

**Building up Students to Reach out to Students!  
Graduating students who are dedicated to Christ and devoted to His Cause!**

## ALLOW TIME FOR FAITH GROWTH

Amid all the activities your teenagers have planned for this summer, where does faith development rank? When the sunshine beckons, church attendance and personal time with God often suffer.

But summer can be a great time for families to talk about God and deepen relationships with him. Use travel time for in-depth conversations about your kids' beliefs. Attend Christian concerts and outdoor worship services. **Grace is offering a great opportunity through our ECHO Week for families to serve together to put "feet" to your faith.**

Practicing "spiritual disciplines" is another way to grow as followers of Christ. Devote a portion of your summer to modeling and practicing the following God-connecting disciplines with your kids:

- Solitude—Go on an iPod-free hike, allowing time for silent prayer.
- Simplicity—Keep your schedules simple and get rid of extra "stuff."
- Abandon—Serve without expecting acknowledgment or praise.
- Submission—Trust God as almighty and treat people as treasures.
- Worship—Expand your worship to everyday experiences.
- Fellowship—Establish faith traditions and make Jesus your top priority.

## THE VIEW

- In a survey about summer, 40% of preteens and younger teens said they'd likely be bored, and only 10% expected to be over-scheduled. A majority of older teens, meanwhile, said they relish the freedom and independence that summer brings.  
—kidshealth.org
- Because of the recession, many teenagers have extra time on their hands during summer. Last year, only 25% of U.S. teens had summer jobs, and competition is tough again this year. Instead, more kids are now taking summer classes.

## TIPS >>>

### **This summer, help kids solve the truth of their unique identity.**

Youth ministry pioneer Dan Webster uses a Four-Window Model to help teenagers get a lasting taste of who they are, what they should do with their life, and how their talents can find their sweet-spot out in the real world:

1. **Observation.** Realize that a story is unfolding right before your eyes and slow down enough to see it. Pay closer-than-normal attention to your teenagers and to what they notice. This conveys interest and value.
2. **Exploration.** Adults with an explorer's heart push into new territory, understanding on ever-deeper levels the terrain of a teenager's life. Inspire kids to learn about themselves by trying new opportunities and adventures. Then discuss their reactions and identify their interests and strengths.

3. **Affirmation.** This unleashes the power of telling kids what's right with them, rather than criticizing. See beyond what might need to change and communicate the upside truth of the person God has created them to be.
4. **Revelation.** God knows our teenagers better and loves them deeper than we ever could. We need his help to show kids they're fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). God can help us identify and call out what he's put into each of them.

## PONDER THIS

- What were your most memorable summers, and why?
- If you could do anything with your teenagers this summer, what would it be?
- What steps can you take this summer to help your kids explore their true identity in Christ?



# Updates from Grace Students

## High School Mission Trip Washington, DC



We took a team of 14 High School students and 3 adults to DC this summer. They served in soup kitchens, homeless shelters, inner city kid clubs, and a rehab center. The goal of this mission trip was to open their eyes to the needs that many people have in our world. They have returned home excited to serve here in Johnson City in similar ways that they did in DC. We are currently looking at service opportunity at the Melting Pot, Rise Up, and through Good Samaritan.



## Middle School Mission Trip Chattanooga, TN

16 Middle School students and 5 adults headed to Chattanooga, TN for the 4th of July week to serve the least and the lost. We spent most of our time at the Life Care Center and St. Barnabas (nursing homes), as well as at the Boys and Girls Club, Head Start, and the Trail of Tears. It was amazing to see God move in the lives of these young believers because they have come home, just like the High School students, with a desire to serve closer to home. We are hoping to serve at the V.A., Children's Hospital, and local nursing homes this coming ministry year!



More photos from our High School and Middle School mission trips can be seen on our Facebook Page:

[www.facebook.com/gfcstudents](http://www.facebook.com/gfcstudents)



The Student Ministry will be heavily involved in and leading two of our serving opportunities for ECHO week. We hope to see you at one or both of them!

Science Hill High School  
Service Projects  
Monday—Friday  
9am—Noon

Lakewood Apartment  
Backyard Bible Club  
Monday—Thursday  
6:30pm—8:00pm



# Define Summer ‘Success’

Expert Insights for Parents of Teenagers

By Walt Mueller

School’s out, and kids are enjoying summer vacation—or are they? Teenagers struggle to balance jobs, athletics and other activities, camps, volunteer work, mission trips, and lessons. These are all good things...as long as there’s still time to relax and do things together as a family. But summer busyness can lead to madness.

The primary goal of these chaotic schedules is all too often parent-driven, as we try to better our kids and improve their ability to be “successful” in their futures. Unfortunately, the end result of parental pressure and pushiness isn’t always what was intended. Some kids stress out. Others start to believe that their parents’ love for them depends on their performance.

Stress builds, relationships weaken, rebellion flares, and depression may result.

Developmental expert Cliff Schimmels says: “The one prayer I pray most frequently as a parent...is that the Lord will give me the wisdom to know how much to expect of my children. If I expect too little of them, they may waste their gifts. If I expect too much, I may destroy them with an unrealistic burden.”

