's like 'how was your day' and you're not really paying attention. You get so tired you don't listen. --Kelly, girl-9, boy-20

You hear them give you the opportunity but if you're not ready for it or you're too tired for it you've missed a cue, a window of opportunity. --Cindy, single mom, son-7

Even when you're home together you need to pay more attention. You can be oblivious to one another. You've got so much to do. --Donna, boy-2, boy-9

You have to be able to talk with them on their terms. My son will ride with me in the car when it's dark and he'll tell me things you wouldn't believe. He can talk to me on his terms. He doesn't have to look in my eyes or see my horrified reaction. And it's great. --Karen, boy-6, boy-15

As your kids get older they need more from you in terms of active dialogue. --Mia, girl-6, girl-10

When the child is talking and you're listening and it's just a nice exchange he thinks he's valued.--Don, girl-9, boy-7

Parents talked about the need to be more honest: Many parents feel that being honest is critical to forming a chain of communication with kids—it increases receptivity to the message and the likelihood that a child will actually come to a parent with problems. Many parents recalled growing up in a household with authoritarian parents who were positioned as infallible. Rules were not explained or discussed, they were mandated. Today, these parents try to be more honest with their own children about their personal experiences with a given issue, drugs, premarital sex, et cetera. The hope is that their children will respect them for being honest and will be more receptive to the message because the parent is demonstrating genuine empathy with their child.

It's about not living in a fantasyland. Say to your kid, I know you're going to have sex and be honest about it. Be realistic. But let them know the consequences based on your own real experiences. Then they'll come to you with their problems. --David, from NYC, girl-13, boy-15

I have an 18-year-old that decided to stay at home rather than move into the college dorms. She likes to crawl in bed with me and she just wants to de-brief with me about her day. And I feel like something is happening right here. It all started when she was 6 years old and she asked me how babies were made and that was the day I decided I everything I say will be honest. I let them know my feeling on the issue but I tell them they have to make their own decision. You are the result of your choices. I don't preach but I let them know my point of view. --Laura, boy-12, girl-18

These drug classes tell people that you'll die or see colors and it's just a lie. And if they try it and that doesn't happen you don't have any credibility and they won't believe anything you say. Be realistic about the consequences. --Kristine, son-6, 10-girl

Honesty, openness, they know what's bullshit and what isn't. ...if you want to dissuade your kids from bad peers you should be very honest about your life and lay the facts down. Never lie to them and just tell them not to do it and make yourself look clean. They'll treat you with respect and relate to you more—otherwise they'll just turn to their peers. --Lionel, girl-13, son-9

You have to keep the chain of communication open...I've taken my kids to NY to show them their relatives and what craziness is—they have cousins in jail. They know everything...I don't hold nothing back...I'll tell them, 'he had a mercedes, he thought he was big time, he thought he was rolling, now he's in jail...that's something I don't want you to get involved in.' Show them the truth and let them live their own life.

--David, from NYC, girl-13, boy-15

If you can demonstrate that you have an interest and you care about what's going on in their life and that you are not the ultimate source of all information and you're fallible and you've made mistakes and that this is about going through this hand in hand. This isn't me telling you what we're going to do and how we're going to act. As long as I feel comfortable that there's a chain of communication and it's not getting cut then I think that whatever it is I'm doing is working. But severed communication is a big problem today.—Chris, granddaughter-5, daughter-8, son-11, girl-26

Parents appreciate and are looking for opportunities to discuss important issues. Finding the “right” time or occasion to discuss certain topics can be awkward for a parent. Occasionally, children will bring up an issue or a PSA or message will appear in the media that give a parent an opportunity to discuss the issue. Parents appreciate these catalysts for discussing sensitive subjects.

I was driving in my car with my daughter when a radio ad came on that said 'I'm 16 and I'm pregnant my parents never talked to me about sex or anything. I'm not upset I'm going to have the baby but I'm upset that I'm not going to live past 18 to see the baby b/c I have AIDS. Talk to your child about sex.' I stopped the car and said, let's talk about it. She was only 8 years old at the time and had no idea what I was talking about. But it gave me an opportunity to talk to her about it. --David, from NYC, girl-13, boy-15

Parents are worried about activities replacing “real” interaction: Activities are increasingly seen as a substitute for real conversation/interaction. This was felt most strongly amongst the Mothers who felt that activities can be used to avoid having to actually talk or connect with one another. Television, videotapes, and the internet can all serve to isolate family members from one another. The perpetual use of activities can lead to awkwardness when the family is left alone to actually converse with one another—activities can become a crutch.

A lot of people don't know what to do with their children. They have to think of something to do...let's go to the mall, what can we do so that we don't have to talk to each other.--Laura, boy-12, girl-18

“Affluenza” is a sickness, it's the need to fill up our lives with things and activities that don't enrich us but keep us on a conveyor belt and keep us separate. And you don't connect.--Kristine, son-6, 10-girl

Video games, videotapes, friends, you could go days without really talking to your kids. .

--Karen, boy-6, boy-15

I think we can give our kids too many extracurricular activities to do. Because I don't have time to spend with them I fill up their day with things to do so they won't realize how much time we're not spending together.--Kelly, girl-9, boy-20

I don't let the internet in our house because it's a solitary pursuit and it's going to suck my husband or my son away from our family. It's 10% of our day already and I don't want to resent them. I just got the TV monster under control.--Kristine, son-6, 10-girl

III. PERCEPTIONS OF COUNTRY MUSIC/COUNTRY MUSIC INDUSTRY

Parents and kids were asked what their perceptions were of the country music industry in order to understand areas that make sense for the country music industry to support as well as feel sincere coming from the country music industry.

This exercise proved more difficult than expected due to the various genres of country music that people are familiar with. They talked about the following “types” of country music, which they had various ways of describing:

- “Hard”, “Old Country” or “Old Fashioned Country”: Waylon Jennings, Conway Twitty, George Jones
- “Modern Classic Country”: George Strait, Randy Travis, Reba McEntire
- “Austin Live Country Music”, “Folk Country”, “Outlaw”: Jerry Jeff Walker, Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash
- “Progressive”, “Electric Rock Country” or “Commercial Country”: Garth Brooks, Shania Twain, Dixie Chicks

Even the ten and eleven year olds that were not very familiar with country music—as they were not listeners—asked if they were supposed to talk about the “old twang-y kind of country like on Andy Griffith” or “Shania Twain kind of country” (neither of which they were particularly fond of).

For the purposes of this study, respondents were instructed to think of country music as a whole, including all of the disparate genres of country music.

Top of Mind Associations:

Among both children and adults, most top of mind associations relate to the ‘accoutrements’ of a country-western lifestyle:

- Pick-up trucks, Fords
- Cowboy boots, big belt buckles, blue jeans
- Two-Stepping, Kicker Dancing
- Tobacco/Dip, Beer
- Cows and horses

The “stereotypical” country lyric also has a strong foothold when people think of country music:

- Sad, depressing songs
- Divorce, ‘she left me’, ‘cheatin hearts’
- Getting drunk, getting in fights
 - “I was drunk the day my Momma got out of prison”
 - “When you play a country song backwards you get your dog back, your truck back and your girl back.”
- America, patriotic

AIDED ASSOCIATIONS:

To get beyond the top of mind, “surface level” associations, parents were given a list of adjectives and asked to circle the words they associated with country music or the industry in general. The following outlines their associations.

