

August 2016

parenting CHRISTIAN kids



Immanuel Lutheran Church
1850 Chestnut Ave.
Glenview, IL



CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Take Charge of Your Family's Schedule

POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To help you make wise choices about time management.
2. To guide you and your kids as you set priorities.
3. To protect your family—and your family time—from busyness and stress.

Just when your family gets settled into summer, school registration sneaks up on you. No matter what grade your children are entering, school bells bring super-sized family calendars. Even toddlers seem to need a social secretary these days!

Lately there's been a movement against hurried, harried, and over-scheduled kids. Always being busy takes a toll on children and their families. Plenty of free time is vital—and doesn't mean your kids will miss out on opportunities. Here are tips for balancing busyness and rest:

Schedule family time. Block it out on your calendar, just as you do with other important obligations. Plan at least a couple of hours a week for together

time, and don't let other responsibilities interfere. Also make family mealtime a priority.

Sign up with care. The start of a new school year is the best time to limit activities. Be realistic about how many your family can handle—and about the amount of homework time and sleep each child needs.

Involve your kids. Ask children about their preferences. Which activity means the most to them? Which ones are they willing to cut? Parents make the final decision and can make church-related activities non-negotiable.

Read on for more great ideas to make the most of your family time.

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Slow Down!



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Grow in Wisdom

Read aloud Luke 2:40, 46-47. Talk about Jesus growing up, learning carpentry skills, and teaching in the temple. Say: **Just as Jesus grew and learned, we're growing and learning.**

Ask family members to think of skills they're learning at school or work. One at a time, have family members act out the skills while others guess.

Say: **The start of a new school year is exciting! It means we get to learn new things and try things we haven't tried before.**

Invite your kids to talk about new things they're excited to learn as well as things they may feel nervous about.

Say: **As you learn and try new things this year, remember that Jesus is always with you. He knows what it's like to learn new things.** Close in prayer, thanking Jesus for his love and presence.

When kids are too busy, they miss important childhood experiences. David Elkind, author of *The Hurried Child*, emphasizes that schedules filled with too many programmed activities can limit experiments in self-discovery. Children need time to read, draw, dream, build, and even experience boredom. Unstructured time offers a chance to play in natural ways, boost creativity, and develop personality. Packed schedules make it more difficult for children to build a network of social support. They need contact with extended family members, neighbors, and playmates of various ages. Try these ideas so your family members can slow down and connect with one another—and with God.

In With the Good Give family members each a card with Philippians 4:8 written on it. Think about the activity you each do the most, and place the cards in those places. Challenge family members to think about the positive side of their favorite activity—and how it honors Jesus.

Mad, Sad, Glad At dinner, have family members each share something about their day that made them mad, sad, and glad. This prompt will help everyone reflect on their day and connect feelings to experiences. Before clearing the table, pray together as a family.

Cross Challenge Play a seek-and-find game during the week. Try to find as many crosses hidden in everyday life as possible (signposts, telephone poles, etc.). Share your findings at dinner.

Pop the Question Before a meal, write questions about each other, about God, or about anything discussion-worthy on slips of paper. (Ideas include "What's your favorite movie?" and "What's the first question you'll ask Jesus when you get to heaven?") Tightly roll each slip to fit inside a balloon. Then inflate the balloons and tie off the ends. Before

every course of a meal, let each family member choose a balloon and sit on it until it pops. Then discuss the questions from those balloons during the next course. Repeat! (This activity works well even without balloons. If you use them, be sure to discard all the pieces afterward.)

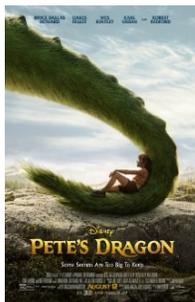
Busy Bee Choose a leader. Have the leader say either "Martha was busy" or "Mary was quiet." When "Martha" is said, have the leader do an action such as run in place or turn around. Everyone else should follow the leader. When "Mary" is said, everyone stands still. The leader may try to trick the others by saying "Mary" and doing an action. Those who aren't tricked remain in the game. Afterward, read aloud Luke 10:38-42 and discuss the story of Mary and Martha.