Now that three of my own kids are grown, I’ve had a chance to reflect on how we raised them. I should have said no to the summer busyness in our family more often. A well-placed “no” can be a great big “yes” to family time, a truly

restful summer vacation, and a wonderful opportunity to spend a few months teaching kids about the true meaning of success.

True success in life is faithfulness and obedience to God. Our desire for our kids should be the same as God’s desire for them: that they become like Christ in all things. What must we do to make that happen? We must know the truth from God’s word, talk about it, live it with our teenagers, model it, experience it together, and prayerfully trust God to change our teens’ hearts and minds.

—SimplyYouthMinistry.com

## RESOURCE



In *KidUnique* (Simply Youth Ministry), Dan Webster shows parents how to make a life-changing impact on teenagers’ lives. Parents can put the ideas into practice with a 31-day experience with their kids.

## BIBLE FOCUS

The apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry tour and told him all they had done and taught. Then Jesus said, “Let’s go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.” He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn’t even have time to eat.

—Mark 6:30-31

# MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

## MAINSTREAM MUSIC



### MATISYAHU

**Background:** Matisyahu blends reggae and alt-rock with traditional Jewish themes. His hits include “King Without a Crown” and “One Day.” He recently shaved his beard and has appeared without a yarmulke but says he hasn’t abandoned his faith. If kids lack a foundation of truth about Christianity (as most studies show), this sort of music can turn their faith into a hodge-podge. They’ll mix KJ-52’s Christianity with Matisyahu’s Judaism with the Beastie Boys’ Buddhism and come out with a shallow mess.

**Albums:** *Spark Seeker* (2012), *Light* (2009), *Youth* (2006)

**What Matisyahu Says:** “Vocal rest is awesome. It is like any kind of fast. Firstly, it is a purification of speech. It made me realize how not careful I am with the things I say. It also makes you find new ways of communication and new methods to connect with people.”

**Explore:** The video for “King Without a Crown”—with helpful lyrics—is here: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChV5BZ8SmS0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChV5BZ8SmS0).

## CHRISTIAN MUSIC



### BELLARIVE

**Background:** Bellarive just released their first full-length album, following last year’s critically acclaimed EP, *The Being Human Project*. Gungor fans will love Bellarive—not because they sound particularly alike but because they both meld art with music to create an intriguing whole. From the use of harmonies to multiple instruments, this definitely feels like a collective band.

**Albums:** *The Heartbeat* (2012), *The Being Human Project* (2010)

**What Bellarive Says:** “The Creator is continuously stirring the souls of all his children toward himself. We believe that God creates his children with specific design to reveal and bring glory to himself in unique ways. For the six of us, that gift is creating music.”

**Explore:** Videos of Bellarive’s live experiences are at [www.bellarive.com](http://www.bellarive.com). You can also see videos on YouTube.

## MOVIES

**Movie:** *The Dark Knight Rises*

**Genre:** Action, Thriller

**Rating:** PG-13

**Synopsis:** A mysterious masked man comes to Gotham to take on Batman. Other than the inclusion of Catwoman, plot details of the trilogy’s final installment are under wraps.

**Our Take:** Director-writer Christopher Nolan has made some of the most compelling movies of the last 10 years. His reboot of this franchise has been incredible, and this wrap-up should be no different.

**Movie:** *The Amazing Spider-Man*

**Genre:** Action, Adventure

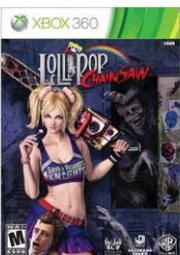
**Rating:** PG-13

**Synopsis:** In the reboot of this film franchise, a spider bite gives Peter Parker incredible powers. This time he searches for his parents’ secrets, which lead him straight to a faceoff with The Lizard.

**Our Take:** Spider-Man has always been one of the “safer” superhero franchises—with little cursing, no sex, and nonbloody violence. I’m not sure yet if this one will be different, but Marvel’s track record is pretty good.

For more media discussions and ideas, go to [www.MinistryandMedia.com](http://www.MinistryandMedia.com).

## VIDEO GAMES



**Lollipop Chainsaw**—This game is getting a lot of buzz, mostly because the main character is a scantily clad, zombie-hunting cheerleader. So it’s a mixture of objectification and extreme violence—exactly what teenagers should *not* be exposed to. (Rated M.)

**The Walking Dead: The Game**—This title, based on AMC’s hit TV show, is being released in episodes throughout the next year. Just like the show, though, the game is incredibly violent and bloody. (Rated M.)

# JULY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Middle School Mission Trip: Chattanooga, TN (Sun 10am—Fri 4pm)						
			<i>Independence Day</i>			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
			Water War 2012 @ GFC 6pm—8pm			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	ECHO—Science Hill High School Service Projects (9am—Noon)					
	ECHO—Lakeview Apartments Backyard Bible Club (6:30pm—8pm)				<i>Summer Olympics Opening Ceremonies</i>	
29	30	31				

\* The calendar is accurate at the time of its publication. Things may be added to the schedule or adjusted as needed.

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