Storytellers:

Many parents, especially women, associate country music with well-told, emotional stories. While the ‘stereotypical’ country lyrics described above may be top of mind, there are also a wealth of songs which people relate to very personally. Many describe country lyrics as “real life” stories they can relate to in their own lives. Not only do they relate to them, they talk about them. Women feel songs are great catalysts to start conversations with their children or spouses. While they sometimes had trouble thinking of the actual song title or artist, they could always remember the story and the message of the song and were quick to relate it to a personal experience of their own.

*We talk a lot about the lyrics of songs and country music gives you a lot to talk about.
--Cindy, single mom, son-7*

*Sometimes I think men don't like it because it is so emotional; I think a lot of men can't handle it.
Some of those stories make you want to just break down and cry.--Kristine, son-6, 10-girl*

*It makes you feel good to know other people feel the same way.
It's bittersweet. --Donna, boy-2, boy-9*

Small towns, Down to earth:

The association of country music with small towns reflects the ability to relate to country music and country musicians more so than music from other genres. The musicians and lyrics coming from rap, rock, alternative or other genres is often inaccessible to “regular” people—*street scenes and night clubs in New York or LA have nothing to do with me!* Country music and its themes seem more accessible and feel ‘closer to home’ than many other genres, which people may like musically but can’t necessarily relate to personally.

It's down to earth. They play because something touches them. It's a heartfelt emotion. And when you listen to country music you can feel that.-Chris, granddaughter-5, daughter-8, son-11, girl-26

*It's about real life people that live in real towns. It's stories that would really happen to them.
--Karen, boy-6, boy-15*

Depressing, Hard Life (but inspirational):

People felt that the stories tend to focus on how hard and depressing life can be. While sometimes it can be over-dramatized, the people who like country music can still relate to the problems in their own way. They feel like even though the focus is on a negative situation, that the stories tend to have a moral or a message that strikes a chord in the listener and gives a sense that everything’s going to be alright.

Patriotic, America, Conservative, Family:

Country music does seem to be more closely associated with traditional American values of hard work, family and patriotism than other genres of music. People mentioned Willie Nelson and Farm Aide, Lee Greenwood's *Proud to be an American*, and lyrics that stood out from other genres by the lack of focus on sex and infidelity. Country music seems to be one of the last genres of music to extol such values (short of gospel or Christian music).

It's nice to hear about someone married to his wife instead of doing every person you see.
--Kelly, girl-9, boy-20

Alcohol, Guns, Broken Families, Cheating:

For some, a country song isn't a country song without someone getting drunk, losing their girl or going to jail. While this was amusing to most men, the women felt like it was just an exaggerated reflection of "real life". People have problems and country music sings about them. These associations were closely linked with the lyrics rather than the country music artists. For the most part, these parents knew very little about the real life of most country music artists.

Interestingly, the men made the observation that those same themes are present in all genres of music they just manifest themselves differently given the culture that the music represents (country = beer drinking and cheating hearts; rock & roll = sex and drugs; rap = drug dealers and 'bootie calls').

Country Music Perceptions Net Learning:

Country music feels very accessible. It seems to have a unique advantage over other genres in this respect. The music captures "real life stories" which people can easily relate to their own personal experiences. In this sense, country music has credibility when it comes to empathy with *every day* people. Listeners like this feeling of kinship and the ability to project themselves in a particular story or song.

When thinking of positioning ideas, it makes sense that the country music industry would empathize with the difficulties of raising a family and overcoming personal obstacles. And as will be discussed further below, the positioning ideas that tapped into that notion—*Tune-In and Storytellers*—were the very well received.

IV. POSITIONING IDEAS

[Ranked in order of appeal]

Title: **TUNE-IN TO YOUR KIDS**
Theme: Listen to your children
Summary: Musicians need a great ear to succeed. The same holds true for parents. Country music reminds us that listening to your kids can help strengthen families.

Strengths:

- Most beneficial to kids. Parents felt that if parents did a better job of listening to their children a lot of problems would be solved in the process. This position addressed a lot of the issues which parents had discussed at length as critical to developing good communication with your children.
- Positive reminder that parents need and appreciate. While most parents know that it's the right thing to do, it's easy to forget to do it. They liked the idea of a message that would remind them to "tune-in."
- Actionable: Parents can immediately question their own behavior in this area and begin to "tune-in" to their children more effectively. They don't have to call for more information or send money or volunteer, they just have to start paying more attention to their own children.
- Potential to accommodate multiple social issues. If parents learn to listen to their children, then opportunities will arise when they can listen to their children talk about drugs, peer pressure, sex or any other issue they need to talk about.
- Potential for engaging and valuable efforts like programming, concerts, and albums. Many parents saw this theme working in multiple areas beyond just advertising.
- Unique, original message; most parents were unaware of any similar efforts going on in the media or by any other organization.
- Fits well with the country music industry.

*We need to be reminded. It's like 'oh yeah, I need to do that.' Listening is very hard.
You have to be reminded and encouraged.--Karen, boy-6, boy-15*

*It's very easy to do. It's easy to change your behavior, especially when you
know it's the right thing to do. --Lonnie, 23, 16, 11, and 8 year old boys*

*Everyone talks about the value of keeping open the lines of communication and parents
probably need to work on really listening to their kids the most.--Laura, boy-12, girl-18*

It gives you Goosebumps.--Mia, girl-6, girl-10

Weaknesses:

- No focused negatives

Net Learning:

Parents felt this was a compelling issue that will be most beneficial to children by strengthening the chain of communication between parents and children. Good listening, and overall communication, is seen as the key to solving multiple social issues children face. This is an issue that needs addressing, that no one else is talking about, and that fits well with the Country Music Association.

Title: **STORYTELLERS**
Them: Communication
Summary: Country music is all about telling stories. What better way to build/teach kids values than by sharing stories.

Strengths:

- Important issue: This issue addresses the important issue of better communication with your kids. Like 'Tune-In to your kids', this positioning idea promotes spending time with your kids through meaningful communication.
- Promotes meaningful dialogue: Many felt it was helpful because it reminds parents that there's a difference between talking at your kids and really talking with them. This reminds parents to create more meaningful interactions that their kids will actually benefit from and potentially cherish in the future.
- Inspires parents to tell their own stories in an honest and compelling way. Many felt encouraged because this was a new way they could address issues as they come up—through stories of their own experiences. This positioning idea speaks to the value of honesty, or relaying your own personal experiences, which is so important in developing trust between a parent and a child.
- Actionable. The potential ads, concerts, music/songs or any efforts that might be created were seen as good catalysts for parents to initiate conversations with their kids.
- Fits well with the country music industry.

I've seen a statistic that the average parent spends less than 10 minutes talking to their kid a day. It's definitely a problem that this could help. --Don, girl-9, boy-7

When I come home from work my wife reminds me that I've probably been 'talking at my kids' all day long and haven't had a real conversation with them all day. It could help remind me to have more meaningful conversations with my kids. --Mike, son-5, son-3

You're talking. They're getting to know you. There's no pressure to be great, it's just a story. And it leads to a lot of time spent together. --Laura, boy-12, girl-18

It makes you feel like telling stories isn't that hard; it makes you feel like you have something to go do after you see this ad. --Kelly, married 22 years, girl-9, boy-20

Weaknesses:

- No focused negatives.