Noise Busters Hand out paper and pencils and ask everyone to concentrate and draw a self-portrait. Meanwhile, turn on a radio very loudly, sing off-key, and drum a table. The more noise the better! After a few minutes, stop the noise. Ask: "How well could you focus on your drawing? What distracts you from focusing on Jesus? How can we quiet those distractions this week?"

"My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her."

—Luke 10:41-42

MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIE

Title: *Pete's Dragon*

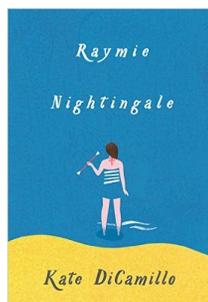
Genre: Adventure, Fantasy

Rating: PG

Cast: Bryce Dallas Howard, Oakes Fegley, Robert Redford, Wes Bentley

Synopsis: This reboot of the 1977 Disney classic features Grace, a forest ranger who grew up listening to stories about a dragon. After meeting 10-year-old Pete, who claims to live in the forest with a dragon, Grace sets out to discover the truth. Meanwhile, other people are trying to hunt the dragon.

Our Take: This live-action movie featuring an animated dragon named Elliott is sure to delight children as well as parents who saw the original. Use the film as a springboard to talk about reality vs. fantasy, as well as pursuing the truth about people.



BOOK

Title: *Raymie Nightingale*

Author: Kate DiCamillo

Synopsis: After her father runs off with a woman, 10-year-old Raymie hatches a plan to stay out of the county orphanage. While trying to win a local beauty pageant, Raymie opens herself to new friendships and gains valuable self-knowledge.

Our Take: This story is loosely based on the childhood of DiCamillo, author of *Because of Winn-Dixie*. She's known for tackling tough subjects (divorce, alcoholism, abuse, etc.) in thoughtful, kid-friendly ways. Raymie's plight reminds readers that although childhood is sometimes complicated and sad, there's always reason for hope and humor.



CULTURE & TRENDS

Lunchbox Competition Social media is making parents anxious about what they send for their children's school lunch. Pictures of elaborate Bento box creations lead to inferiority complexes, as well as to "shaming" about what types of foods parents offer. (usnews.com)

Try on a Tail! Hotels are selling scads of mermaid tails to children—as well as adults. Kids enjoy "mermaid posing" and games such as hula-hoop diving, while adults take water-fitness classes—all while donning a mermaid tail. (abcnews.go.com)

Games, Sites & Apps

Mirror's Edge Catalyst

This first-person action game is set in a futuristic dystopia. While performing parkour stunts, a daring heroine named Faith tries to get citizens to think for themselves. The game, which has some mild language, is best for ages 10+.

MusicTheory.net

Free online exercises help young musicians learn to identify notes, chords, and more. Kids can take theory lessons on a range of subjects and also work on ear training. Premium apps, available for a small fee, can enhance the learning experience.

Name Play

With this app's games, children can practice reading and writing using the letters in their own names and other people's names. Parents must enter a child's name to begin. The app does not share information. Just add names for more word play. Best for ages 4+.

QUICK STATS

Raised Right In response to the statement "I'm raising my kids the way I was raised," 50% of millennial parents agree, 28% disagree, and 22% are neutral. (*Millennial Marketing Study*)

Impoverished Students A majority of U.S. public school students are now considered low-income. Not only does that mean more kids qualify for free-and-reduced lunch; they also need social and academic support to keep up with more-privileged peers. (washingtonpost.com)

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Real. Bold. Love.

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our goal is to help you make informed decisions about what your children watch, read, listen to, and play.



A Note from Ann

Can't We All Just Slow Down?

I found it interesting that this newsletter referred to Elkind's *The Hurried Child* because I remember my college roommate reading it just a few years after the initial book was published. Janice told me about this book that was really making her stop to think about how life was speeding up for kids. Even though I didn't actually read the book, her comments about it stuck with me. Bottom line . . . how much should we push a child vs. how much should we let them be a kid?

I would say think about your own childhood . . . but Elkind was talking about your childhood when he started writing. Most of us have grown up at this accelerated pace . . . which continues to get faster. We scratch our heads as parents and wonder how to reclaim some of the innocence of childhood for our kids. Being aware of what is going on is the first step . . . and then have a conversation about it. What opportunities do you value and where does family time fit into the priority list?

