

# CPYU PARENT PAGE

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"When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise." - Proverbs 10:19

## PREVENTING ONLINE EXTROVERSION

BY WALT MUELLER, PRESIDENT, CPYU

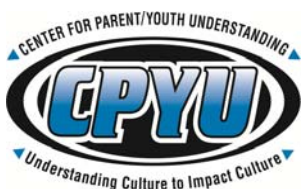
### TOP 10 FAVORITE MALE SPORTS STARS (SOURCE: HARRIS INTERACTIVE)

1. **Derek Jeter**
2. **Peyton Manning**
3. **Kobe Bryant**
4. **Michael Jordan**
5. **Tiger Woods**
6. **Tom Brady**
7. **Albert Pujols**
8. **Hines Ward**
9. **Derrick Rose**
10. **Aaron Rodgers**

### YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

"Back in the day, music was always more divided. Punk rockers were punk rockers. If you listened to hip-hop, you dressed and looked a certain way. If you listened to heavy metal, you looked and dressed a certain way. Lines are blurred right now."

- Travis Barker, drummer of punk-rock band Blink-182 and hip-hop artist, *XXL Mag*, July/August 2011



Seven years ago it wasn't on the cultural radar. Who could imagine that a day was coming when the only people who hadn't heard about it were most likely living under rocks?! Today, the social networking site known as Facebook is not only a cultural mainstay, but it's now the third most populated "country" in the world, and I'm guessing that your kids – like mine – live there.

There are now more than 750 million active Facebook users, with more than half of them logging in on any given day. Seventy percent of Facebook's population lives outside of the United States. The site is so popular that last summer, AT&T announced the first HTC Facebook phone. That's right, a phone that has a button dedicated to Facebook. This new mobile device will make it that much easier for our kids to send messages, post comments, join groups, and upload photos.

The reality is that Facebook is here to stay. Because adolescents are socially motivated, Facebook is especially appealing to kids trying on different "selves" as they look for the best way to present themselves to the world. It offers them a place to "hang out" with others, to stay connected, to enrich friendships, to gossip and flirt, and to fish for affirmation. That's right, all those "likes" serve as great social currency.

Wise parents monitor the "where's" and "what's" of their kids' online time. They know that their kids are by nature impulsive, with a tendency to say, post, and do things without thinking first or considering the long-term consequences. They also lay down guidelines and rules that equip their kids for a safe and God-glorifying social networking experience.

### CPYU TREND ALERT: PARANORMAL TEEN ROMANCE BOOKS

It hasn't been long since the vampire romance books known as the *Twilight* series took the teen literary market by storm. Since then, an entire industry of *Twilight* knock-offs have been written and sold. Large-chain bookstores contain entire sections of shelving topped off by signs that read, "teen paranormal romance." Earlier this year, the folks at Scholastic books released their list of top 10 trends in children's books from 2010, and there on the list was trend number

Here are some of the most basic Facebook guidelines to pass on to your kids. By the way, with more and more of adults spending time social networking online, these parameters are good for us as well.

- Don't give out too much personal information. We live in an age of over-sharing. Giving out things like a full birthdate, social security number, or address could put identity thieves or predators on your trail.
- Make sure you stay up-to-date on Facebook's privacy settings and controls as they do change from time to time. A "friends only" setting is a big step towards safe social networking.
- Don't post anything you don't want the whole world – now and forever – to see. Ever heard the term "digital footprint?" We add to our own "digital footprint" with every keystroke as once it's out there, it's out there forever. Ultimately, we want our kids to police themselves, posting only those things that are good, true, right and honorable. It's also a good idea to remind them that admissions officers, future employers, and law enforcement might be checking them out on Facebook.
- It's your responsibility to monitor what other people post on your wall. Because friends might post profanity-filled or inappropriate rants on your wall, it's a good idea to regularly check so that you can remove anything that shouldn't be there. If they keep it up, de-friend them!
- Always pause and think before you send, post, or reply. Once you hit that "send" button, it's out there and it can't be retrieved!

ten – the continued development and growth of paranormal romance books.

Our children and teens are spiritual beings who have been made for a relationship with their Creator. Sadly, many are traveling down some very dangerous and dark roads in an effort to satisfy their spiritual interests and longings. Parents, do you know what your kids are reading?

## LATEST RESEARCH: PEER PRESSURE

As a culture, sometimes we cave to prevailing notions about teenagers and how they develop. For example, since we're told that peer pressure is an inevitable and powerful force in the lives of kids, we might let some behaviors slide, showing too much grace when they really need to be learning that giving in to negative peer pressure is wrong, and that there are consequences for actions. Some new research on the developing teen brain indicates that maybe we don't expect enough from our kids in terms of resisting negative peer pressure.

Researchers have examined brain scans and discovered that just around the time kids have to deal with intensifying peer pressure, certain regions of the brain are actually developing in a way that increases a child's ability to stand firm against risky behavior. The good news is that just when peer pressure gets tougher, the neurological processes are coming together in ways to resist. Still, nothing helps our kids more than teaching right from wrong, and setting clear boundaries.



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## FROM THE WORD

For those of us who live with the tendency to say too much or put our feet in our mouths, the growth of the Internet gives us another place to speak too much and too fast. The writer of Proverbs reminds us over and over again of just how important it is for us to work our brains with some wisdom before we choose to open our mouths.

While Solomon could never have imagined an online world, his inspired and God-ordained words provide solid guidance for life in today's hyper-connected world. Whether the words roll off our tongues or our fingertips, Proverbs 10:19 remind us to not say too much and not speak too soon. This is not only wisdom to pass on to our kids, but wis-

dom to live out in our lives. . . which of course, is the best way to pass it on to our kids.

As followers of Jesus, asking ourselves some basic questions before we speak helps us to carefully consider whether our words will be foolish or wise. Ask yourself, "Does what I'm about to say really matter?" "Is this useful to others?" "Does what I'm about to say promote and reflect Kingdom of God living?" "Or, does it promote things that are of the world, the flesh, and the devil?" "Does it glorify God? . . . Or, does it glorify me?" And finally, check your motives by asking "Why I am going to say this. . . really?"

## IN THE NEWS: PRE-MARITAL SEX IN AMERICA

The *New York Times* recently reported on a new book, *Premarital Sex in America*, written by Mark Regnerus and Jeremy Uecker. In the book, the authors distinguish between sex that a couple has before they marry each other, and casual or promiscuous pre-marital sex. They believe the distinction between the two is needed if we are going to understand what's changed in America since the sexual revolution of the 1960s.

The authors have found that all the way back in 1950, things weren't that much different than

they are now. Most people didn't get married while still virgins. What was different is that people waited longer to have sex, they took fewer sexual partners, and losing one's virginity was more likely to happen with the person you were going to marry.

While that practice is still not what God ordains as right, the authors make a connection between emotional well-being and sexual restraint. In a world where God wants us to wait, it makes sense that sexual discipline is a path to happiness.