Net Learning:

Like "Tune-In", the appeal of this concept was in strengthening the quality of communication between parents and children—talking with kids rather than at them. Many parents felt this idea worked in tandem with "Tune-In"; but forced to prioritize, parents felt they could use more help becoming better listeners. Again, this is an issue they felt needs addressing, that no one else is promoting, and that fits especially well with the Country Music Association.

Title: **KEEP THE SONG ALIVE**
Them: Save the music
Summary: Country music reminds parents that music can enrich life at home and encourages them to support arts-education in public schools.

Strengths:

- Arts-Education needs financial support. Most parents felt that the funding and support of music education in public schools was a very important issue. They cited budget cuts as the source of the problem and felt that the CMA could make a significant contribution to “saving the music.” Parents felt this could be very meaningful if the CMA supported arts-education through financial backing of major programs, donating musical instruments to schools, providing music scholarships, holding benefit concerts to raise money towards the effort. As one mother put it, *this is a cash issue, not a heart issue.*
- Tangible results. This issue seemed the most tangible in terms of measurable results. They felt this was the easiest issue to solve because it was just a matter of money. They referred to it as the “safe choice.”
- All children benefit. One major benefit that this positioning idea had over the others was the feeling that all children would benefit from this regardless of their (or their parents) affinity for country music. The other positioning concepts are predicated on a viewer that will respond to what country artists have to say about something—the assumption was that the most receptive audience would primarily be country music listeners.
- Goodwill toward CMA. The idea of the Country Music Association supporting arts-education also made many people feel good about the country music industry.

You don't have to like country music to reap the benefits of this; all kids benefit—not just kids whose parents like country music.--Lonnie, 23, 16, 11, and 8 year old boys

*I'll take care of the home but I can't pony up the money for programs in schools.
--Ross, boys-14 and 11*

Weaknesses:

- Funding issue is not a personal issue. Parents felt that this issue was almost entirely one of funding in order for it to be meaningful. The onus was entirely on the Country Music Association to provide financial backing to arts-education programs. In that regard, there was a complete lack of action-ability related to this issue for the parents. Most felt that advertising would only serve to notify the public of the CMA's support of arts-education for public relations purposes.
- Already being addressed/less of an issue. Some parents were aware of other organizations or efforts that were already addressing this problem, most notably VH-1, and questioned if the CMA couldn't put their efforts toward another worthy cause. And while they were aware of budget cuts and recognized it was a problem, almost all of their children were already in music programs in school.

Net Learning:

Save the music is a very appealing cause due to the fact that all children could benefit from the financial backing of arts-education programs by the CMA. While this is a worthy effort for the CMA to support, it appears to place the onus entirely upon the CMA with little call-to-action for the parents. It also represents one very specific issue rather than addressing the higher calling of better communication which has the potential to benefit children on many levels and across multiple issues.

Title: **PARENTS ARE HEROES**
Them: Role Models
Summary: Only one in five Americans believe parents serve as good role models. To change this perception, country music will highlight ways parents can shape their kids lives.

Strengths:

- Appreciate the recognition. Several parents felt they don't get the recognition they deserve; that people do tend to focus on the poor job that parents are doing rather than acknowledging the effort it takes to raise a child. In this regard, parents felt this positioning concept was commendable.
- Raises awareness of importance of good parenting. Some felt that this issue would benefit "other parents" who don't realize that they are role models or 'teachers' for their children. While the parents in the group complained about the public perception of "poor parenting", they felt that there were a lot of "bad parents" out there that could learn from this message.
- Potentially actionable: This idea also seemed actionable in that the onus would be on the parents to become better role models for their children (rather than a 'removed' mentoring program or financial contribution). However, the ways by which they were supposed to become better role models was unclear from the positioning concept as it was read.

Church of the Latter Day Saints has ads that do a great job of doing this. Reminding you that your kids should be the most important thing in your life. When the ads over I stop and think 'am I doing that?' It's very effective. --Kelly, married 22 years, girl-9, boy-20

It would be nice for our children to see something that says how important we are and how hard it is to be a parent.... It may prompt a child to ask their parents why they're not doing that. --Don, girl-9, boy-7

Weaknesses:

- Action unclear: Overall, this idea seemed the most nebulous of all the positioning concepts presented. It was very difficult for most parents to wrap their head around and understand what they were supposed to do or how this was going to benefit children.
- Little connection with country music industry. Unlike "tuning-in to your kids" or "storytellers", there was less of a connection with the country music industry or artists. Most people don't know much about the personal lives of country music artists. When they do postulate on whether or not a country music artist would be a "good role model" many default to the stereotypes associated with country music—cheating hearts, drinking, et cetera.
- Need for credible spokespeople. There was concern over which artists from the Country Music Association would be chosen to support this effort. The right choices would be critical to making the effort credible. Even with good country music role models some worried about setting someone up as a role model because "they're always going to disappoint you."

I don't know anything about them... what they're like, their families and stuff. --Karen, boy-6, boy-15

I would imagine a lot of them are not shining examples of parents—it would really depend on who they choose. --Lionel, girl-13, son-9

Net Learning:

The need, expected action, and relationship with the country music industry were all questionable with this positioning idea. Parents need a more clearly defined role in order to take action and make substantial changes that will benefit children.

Title: ***COUNTRY GOES TO THE CITY***
Them: Removing barriers
Summary: Country music is perceived as rural and hometown. Country music will broaden its horizons by helping urban kids get a fresh start.

Strengths:

- Fresh Air Fund concept: A few fathers thought this was a good idea if it was similar to a “Fresh Air Fund” program; basically that country music artists would take urban, inner-city kids and expose them to fresh air and animals and outdoor activities.

They'd be getting the kids out of the cities and into the fresh air. Showing an alternative to city life...break them from the concrete jungle of the city. --David, from NYC, girl-13, boy-15

Weaknesses:

- Contrived: The primary weakness was that the idea seemed too contrived.
- Self-serving: Many parents felt it was a self-serving attempt on the part of the CMA to expand their audience to the urban market and generate more record sales.
- Go with what you know: Many also criticized them for not starting in their own backyard—*there's plenty of poverty and problems in rural America, why don't they help their own people first?* There was a sense that the country music industry would be more effective at dealing with issues that effect their traditional audience rather than going after an audience that is unlikely to be receptive to their message.
- Less actionable: This issue doesn't feel like an issue that parents have any personal control over or means of effecting change. *What do they want me to do?*

Net Learning:

The idea of country music helping urban kids seemed entirely contrived and self-serving. In addition to feeling like an attempt to gain a new market, most parents felt removed from this issue and questioned what they were expected to do. The feeling was that the country music industry would be most effective at rallying parents to take action in their own home and serving people that would be more receptive to their message.

Title: ***IT'S ALL ABOUT HARMONY***
Them: Accepting diversity
Summary: Country music is not perceived as culturally diverse. CMA encourages parents to help their kids see beyond prejudices and disabilities.

Strengths:

- No focused strengths

Weaknesses:

- Hypocritical/ lack of credibility: Many parents felt this was akin to Willie Nelson coming out against smoking marijuana. It just doesn't make sense to take on a national social issue that they haven't proven to overcome in their own industry.
- Insincere/a PR effort: For many parents, this felt like a public relations effort to overcome the perception that country music is too "white". As one parent put it, *they're serving their own agenda...seems like they're just trying to go after a bigger audience.*
- Less pressing social issue: Many parents felt that this issue was becoming less of an issue over time and for some parents it was a non-issue. They felt a lot of organizations had already dealt with this effectively and it doesn't feel like a pressing issue in their daily lives.

