

HELP TEENAGERS FORM THEIR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

Conformity and peer pressure threaten to squeeze the individuality right out of teenagers. As they're confronted with choices and expectations, kids are often terrified to be identified as different. Discouragement and hopelessness can leave teenagers even more vulnerable to unhealthy, unsafe pressures.

1. In *The Religious Life of Young Americans*, George Gallup Jr. and Robert Bezilla offer these six things teenagers need when facing challenges and pressures:
2. The belief that life is meaningful and has a purpose. For Christians, the ultimate meaning and purpose are found in a relationship with Jesus.
3. A sense of community. "Radical individualism" leads to loneliness. Kids need deep relationships with positive, supportive role models and peers.
4. To be appreciated and loved. The closer people feel to God, say the authors, the better they feel about themselves. They also have a happier outlook.
5. To be listened to and heard.
6. To feel like one is growing in faith. Young people need support as they pass through various "faith passages."
7. Practical help in developing a mature faith. By partnering with your church and youth minister, you can guide teenagers into owning their faith.

THE VIEW

- In a poll of more than 700,000 American kids ages 10 to 18, 53% said they're hopeful, with numerous ideas and abundant energy for the future. Meanwhile, 31% said they're stuck and 16% said they're discouraged, lacking ideas and energy to navigate problems and reach goals. Reports of hopefulness varied little across age and grade levels.

(Gallup Student Poll)

- In an ongoing survey, only 6% of respondents say they've been affected by peer pressure in a positive way.

(survelum.com)

TIPS >>>

Celebrate your teenagers' uniqueness with these insights from youth leaders Steve Argue and Dave Livermore:

- **Avoid saying, "When I was your age."** That will just cause kids to shut down. We can't make our own experience the primary reference point for teenagers.
- **Value your teenagers for their "in process" selves.** Don't focus just on the future and on the person your son or daughter is becoming.
- **Be willing to tackle the "messy reality" of faith.** When you talk about your own journey, be sure to include failures as well as successes.

Don't worry about using the correct Christian lingo or having all the right answers.

- **Honor your teenagers' unique ideas and expressions.** Tell them, in specific ways, how they're inspiring you to follow Jesus and serve others.
- **Watch for examples of individuality and hope.** Together, seek out news reports that highlight people's differences and explore their transformations for the better.
- **Help your teenagers embrace the "messiness" of life.** Let them know you'll support them through all its twists and turns.

PONDER THIS

- How would you characterize your own identity and purpose? When did you find that—or are you still searching?
- What are you hopeful about? What are your biggest discouragements? Explain.
- What traits or qualities make your teenagers stand out from the crowd, and how do you celebrate those things?





GOING DEEPER

Expert Insights for Parents of Teenagers

By Chuck Bomar

At SimplyYouthMinistry.com, student-ministry pastor **Chuck Bomar** discusses the importance of identity in Christ, especially for older teenagers:

For college-age people, the search for identity goes to an entirely different level. They have dreams but most lack a sense of direction as to how to get there. Here are some areas in which young people need to embrace their spiritual identity in Christ:

- **Beyond the crowd.**

Although we can never completely separate our identity as

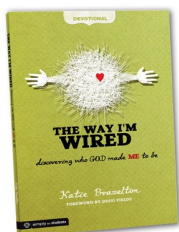
Christians from the body of Christ, we still must have a personal relationship with Jesus.

- **Beyond sin.** The number-one ingredient to a mediocre Christian life is wrongfully identifying our selves in sin struggles rather than in Christ.
- **Beyond circumstances.** Young people may not yet have a career identity or a romantic relationship, but they can identify themselves in one abstract truth: hope in Jesus Christ.
- **Beyond sociological changes.**

Because today's young people live in a fast-paced world of change, their identity must be found outside of their situations (good or bad).

- **Beyond the American dream.** Help young people move past society's standard of "success" to a point of contentment where they're okay with doing and being anything God has for them. Young people in college or preparing for college feel a tremendous amount of pressure in this area, and you could be the breath of fresh air they need.

RESOURCE



In the devotional *The Way I'm Wired* (Simply Youth Ministry), Life Purpose coach Katie Brazelton helps young people put together the puzzle of God's plan for their life and teaches that God never intended for their purpose to be a big mystery.

BIBLE FOCUS

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

Romans 12:2

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

MAINSTREAM MUSIC



COLBIE CAILLAT

Background: The 26-year-old singer's laid-back style has earned her numerous fans and awards. She's been nominated for Teen Choice Awards and has won two Grammy Awards. In 2010, Caillat was named BMI's songwriter of the year.

Albums: *All of You* (2011), *Breakthrough* (2009), *Coco* (2007)

What Caillat Says: When asked about staying grounded while living in party-happy Los Angeles, she says, "I'm not going out to clubs. I'm pretty much a homebody. I've had the same friends since fifth grade. My family raised me well, and we like each other, and we hang out. It's all a matter of who you are and who you associate with."

