

"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation."
- Luke 2:29&30 (NIV)

10 MOST VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES

ACCORDING TO COMMON SENSE MEDIA

OCTOBER 2009

1. *Manhunt*
2. *Resident Evil 5*
3. *Dead Rising*
4. *Resident Evil 4*
5. *Grand Theft Auto (IV and San Andreas)*
6. *God of War II*
7. *Mortal Kombat: Deception*
8. *MadWorld*
9. *Gears of War*
10. *Saints Row 2*

YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

"I was hungover for two years. I'll be the first to say I had a problem. I felt like I couldn't say anything if I was wronged or disrespected or there was ungratefulness or lack of effort within the band. Then I'd get drunk and say what I wanted to say. But that's no way to be."

- Julian Casablancas, frontman of the Strokes, *Spin*, November 2009

NOT TOO MUCH

It's December. . . . and chances are that right now while your reading these words, a multitude of people in your community are traversing the halls and stores of your local mall in a Christmas spending frenzy marked by reckless abandon. Many shoppers who have children and grandchildren are loading their trunks with an abundance of gifts, many of them with high price tags. Come Christmas morning, a host of happy kids will spend time unwrapping piles of stuff. . . . all of which will eventually break or wear out, if they don't get bored with it first.

Is it possible that we give our kids too much? According to a growing body of research, today's parents are over-nurturing and over-indulging their kids. The research is pointing to the fact that while we think we might be helping our kids by giving them the good life, we might actually be setting them up for a bad life.

Wise and thoughtful parents should pause to think about the need to give their kids the *best* life, rather than giving them the *good* life. More and more, the nasty effects of giving the good life are being seen in even our youngest children. Pediatrician Ralph Minear was puzzled by the physical and emotional symptoms of stress that he and his colleagues were seeing in children as young as preschool age. He has diagnosed the malady as *Affluenza* or *Rich Kids Syndrome* because the children have been given too much of something - whether it's pressure to perform, freedom, money, food, protection, or parental sacrifice.

BY WALT MUELLER, PRESIDENT, CPYU

These are children whose parents want them to have all the benefits of the good life. Consequently, they push them to be perfect children, cramming them with more cultural, educational, athletic, and material opportunities than they can handle. And its victims aren't just those from wealthy homes. The disease is as common in middle-class and poor families as in those with lots of money. Included are nausea, headaches, eating disorders, anxiety, depression, and high blood pressure. . . . all because they've been given too much of the good life.

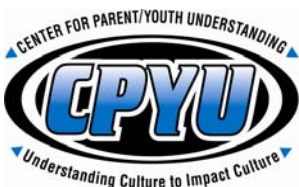
What are the options for those of us who realize that it is dangerous to give our kids the good life? The good news is that there is something better. In fact, it's the "best life." Our lives and actions should communicate to our kids that the best life is found in living in relationship with God by God's will and way, according to his standards of success. The best life consists of directing all that we have, do, and are towards loving God in every nook, cranny, and minute of our lives. And then, because of our love for him, we should love those around us rather than treating them as competition or the means to material ends.

John Wesley had these priorities in mind when he gave this timely and timeless advice: "Work as hard as you can, to make all the money you can, to save as much as you can in order to give away all that you can." Maybe these priorities are the best gift we can give to our kids this Christmas.

CPYU TREND ALERT: SLEEPOVERS

When most of us were young, we would occasionally sleep over at a friend's house. Our parents usually knew each other and shared the same values. Consequently, our parents had few if any worries about what might happen while we were away from home for the night. In today's world, sleepovers are happening more and more frequently, with a larger number of kids sacking out on the floor. But you can no longer assume that the host parents share your values or will

even provide supervision. It's more important than ever to be sure that you not only know the parents and know them well, but to ask the difficult questions about what will and will not be allowed at the sleepover. Many parents have no standards regarding the media kids will watch. At times, the sleepovers are coed. Alcohol is oftentimes provided. Sadly, some recent news reports tell of dads who have perpetrated molestation. Parents, you can't know too much.



LATEST RESEARCH: TECH ADDICTION

When you hear the word “addiction,” what comes to mind? Perhaps you immediately think about the horrible consequences of drug and alcohol abuse. But health care professionals are adding a new type of addiction to the list. Technology addiction among young people is on the rise, and it’s having a disruptive effect on their ability to concentrate and learn. The study of 267 British students ages eleven to eighteen found that 63 percent feel they are addicted to the Internet, and 53 percent feel addicted to

their mobile phones. It appears that early access to these devices might be partially to blame. 62 percent first used or owned a computer before the age of eight, and 80 percent first used the Internet between the ages of five and ten. 58 percent first used a mobile phone between the ages of eight and ten. The message for parents is obvious. Teach your kids to use technology by setting clear limits and rules, thereby preventing addiction.



FROM THE WORD

Since this is the month when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, I thought I would share one of my favorite Christmas scriptures. In the Gospel of Luke (Chapter 2, verses 21-40), we are told that eight days after his birth, Jesus was brought by Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem to be circumcised. While there, they took Jesus into the temple where an upright man by the name of Simeon took the infant in his arms. God had promised Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Lord’s Christ with his own eyes. As he looks upon the Messiah, Simeon says, “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gen-

tiles and for glory to your people Israel.” I can only imagine the joy that Simeon felt.

God in His amazing mercy and grace gives us the same opportunity to gaze on the Messiah and to accept His gift of salvation by faith in Jesus. As a parent, you have been called to point your children to the Christ so that they might hear and heed His call to “come and follow me.” It is in following Jesus that we enter into the Kingdom of God and the joy of salvation.

This Christmas, may you and your family focus your eyes, thoughts, hearts, and minds on that infant. And, may Simeon’s words be yours. May you rejoice with great satisfaction in the coming of your Savior. Have a very blessed Christmas!

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information about your
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IN THE NEWS: TANNING BEDS

As people concerned about children and teens, we want to protect them from harm and provide for their well-being. Parents are especially concerned about the physical safety of their kids, as we teach them to care for the bodies Scripture calls the temple of God’s spirit. One relatively new physical danger kids are recklessly exposing themselves to is the local tanning salon. Exposure to UV radiation from indoor tanning lamps has been linked to melanoma and other forms of cancer, with exposure

before the age of 35 increasing risk by as much as 75 percent. This has caused the FDA to recommend that tanning bed operators limit teens to three or fewer tanning sessions a week. But researchers recently found that 71 percent of tanning bed operators allow teens to tan up to seven times a week. Parents, this is an issue you need to consider. Talk to your teen about the dangers of tanning, and if needed, step in to protect them if they aren’t making healthy decisions for themselves.