Net Learning:

The idea of country music supporting diversity was seen as hypocritical and insincere. More importantly—in terms of identifying an issue that will benefit children the most—many parents feel that tolerance is a less important issue than the issues explored in the other positioning concepts.

OVERALL POSITIONING NET LEARNING:

TUNE-IN TO YOUR KIDS

From the moment parents and kids began talking about issues they face in the nineties, it all came down to two central factors—time and communication between parents and children. These parents felt that the better the relationship between a parent and a child, the more valued the child will feel. The more valued the child feels, the less susceptible he/she is to peer pressure and negative influence. The more a child can turn to a parent for advice, the better informed his/her decisions will be.

As parents become busier and increasingly stressed they feel a need to be reminded and encouraged to remember the importance of communicating with their children. The positioning idea which was found most appealing reminded parents to listen to their children more effectively. "Tune-In to your kids" was seen as a positive first step in building better communication between parents and their children.

If parents aren't listening to their kids they won't talk about any issues. The bottom line is getting people to talk about those issues and everything else will work itself out. --Mia, girl-6, girl-10

APPENDIX

- A. Matthews Elementary School: Concerns among 5th graders (ten, eleven and twelve year olds)**
- B. Matthews Elementary School: I feel good when my parents...**
- C. Parent Collage Homework**
- D. Parent Country Music Imagery**

Appendix A

The top 10 things I'm concerned about are...

The top 10 things kids and parents need to work on...

How people treat each other (19)

- Spend more time with each other (5)*
- Better communication with each other (4)*
- Some people don't get along well (3)
- Be kind to each other (2)
- Love *
- The need to help the needy and appreciate what you have
- Don't lie, be honest
- No more bossing around
- Better respect

The way we're treated (19)

- More freedom/independence (4)
- Let us go more places (3)
- Parents need to pay attention to us (2)
- Don't get enough say in what happens*
- Our family needs to stop yelling at us*
- Parents should not get in our private life*
- Parents need to stop being so annoying
- Parents should not be so concerned when we're with friends
- Not criticize our clothes, looks and friends
- Why do I sleep around 11:30 p.m.
- More time with your friends
- Let us play the sports we want (mainly talking about girls)
- Don't force us to have to do things with people we don't like

My Education (18)

- Homework (3)
- School (3)
- My grades (2)
- Reading books (2)
- More hands-on activities/projects (3)
- Balancing homework and activities
- Some teachers are too mean
- Lower class education
- More tutoring
- *More make-up work time*

Fun Stuff (15)

- Doing fun things (7)
(e.g. Dinner, Swimming, the Park, Halloween, Playing)
- Pets (2)
- Telling jokes *
- More weekend cartoons
- More allowance
- Why Nintendo 64's are so much
- Get a new bicycle
- To watch t.v. for 30 seconds or more

Family (14)

- Spend more time together (4)
- Family (3)*
- The health of our family (2)*
- No more child abuse*
- Talking between family members *
- Help around the house
- Parents need to get home earlier
- *Family problems*

Environmental Issues/Social Causes (9)

- Littering/Pollution (5)*
- Nature (3)
(e.g. rain forest cut downs, burns)
- Animal testing

Violence/Fighting (8)

- Fighting (3)*
- Kids/Adults pick on others (2)
- Killing
- Gangs

Marriage/Divorce (7)

- Divorce (4)*
- Commitment in marriage (2)*
- *Effect of divorce on the kids*

Health Issues (7)

- Drugs (3)*
- Smoking (4)*

People (5)

- People* (2)
- Mean people
- When people get hurt
- People with violence problems

Other (5)

- Why is life painful (2)
- Not enough sleep
- More hours in a day
- Why? Why? Why?

World Affairs (3)

- The situation with food in Africa*
- The Civil War in Africa on slavery*
- Lack of money in other countries

The top 10 things kids and parents need to work on...

- ★ 1. Play together.
- ★ 2. Spend more time with each other.
3. take you to more places
4. get along more.
5. beter respect.
6. be kind to each other
7. be good to each other
8. listen to each other
9. go to the park
10. smOKing problem

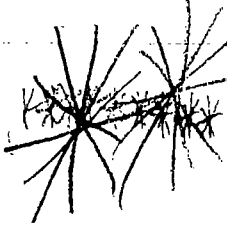
Name: Alonso ~~Jashoet~~

Age: 10

Name: Pedro ~~Joshua~~ n Joshua

Age: 10

The top 10 things kids and parents need to work on...

- 
1. Spent more time with each other
 2. Going to do fun things.
 3. Need to get some version (Parents)
 4. Don't Lie, or be honest!
 5. _____
 6. _____
 7. _____
 8. _____
 9. _____
 10. _____

Name: Brey Giden
Age: 10

Name: Chloe Ramirez
Age: 10

The top 10 things kids and parents need to work on...

1. Parents should listen to there kids more
2. More independance
3. More time with your friends
4. Let us play the sports we want (mainly talking ~~labo~~
(Girls)
5. Let us stay home at a ^{certain} ~~scarten~~ age
6. ~~forbe~~ Don't force us to have to do things with peopl
7. Not be so concerned when we're with friends ^{we} ~~don't~~ _{like}
8. Not ^{critisize} ~~critisize~~ our clothes, looks and friends.
- ★ 9. ~~Let us go~~ Not get in to our private life
10. When we are teenagers let us go places.

Name: Alicia
Age: ~~10~~ 11

Name: Rebecca
Age: 10

The top 10 things kids and parents need to work on...

- ★ 1. Our family needs to stop yelling at us.
2. Our family needs to start more things with us
3. Our family needs to start going on more trip us.
4. Parants need to stop being so annoying
5. Parents need to pay attention to you also
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

and not
Just
are baby
sisters/
brothers.

Name: Marilu
Age: 10

Name: Stephanie
Age: 10

Name Stella
Age 10 1/2

The top 10 things kids and parents need to work on...

1. Talking things over
2. Devorce
3. No more child abuse ★
4. Spending time together
5. More allowance
6. More Freedom
7. Go out to dinner
8. More pets
9. No more bossing around
10. No more arguing ★

Name: Margaret Sullivan
Age: 10 year

Name: Jane Cronk
Age: 11 year

Name: Christina
Age: 10 year

Appendix B

I feel good when my parents...