Explore: Caillat's songs deal mostly with the highs and lows of love. You can hear many of her songs on her Myspace page: www.myspace.com/colbiecaillat. Her Grammy-winning duet with Jason Mraz is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=acvIVA9-FMQ.

CHRISTIAN MUSIC



MAT KEARNEY

Background: Singer-songwriter Kearney picked up a guitar in college, moved to Nashville, and never looked back. His songs have been featured in numerous TV shows and movies. In 2006, he won the Dove Award for Rap/Hip-Hop Song of the Year. Kearney's new album brings back some of his hip-hop roots.

Albums: *Young Love* (2011), *City of Black and White* (2009), *Nothing Left to Lose* (2006)

What Kearney Says: Regarding college and his eventual faith in God, he says, "I guess I lived it up and did what everyone said you should do in college. I discovered the depth of depravity, the bleakness of that lifestyle. It just wasn't working. I finally started understanding there must be more to life."

Explore: "Hey Mama," the first video from *Young Love*, is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=L9qUMr6feOI.

MOVIE

Movie: *Final Destination 5*

Genre: Horror

Rating: R

Synopsis: A young man has a premonition and saves a group of people in a bridge collapse. But those people weren't supposed to survive, so Death is coming for them now.

Our Take: According to the MPAA, this film doesn't contain sex or nudity, but it will more than make up for that in gruesome death and dismemberments.

Movie: *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*

Genre: Action-Adventure/Sci-Fi

Rating: N/A (probably PG-13)

Synopsis: When doctors test a super-cure on a chimpanzee, the animal becomes far smarter than they anticipated. Soon it leads a revolution against humans.

Our Take: The special effects on the film's trailer look terrific, but this franchise has already been rebooted once—with poor results. This film might be a good opportunity to discuss evolution vs. Creation.

For more media discussions and ideas, go to www.MinistryandMedia.com.

VIDEO GAME



Deus Ex: Human Revolution—The "Deus Ex" series prides itself on excellent writing and compelling gameplay. You are Adam Jensen, whose life was saved with implanted cybernetic limbs. Adam now must find out who's behind the biotechnology and what it means for all of mankind. This violent shooter game will be too mature for teenagers.

Madden NFL 12—This squeaky-clean game puts you in the coach's seat as you control your team's destiny. The realism has increased with each new iteration of the successful franchise. Even if the NFL lockout means there's no real football this year, you can still have your own season at home.



Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

It's hard to believe we are in August already! Summer is coming to an end and students are getting ready for school to start. Over the next several months, you will see some changes to how we communicate with you as parents and with our students. I would like to encourage you to become a fan of Refuge Student Ministries on Facebook. This page will keep you current on all the happenings at Refuge. We are in the process of updating our contact information list and we ask that you please email Jeanice McCall (jmccall@watermark-church.com) your and your student's current email address as well as your cell phone numbers. Even if you think we have it, we ask that you send it anyways just to be on the safe side. If you don't have an email address, don't worry, we will still get you all the information you need to stay informed.

Our 10th-12th grade small groups start back August 7th from 6:15pm - 8:00pm. The guys will meet at Milton & Nancy Pearce's house, 101 Crawford Rd in Cowarts. The girls will meet at Mark & Cindy Kelley's house, 118 Ole Taylor Place in Ashford. The guys will be led by Chris McCall and the girls will be led Rachel Dykes. Right now we plan on keeping the grades together. When the groups start growing, we will look at dividing them up by grades. There will be a pool party on Sunday, August 28th, from 4:30pm-8:00pm at Ben & Sheila Shelley's house, 1553 Omussee Rd in Dothan. Girls need to bring a dessert or chips and guys need to bring a 2-liter drink.

For our 7th-9th graders, Promotion Sunday is August 14th. This is when the upcoming 7th graders will officially join Refuge Student Ministries. We will have a special time during small group for the students and leaders to get to know each other better. There will be a pool party on Sunday, August 21st, from 4:30pm - 8:00pm at Seaby & Floy Bess' house, 110 Stone Ridge Rd in Ashford. Girls need to bring a dessert or chips and guys need to be a 2-liter drink.

Our Family Lake Trip Day is August 13th, from 8am - 5pm at Lit & Eilene Dekle's lake house, 153 East Lakeview Drive in Abbeville. We will meet at the church at 8am to carpool/caravan to their house. Each family is asked to bring a side dish or dessert and a 2-liter drink. Please contact Jeanice McCall (jmccall@watermark-church.com, 899-3624 or 618-0214) to let her know the number of people in your family and what you plan on bringing. Also, if your family has a boat and would be willing to bring it, please let us know as soon as possible.

This month we begin our series entitled "YouPick" - answering the hot topics of students today with the truth of God's Word. Students are asking a lot of questions about life, God, relationships and more. Too many times the world is quicker to answer their questions. During this series we will discover the powerful truth and relevant practicality God's Word has on our lives.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the above information. Please join me in prayer that God will do an awesome work at Watermark through our students.

