



WHAT'S UP?

A PAGE FOR PARENTS OF TEENS

The newsletter designed to help you better understand and relate to today's youth culture and your church's teenagers— including your own.

SUMMER 2018

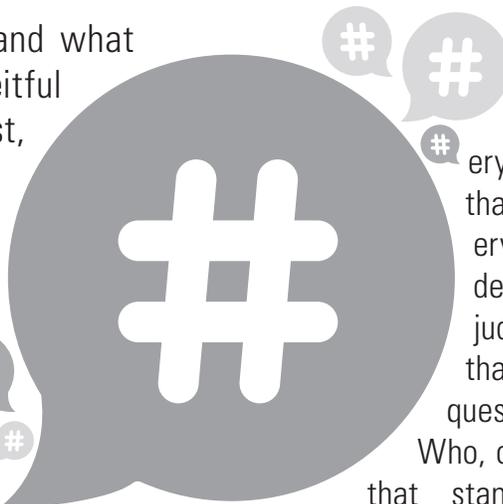
CULTURE WATCH



How do our teens determine what is right and what is wrong? In the wake of sex scandals, deceitful politics, mass shootings, and racial angst, everyone has an opinion on how things should or should not be solved. Star athletes or celebrities will use (and sometimes abuse) their platform to declare what they believe is right or wrong in any given situation. The country seems to be split in two concerning politics and social reform. There seem to be too many voices saying too many things, blurring the lines of what is truly moral.

Because so many voices are sharing their views, it seems that those with the loudest "megaphone" and largest platform will rise above the crowd. They act as the moral arbiters of society, creating a clever hashtag that gains momentum and establishes a new polarizing stance on an issue. Though this has become a popular trend in our society, is it

a good thing or is it a bad thing? Who has the authority to establish what the correct moral decision should be on any given issue? Celebrities? Athletes? Presidents? What happens when the majority of the crowd takes a certain stand on an issue? How can we know if their stance is moral, or immoral? It seems that almost everyone



operates under a general moral standard. Not everyone will abide by that standard, but everyone has a basic understanding of moral judgments based on that standard. The question then becomes: Who, or what, established that standard? As Christ-followers, we believe our Creator established that standard at the beginning of time. Righteousness flows from the character of God. Therefore, as a part of His creation, humanity already knows what right looks like (it is established in us), making it very easy to identify when something is not right. God is rightfully (and logically) the moral arbiter of our world. That is a truth we need to help our teens recognize.

The articles in *Forward* and *Velocity* magazines provide great discussion starters for you and your teen. Also, devotions for teens cover the same topics as the adult devotions in *FUSION* and *FUSION*Next, creating opportunities for family Bible study. Read them, discuss them, and use them as a tool for discipleship in the home.





Make lots of memories this summer with your family. Think outside the box with your activities and quality time. Go get doughnuts together one Saturday morning, or take a selfie together to put up on your fridge. Tell each other your favorite jokes or try to fry an egg on the sidewalk on an especially warm day. Go camping or take a picnic to the park. Beat the heat one day by staying inside and watching movies together. Enjoy the time your children have on summer break!

PARENTING TEENS

The fact that God is the moral authority may feel like common sense to some parents, however, our teens are living in a culture in which that reality is blurry and unclear. It is incredibly important that we instill this truth within our children. Here are some important ways we can be more intentional in establishing this truth within our teenager's worldview:

1. Learn to ask good questions.

Whenever you see a major issue becoming popular within our culture, or if your teen is quick to come to conclusions on any hot button issue, learn to ask good, timely questions. Ask questions like: What do you think about the issue going on? How did you come to that conclusion? On what ideas or facts did you base your conclusion? Why do you feel differently than what most people are saying (this is a good question if your teen has a different perspective than the majority)?

2. Have intentional conversations about God establishing the moral standard.

This may seem obvious but it is still very important in shaping your teen's worldview. Read the creation account in Genesis together. Ask for examples of how to know what

is right all of the time. Point out flaws in the culture's worldview and discuss it. Just be intentional.

3. Celebrate their good choices.

Be careful not to embarrass your teen but rejoice in his good choices. When you see that your teen made the right moral decision (no matter how big or small the dilemma), celebrate her for making a good choice. Ask him why he decided the way he did. Allow the celebration to blossom into a conversation of affirmation in God's moral authority.

4. Be consistent.

Try to do these steps on a regular basis. Be careful not to make these conversations an event, meaning she can look back and recall that "one time" that Mom and Dad talked to me about God's authority. Let it be a consistent, normal part of their lives.

ON the CALENDAR

- Jun 1** National Doughnut Day
- Jun 10** Iced Tea Day
- Jun 17** Father's Day
- Jun 21** National Selfie Day
- Jul 4** Sidewalk Egg Frying Day / U.S. Independence Day
- Jul 13** National French Fries Day
- Jul 24** Tell an Old Joke Day
- Jul 30** International Day of Friendship
- Aug 2** National Ice Cream Sandwich Day
- Aug 5** Campfire Day
- Aug 10** Lazy Day
- Aug 31** National Eat Outside Day

POSITIVE NEWS ABOUT TEENS

Recent studies show that today's teens are exercising wisdom in several areas. Smoking is no longer cool—smoking levels among teens are lower than they've been in over 20 years. Teens are staying in school longer, too. The high school drop-out rate has continued to decrease. Teens are also volunteering more. When you see your teen doing something positive, encourage him or her to keep making wise choices.

Do you like WHAT'S UP?

Let us know what you think, and make any suggestions for improvements. Contact us at forward@d6family.com or call 800-877-7030.



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