Take me places (36)

- Take me to the movies (7)
- Take me out to eat (5)
- Take me places (5)
- Take me on trips (3)
- Take me swimming (3)
- Take me to my friends house (2)
- Take us to see my family (2)
- Take me to the beach
- My dad takes me bowling
- My mom takes me to Europe
- Take me to the Nightmare Factory
- Take me to concerts
- Take me to New Braunfels
- Take us all to Malibu
- Took me to Mexico
- Take us to the base

Do things with me (29)

- Play with me (10)
- Spend time with me (5)
- Go shopping with me (3)
- Watch a movie with me (3)
- Eat with me (3)
- Read with me/to me (2)
- My dad is my den leader
- Rides bikes with me
- Build science projects with me

Give me affection/attention (18)

- Tickle/Hug/Kiss me (5)
- Are nice to me (2)
- Love me (2)
- Pay attention to me (2)
- Laugh with me (2)
- Tell me I did good
- Respect me
- Talk to me
- Spend some family time
- Call me by a nickname I really like

Let me do things (16)

- Let me do things I want to do (5)
- Let me have friends over (3)
- Let me stay up late
- Let me watch t.v. for a really long time
- Let me go to the store by myself
- Leave me alone
- Let me run errands
- Let me cook with them
- Let me cook dinner for them
- Let me go on trips with them or my best friend (beach, birthday, skiing)

Do things for me (12)

- Cook me food (5)
- Order pizza and other things (3)
- Give me spending money (2)
- Do special things
- Surprise me with a gift

Buy me things (9)

- Buy me things (5)
- Buy me new clothes (2)
- Buy me a c.d.
- Buy me jewelry I really like

Are happy (8)

- Get along/Don't fight (4)
- Aren't in a bad mood (2)
- Aren't divorced
- Be themselves

Help Me (7)

- Help me with my homework (3)
- Help me when I need it (3)
- Help with my friend's problem

Other (2)

- Are not moving a lot
- Are not smoking

I feel good when my parents...

Walt Wilkerson
Ms. Walker
5th grade
Mathias Fleming

Do Things With Me!

cook the food, love me, take me places, buy me things and
talk to me, help me, Do special things on special places and
take me places I want to go, let me do things I want to do and
I really like my parents and they love me.



I feel good when my parents...

Play with me- Go shopping with me- Help me with my homework-
Understand me- Help me with my friends problems- cook for me-
Take me on a trip- read to me- Give me money
on Sundays- Don't fight- Buy me new clothes-
Take me to the movies- Spent a little time
with me when they are working- Tickle me
when I feel blue- Rent a movie and watch
it together.



I feel good when my parents...

Take me places, aren't in a bad mood, fix pancakes on saturday morning, let me do things I want too, let me have things, and play games with me. Have my choice to do things, order pizza or other things, and take me out to eat at places.



I feel good when my parents...

Chase me through the house and tickle me until my eyes fill up with water. And also when me and my mom go shopping for winter sweaters, and Jackets. And drink hot chocolate.



I feel good when my parents...

When they buy me things. When they take me to the movies.
I like when they play with me. I like when they
take me to New Braunfels. I like when my mom bakes
a cake. I like when they take me swimming.



I feel good when my parents...

plaining together, spent time with me, Take me
to the movies, rides bikes with me, pay attention
to me, respect me, go out to dinner, Help me
when I needed, we went to Mexico

✓



I feel good when my parents...

Go shopping with me. Surprise me with a gift
eat dinner and watch a movie with them.
I like to cook with them. I like it when we
read silently together. I like it when my parents
let me cook dinner for them. I like to draw
with them. I really like it when they give me
spending money. I really, really, appreciate it when
they let me go on beach trips, birthday trips or
skiing trip with them or with my best
friend.



100-Remains
100-9000

I feel good when my parents...

Take me and my mother. Not to other places like to the mall,
I want to go forward to the mall and see. I like when my friends
and I go to the mall together and spend most of the day together.
And I like when my family happy and that makes me happy
too. The last thing that I like that my friends and I
and my mother and father.



Stephen

I feel good when my parents...

*aren't divorced, doesn't fight, not moving out, not smoking,
and just going with me happy lives, and spending some family time.*



David Traversa

I feel good when my parents...

Tell me I did good. Do something because
I want to do it. Laugh at my jokes.



Alonso G

I feel good when my parents...

play with me

let me do stuff

gets me any thing I want

when they order pizza for me

spend time with me

when they help me on someth

when my mom buys me things

when they take me to the movies

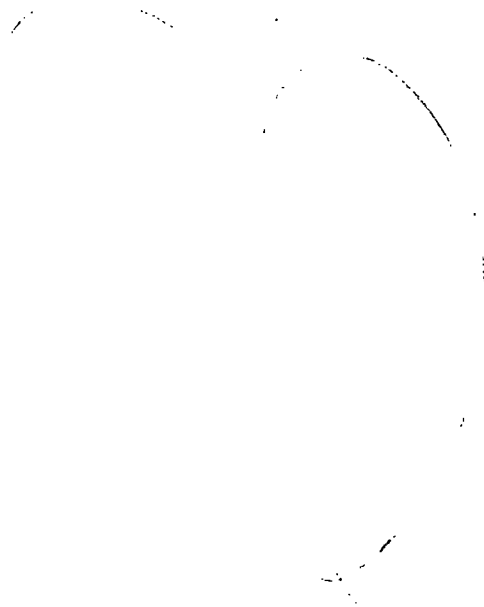
let me stay up late



when they take me out

when they let me play with my friends when they let me

play with a ball or a house



Appendix C

Parent Collage Homework

The Objective:

We want to know what's on your mind as a parent in the 90s. We would like you to create a collage that captures your thoughts and feelings on what it means to be a parent or what issues you face as a parent in 1998. A possible caption to your finished collage should read something like: "What I grapple with as a Parent!"

Helpful hints:

The following are some questions you might ask yourself to help you create your collage. [You do not have to answer all of the questions—they are just to help you think about the ideas to explore.]

- What emotions do you associate with parenting? What's it like to be a parent?
- How do you know if you're being a good parent?
- What do you wish you could do more of for your child?
- What issues that effect your children do you feel like you have control over v. issues you feel are out of your control?
- If parents had an anthem or a theme song that expressed what it's like to be a parent, what would it be?
- What are the biggest issues facing your children as they grow up?
- What areas in your child's life need the most attention. [For example, education, health, personal attention, career development, self-esteem, responsibility, peer pressures, drugs, etc]

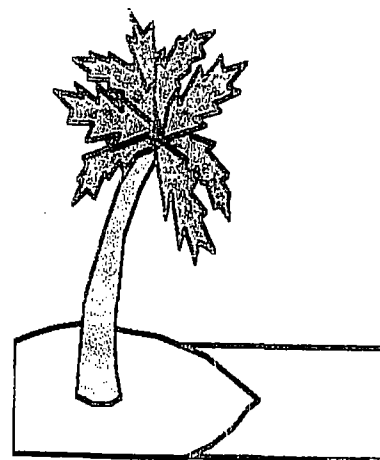
Instructions:

You should make a collage on a large sheet of paper using scotch tape or some glue. You may want to have your children help you with this project. The following is a list of some of the materials you might use to make your collage; feel free to use whatever you think expresses you the best:

- cut-out pictures from magazines, newspapers
- cut-out words that capture how you feel from magazines, newspapers
- your own personal drawings (you don't have to be an artist!)
- write poems, thoughts
- find famous quotes
- cartoons
- personal photographs

OLD-FASHIONED IDEAS.

Health Hope



Home

"Teach Your Children"

TIME

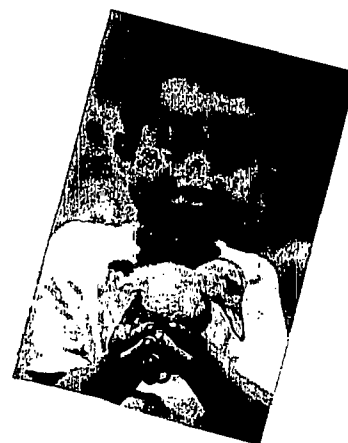
Dad

Family

Kids

Sense of

HUMOR



Need Help?