Stay clean and close to God,

Josh Robinson
Student Minister
Watermark Church

AUGUST 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
			Refuge Live 6:30pm - 8pm Snack bar opens @ 5:45			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Refuge Small Groups 7th-9th grade: 9:30am - 10:30am 10th-12th grade: 6:15pm-8:00pm			Refuge Live 6:30pm - 8pm Snack bar opens @ 5:45			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Refuge Small Groups 7th-9th grade: 9:30am - 10:30am 10th-12th grade: 6:15pm-8:00pm			Church Wide Worship Night @ 6:30pm			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Refuge Small Groups 7th-9th grade: 9:30am - 10:30am 10th-12th grade: 6:15pm-8:00pm 7th-9th grade Pool Party 4:30pm - 8:00pm @ Seaby & Floy Bess' house			Refuge Live 6:30pm - 8pm Snack bar opens @ 5:45			
28	29	30	31			
Refuge Small Groups 7th-9th grade: 9:30am - 10:30am 10th-12th grade Pool Party 4:30pm - 8pm @ Ben & Sheila Shelley's house			Refuge Live 6:30pm - 8pm Snack bar opens @ 5:45			



Fall (Aug - Oct) 2011

August

Series: YouPick

- 3rd Refuge Live *
- 7th 10th-12th grade Refuge Small Groups** start back
- 10th Refuge Live *
- 13th Family Lake Day @ The Dekles (8am - 5pm)
- 14th Refuge Small Groups ** **(10th-12th grade guys @ the McCall's house)**
- 17th Church Wide Worship Night (6:30pm - 8:00pm)
- 21st Refuge Small Groups **
- 7th-9th grade small group pool party @ The Bess' house (4:30-8pm)
- 24th Refuge Live *
- 28th Refuge Small Groups **
- 10th-12th grade small group pool party @ The Shelley's house (4:30-8pm)
- 31st Refuge Live *



September

Series: Hostage

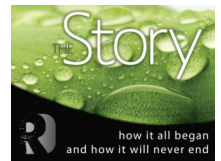
- 4th Refuge Small Groups ** **(7th-9th grade ONLY / 10th-12th grade NO SMALL GROUP)**
- 7th Refuge Live *
- 11th Refuge Small Groups **
- 14th Refuge Live *
- 18th Refuge Small Groups **
- 21st Refuge Live *
- 25th Refuge Small Groups **
- 28th See You At The Pole Rally (Place & Time TBA)



October

Series: The Story

- 2nd Refuge Small Groups ** **(7th-9th grade ONLY / 10th-12th grade NO SMALL GROUP)**
- Family Movie Night "Courageous" (place & time TBA)
- 5th Refuge Live *
- 9th Refuge Small Groups **
- 12th Refuge Live *
- 16th Refuge Small Groups **
- 19th Refuge Live *
- 23rd Refuge Small Groups **
- 26th Refuge Live *
- 30th Refuge Small Groups **



*** Refuge Live meets from 6:30pm - 8:00pm (Snack Shack opens at 5:45pm) at Watermark**

**** Refuge Small Groups**

7th-9th graders meet from 9:30am - 10:30am at Watermark
10th-12th graders meet from 6:15pm - 8:00pm in host homes
Girls - Mark & Cindy Kelley, 118 Ole Taylor Place, Ashford
Guys - Milton & Nancy Pearce, 101 Crawford Rd, Cowarts



Fall (Nov - Dec) 2011

November

Series: Pause

2nd	Refuge Live *
6th	Refuge Small Groups **
9th	Refuge Live *
13th	Refuge Small Groups ** (7th-9th grade ONLY / 10th-12th grade NO SMALL GROUP) 3rd Annual Turkey Bowl (3pm - 8pm)
16th	Refuge Live *
20th	Refuge Small Groups **
23rd	NO REFUGE LIVE
27th	Refuge Small Groups **
30th	Refuge Live *



December

Series: Christmas Message

4th	Refuge Small Groups ** (last small group for 10th-12th grade)
7th	Refuge Live *
11th	Refuge Small Groups ** (7th-9th grade ONLY / 10th-12th grade NO SMALL GROUP)
14th	Refuge Live * Christmas Party
18th	Refuge Small Groups ** (7th-9th grade ONLY / 10th-12th grade NO SMALL GROUP)
21st	NO REFUGE LIVE
25th	NO REFUGE SMALL GROUPS
28TH	NO REFUGE LIVE

* Refuge Live meets from 6:30pm - 8:00pm (Snack Shack opens at 5:45pm) at Watermark

** Refuge Small Groups

7th-9th graders meet from 9:30am - 10:30am at Watermark
10th-12th graders meet from 6:15pm - 8:00pm in host homes
Girls - Mark & Cindy Kelley, 118 Ole Taylor Place, Ashford
Guys - Milton & Nancy Pearce, 101 Crawford Rd, Cowarts

Upcoming 2012 Events

April 2012

20th - 22nd Beach Retreat (confirmed)

June 2012

24th - 29th Wired 2012 (confirmed)

July 2012

14th - 22nd Costa Rica Mission Trip (tentative)