CREATES HIGH
EXPECTATIONS.

CHANGE

"Go confidently in the
direction of your dreams.
Live the life you imagine."

Henry David Thoreau

Chris Huff

What a time to be alive!

Let's talk

VACATIONS



share secrets.
act silly.
become best friends again.



TO BE
OPTIMISTIC

Let's talk

health care?

the truth about jobs, poverty
(WHAT DO YOU
DREAM ABOUT?

what if

worry about

gun

funeral

bad news

EDUCATION



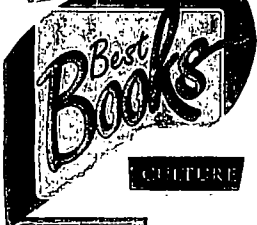
Let the Games Begin

Let's talk

listen

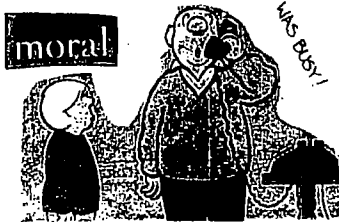
options

BE THERE.

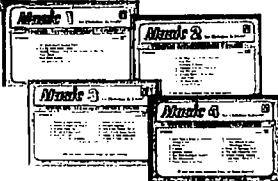


Makes a
Difference

moral



Diabetic

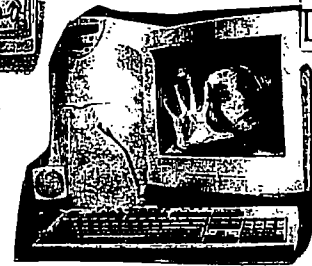


Diet and exercise

Over-Achieving

business

I KNOW IT'S
BRIBERY, BUT
I
SO GRUMPY.



THEY
MADE
ME FEEL GUILTY
ABOUT IT...

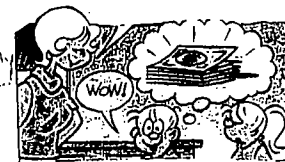
HOW CAN YOU BE WASTING TIME
WHEN WE HAVE SO MUCH
WORK TO DO?!!



I'M FINALLY
HERE... I HAVE
THE
TIME, THE
ENERGY AND
ENTHUSIASM TO

WHAT'S
THAT
INFERNAL
RACKET?

Teaching
Responsibility



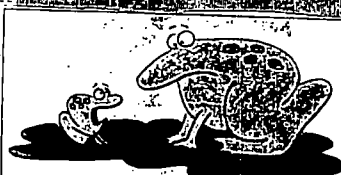
A split decision



MICHAEL FARWELL



TEN TIGHT RACES
THAT COULD SHAPE
OUR FUTURE



"Oh, Mother, stop treating me like a tadpole!"

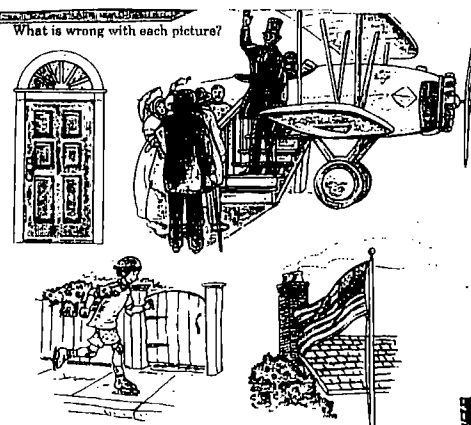


"Cal, lend me your math homework so I can copy it, will you? I didn't have time to do mine."
"Sorry, Greg, that wouldn't be right. I can't help you cheat."

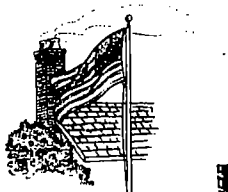
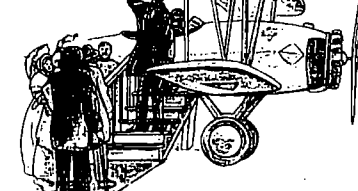
Part 6: Step



Vegging Out Is Actually A Sign
Of Intelligence.



What is wrong with each picture?

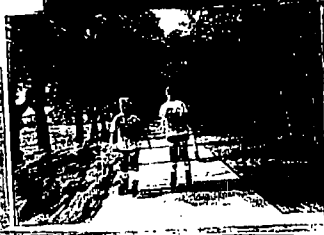


THE SUN

I told the Sun that I was glad.
I'm sure I don't know why:
Somehow the pleasant way he had
Of shining in the sky
Just put a notion in my head
That wouldn't it be fun
If, walking on the hill, I said
"I'm happy" to the Sun.

The Salt of the
Earth

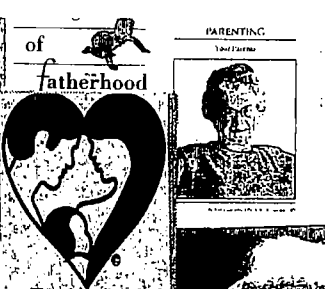
Environmental
IMPACT



What Makes
Happy

Her life was boring...
she thought
she needed
a change.

an alternative for an excellent
education does exist. It demands
as much involvement and concern
as does home or private
schooling. That alternative is
nothing less than the
transformation of this nation's
public schools.



DANCE
DANCE
DANCE
YOU'RE NOT
CRAZY
But You May Have
PMS
NATURAL REMEDIES
TEENAGE PREGNANCY:
Consider All the Angles
NUTRITION
CHOICES

family

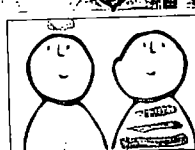


ORIGINALITY
IN THE
SPEED OF
PROGRESS

LET'S OUTRAGE
STANDARDIZED
TESTING!

FRIENDS
DON'T LET
FRIENDS
DRIVE
DRUNK

Mom...



Our Biases
are
Communicated
in a Hundred
Different
Ways, Even to
Toddlers



Let's Get Along
Conflict Skills



STRESS
TYPE



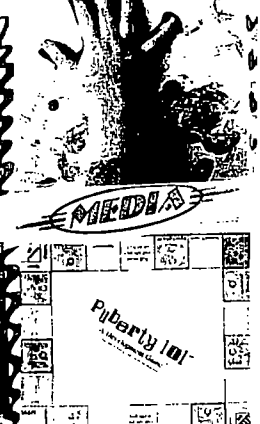
Raise a
Little Reader

Montessori

"Hey little mama, how'd you get
so funky?"



"The trick is to learn how to
scrimp where it won't really
hurt and to manage your
money rather than have it
taken from you."



Human Milk

Difficulties.

Financial struggles

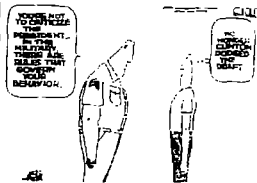
Decisions - How to discipline fairly - knowing when issues to stand firm on and which ones to compromise.

How to protect my children from the evils of society without smothering their independence

Evils of society.

Murders, hate crimes, genuine lack of concern for one's fellow man
Too much violence, sex, nudity on T.V.
Access to pornography on the internet
Drugs, Alcohol

If you're going to
drink and drive
tonight,
don't forget to
kiss your mother
goodbye.



MONEY

SICK CHILD Bills
Divorce Daycare

After slaying, fingers point to words of hate

What I want the most for my children:

A good education.
To be caring children and grow up to be decent, hard-working, caring adults.

education



A B C

Pflugerville Panthers

BASKETBALL Sports BAND
FOOTBALL



Weekends
are made for families

WorkingMother

Mother Father
Teacher Counselor
Disciplinarian, Nurse
Decision Maker, Accountant,
Home repair person, Maintenance
person, plumber, House keeper
Cook



Modern Technology

WHY WE'RE SO STRESSED: WHY WE'RE SO STRESSED:

CAR-POOL CRISIS:
During the 1990s, carpooling has become a common sight. In fact, according to a survey by the U.S. Department of Transportation, 15 percent of all commuters carpool. This is up from 10 percent in 1980.

ON CALL:
By 1990, nearly one in four Americans had a cellular phone. This is up from 10 percent in 1980. Today, more than 100 million Americans own a cellular phone.

INSECURITY:
Forty-one percent of all Americans own a gun. This is up from 30 percent in 1980. Today, more than 100 million Americans own a gun.

DISCHARGE TRAFFIC:
Last year, 22 percent of all Americans were discharged from the military. This is up from 10 percent in 1980. Today, more than 100 million Americans are discharged from the military.

JUST THE FACT:
In 1990, 1 percent of all Americans owned a car. This is up from 10 percent in 1980. Today, more than 100 million Americans own a car.

TO WHEREVER:
Americans have moved more than 100 million times since 1980. This is up from 10 million in 1980. Today, more than 100 million Americans have moved.

REASON:
Twenty of every 100 Americans live in the U.S. city with the most people. This is up from 10 percent in 1980. Today, more than 100 million Americans live in the U.S. city with the most people.

MEDICAL CRISIS:
Since 1980, the number of Americans who are over 65 has increased by 50 percent. This is up from 10 percent in 1980. Today, more than 100 million Americans are over 65.

Joys:
Having good times together
Becoming very close to my children, sharing their achievements

Keys to success

Be involved with your children. Join volunteer to chaperone the school di
Get them involved with something -
Be vigilant - know where they are & with what they are doing.
Try to keep the lines of communicat

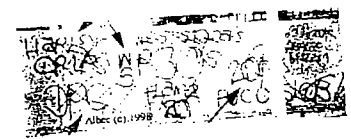


Koss

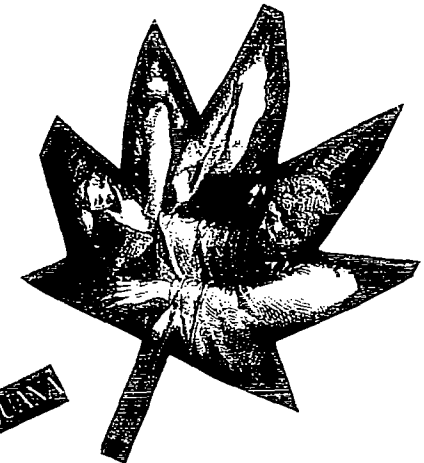
Violence

DRUGS

i was shot at school



MADE TO ORDER
TO ORDER AND
TO ORDER TO ORDER



SEX hiv

Shoot-Out

CRIME

Baby

NO Evidence of intelligent life.

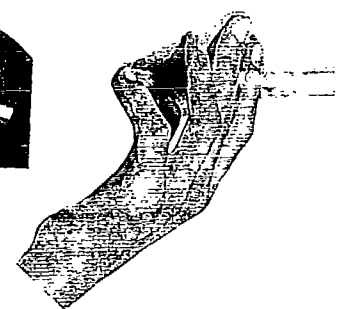
MARIJUANA

COL



Deceptive

NICOTINE



Painful Current Events

Make Fun

SMASH

WOOPS

rules

Dilemmas

Depression

§



STRESS

Love

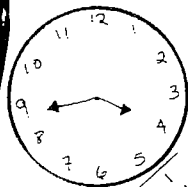


Defending
The Prince

OUR LIVES

Responsibility

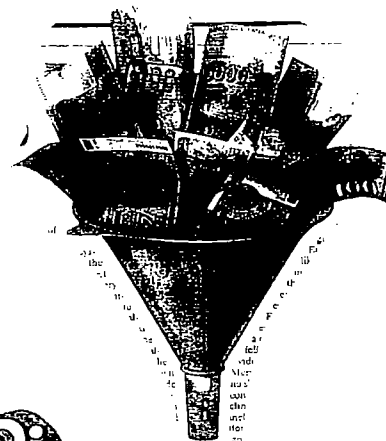
Playing Deadly Games?



GIVING

The Web's Next Wave

DO NOT BE AFRAID.
CHANGE IS GOOD.



Hearts of Darkness

How To
Ask the right questions.



Distinct? Or Extinct?



Express yourself

James M.
Chamber

AT WAR
CORPORATE
WELFARE



TALK TO YOUR
IDS ABOUT DRUGS.

What's Important to Me As A Parent in the 90's

The simple truth is...

Life is → Black or White

TEACH My Children a Moral Code

1. Honor God, Love Neighbor
2. Honor Your Parents
3. Do Not Steal
4. Live Morally
5. Always speak the truth

Important Issues

Access to Health

Good Nutrition Available

Children Need Love
...And Good Nutrition Too!

Skills from Education

How to Boost Your Child's Immunity

Drugs

Alcohol

Good mental Health -
Self Esteem
Happiness

SEX

Education Xers
K. real-purposes

Stress-

No Other Gods
Materialism

LOST

Choice

HOME

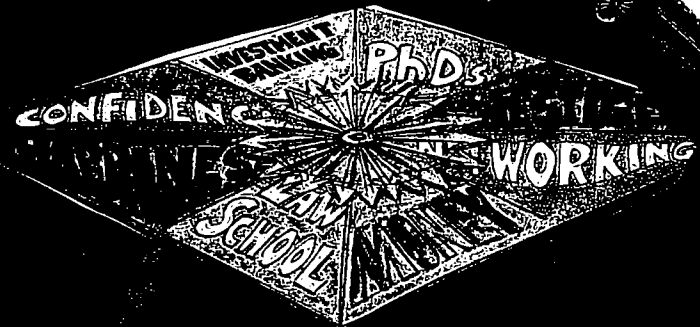
HEART
Blessings

Commitment
Work Relations
Answered Prayers



Paradox:

College



disposable
income



JOHN ANDERSON

DOES YOUR FAMILY
TEND TO YELL A LOT?

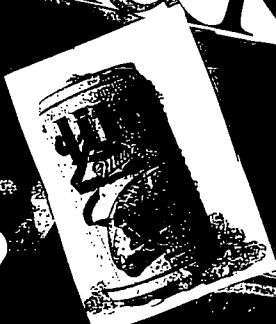
EDUCATION
POLITICALLY CORRECT

Straight Talk.

FATIGUE
HOME

ROCK & ROLL

Wish



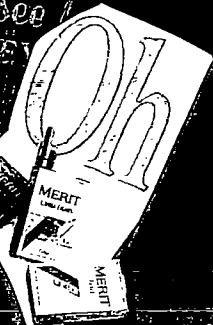
98
kids full of smiles

growing!
Tired of being
Sergeant
Mom

VIDEO GAMES OFFER CHILDREN THE SAME
TRAINING AS THE ARMY GIVES RECRUITS.

A
BOY'S
LIFE

WHY ARE
THERE SO
MANY KIDS
LIKE HIM?



SPiritUAL

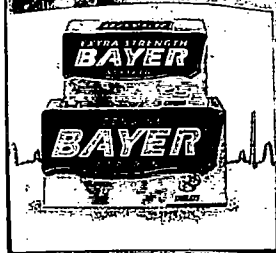
HOOKED ON STRESS

Personal CD player

OUR CONCERN FOR
THE FUTURE HAS
TURNED INTO A WAR
ON ADOLESCENTS.

A creation so remarkable,
it's practically a miracle.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.



BACK TALK

WHO'S RAISING our children?

How not
to raise a
spoiled child

Sex Education



COLLEGE

Manners

* MORE MONEY *

"Why, MOMMY?"

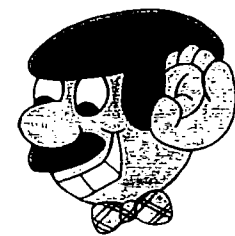


discipline:

smart : parer : no

MONEY PEER Pressure

TRUST
WORTHY!!

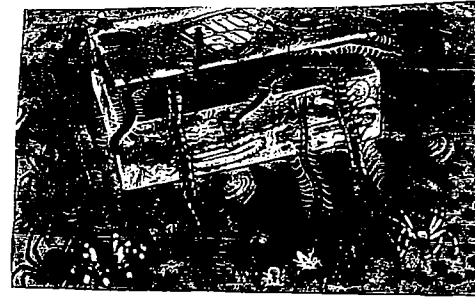


Listen!!

IT'S PRETEND TIME



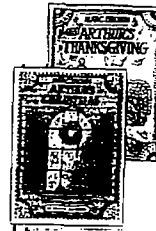
Home for the Holidays



Halloween

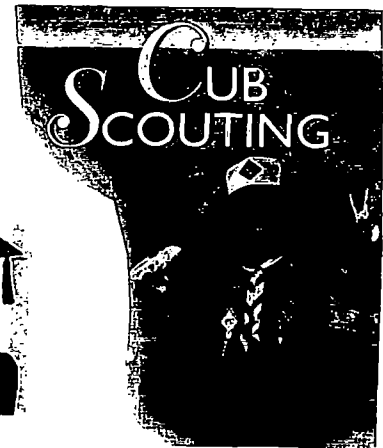
Concentrate on the important things.

NUTRITION



TOYS'R'US

Hope



PTA NEWS

NO WAY!

If someone offers you a drug, say NO!

Never get into a car with a stranger or someone you don't trust.



Stress

communication

Happy

time

Stress



Stress

responsibilities

Happy

love



WALK A LITTLE PLAINER, DADDY

SAID A LITTLE BOY ONE DAY
I'M FOLLOWING IN YOUR FOOTSTEPS,
AND I WANT TO KNOW THE WAY
SOMETIMES YOUR STEPS ARE VERY PLAIN
AND SOMETIMES HARD TO SEE,
SO WALK A LITTLE PLAINER, DADDY,
FOR YOU ARE LEADING ME.
I KNOW THAT ONCE YOU WALKED
THIS WAY, MANY YEARS AGO,
AND WHAT YOU DID ALONG THE WAY
I'D REALLY LIKE TO KNOW.
FOR SOMETIMES I AM TEMPTED
AND DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO
SO WALK A LITTLE PLAINER, DADDY,
FOR I MUST FOLLOW YOU
SOMETIME WHEN I AM ALL GROWN UP
YOU ARE LIKE I WANT TO BE
THEN I WILL KNOW A LITTLE BOY,
WHO WILL WANT TO FOLLOW ME,
AND I WOULD WANT TO LEAD HIM RIGHT,
AND HELP HIM TO BE TRUE,
SO WALK A LITTLE PLAINER, DADDY
FOR WE MUST FOLLOW YOU

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

THE CREATION OF MOTHERS

Author Unknown

When the Good Lord was creating Mother he was into his sixth day of creation when the Angel appeared and said, "You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one."

And the Lord said, "How you read the specs on this one? She has to be completely undisciplined, but not pliant, have 180 removable parts, be replaceable, run on black coffee and insomnia, have a tap that disappears when she starts up, a kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair, and six pairs of hands."

The Angel shook her head slowly and said, "Six pairs of hands, no way!"

"Let me see the hands that are causing me problems," said the Lord. "Is the three pair of eyes and 8 breasts have to live?"

"That's on the standard model?" asked the Angel.

The Lord nodded. One pair they came through closed doors when she said "What are you late, doing to them?" when she already knows. Another here in the back of her head that say what she shouldn't, but what she has to know, and of course the ones here in the front that can look at a child when he yells and say, "I understand and I love you," without so much as uttering a word."

"Lord," said the Angel, "touching her shame greatly. "Come to bed, tomorrow."

"I can't," said the Lord. "I am so close to creating something so close to myself, already I have one who looks herself when she is sick, one that a family of six on one pound of hamburger, and can get a name you told to stand in the shower."

The Angel circled the model of a Mother very slowly. "Is two left," she whispered.

"But enough!" said the Lord. "You cannot imagine what this Mother can do or endure."

"Can it think?"

"No only think, but it can reason and compassion," said the Creator.

Finally, the Angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek. "There's a leak," she announced. "I said you, you were trying to put too much into the model."

"No not a leak," said the Lord. "Is a tear."

"What is it for?"

"Is for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, kindness, and pride."

"You are a genius!" said the Angel.

The Lord looked around. "I said I put it there."



FOR ALL PARENTS:

"I'll lead you for a little time,
a child of mine," He said,
"For you to love while he is in,
and comfort when he is dead
It may be six or seven years,
or twenty-two or three,
but will you, till I call him back,
take care of him for me?
He'll bring his charms to gladden you,
and thank you for his stay;
You'll have his lovely remembrance
as solace for your grief
I cannot promise he will stay,
since all from earth return,
but there are heavens taught down there
I want this child to learn
I've looked the wide world over
in my search for teachers true
And from the throngs that crowd life's lanes,
I have selected you.
Now, will you give him all your love
nor think the labor vain,
Nor hate me when I come to call,
take him back again.
I fancied that I heard them say,
Dear Lord, Thy will be done.
For all the day Thy child shall bring
the risk of grief he'll risk
He'll share his with his comrades;
we'll love him while he's stray;
And for the happiness he'll know,
we'll be grateful stay,
but shall the angels call for him
much sadder than we planned.
We'll brave the bitter grief that comes,
and try to understand!"
Anonymous, West Palm Beach.



When I think of country music , I think...
--

Tradition	Family	Grassroots	Self-Reliance	Simplicity
Conservative	Wholesome	Boot straps	Community	Storytellers
Honor	Values	Heritage	Character	Down home
Patriotic	America	White	Morals	Small town
Depressing	Pick-Up Trucks	Old fashioned	Uneducated	Sin
Guns	Narrow minded	Lower class	Monotonous	Cheating
Homogenous	Gaudy	Patriarchy	The "hard" life	Superficial
Alcohol	Irrelevant	Broken families	Trash-y	Fighting

Anything else...?

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