Ranking priorities makes many of us uncomfortable. We prefer to get swept along by life and tell ourselves that we don't really have any choices to make. The truth is that we have control over those choices and the word that we might need to use more often is a simple NO. God has blessed us with our families and after Him, those families should be our priority (and our spouse should be the priority before our children). Set aside an evening before school starts to talk as a family about your priorities. Write them down and then work together to honor those choices that you make.

August Happenings



Movie Night: Friday, August 12 7:15 PM

We will start the movie a bit later to have a little more darkness to help us enjoy the picture. We'll show it OUTSIDE so bring your pillow, blankets, and chairs. Snacks are welcome.



GRILL NIGHT Wednesday, August 17

Join us in saying "Good Bye" to summer as we enjoy our last Grill Night of Summer 2017. There will be hot dogs and brats to enjoy as we gather together in the "backyard". Mark the night on your calendar and plan to join us.

Backpack Blessing

If you would like to be a blessing to a child in the Glenview area, consider donating a backpack for the Rotary Club's backpack drive. These backpacks are distributed to the children of families who use the Northfield food pantry.

The following items should be in the backpack: Ballpoint pens (black/blue), #2 pencils, Box of 24 Crayola crayons, Elmer's glue sticks, 12" ruler w/metric markings, Scissors, Large pink eraser, 3 x 3 Post-it notes, 200 count Kleenex box, 4x6 and 3x5 index cards, Colored pencils, 2 pocket folders, Clear scotch tape, Washable markers in classic colors, Spiral notebook (70 ct. wide rule), Yellow highlighter, Antibacterial wipes, Hand sanitizer with pump

Deadline for donation: Monday MORNING, Aug. 15

How Skipping Church Affects Our Children

Manglo / July 4, 2016



In a Q&A, Carl Trueman was asked about why churches today are losing their young people. Typical answers to this question range from things like the temptations of this world or the irrelevance of the church—your typical answers. But Trueman makes a keen and convicting connection between our parenting and apostasy.

“The church is losing its young people because the parents never taught their children that it was important. I think that applies across the board. It applies to family worship, and it also applies to whether you are in church every Sunday and what priority you demonstrate to your children church has on a Sunday. If the sun shines out and their friends are going to the beach, do you decide to skip church and go to the beach? In which case, you send signals to your children that it is not important.” (Carl Trueman)

Now we know that artificially taking your kids to church neither bestows salvation nor guarantees it. God is obviously not honored by external religious acts without heart worship. This type of legalism is not the subject of this discussion. This is about parenting and the weight of the responsibility behind how they prioritize their time and lifestyle choices for their families.

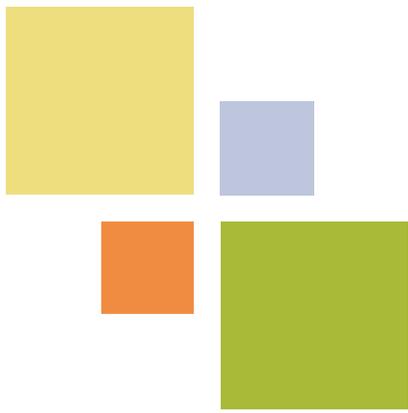
Parents makes choices all the time for their families. As they decide on what takes priority in family, every choice is carefully observed and taken into the heart of their children. Yes, they are watching you, and they are learning from you.

Maybe the reason why our children have no love for Christ is due to the fact that we as parents do not show any love or passion for Christ, evidenced by how we prioritize our time both on Sundays and during the week. When television, sports, school, hobbies even family itself are elevated to a place of idolatry and replace the vital Christian responsibilities, then we tell our children that Christ is secondary to all these things. We tell our children that it is not necessary to take up your cross and die to yourself daily in order to follow Christ. We tell them that you only have to live for Christ when it’s convenient for you. We tell them it is okay to sacrifice time with all-satisfying Savior if something “more fun” or “more important” comes along (sarcasm indicated by quotation marks if you didn’t catch that). And this sounds like a clear path to apostasy if you ask me.

Let’s evaluate where our hearts are by observing are choices. Do you prioritize the local church? Do you prioritize the worship of Christ in your home and on Sundays? Do you prioritize serving Him and worshipping Him in the contexts of school and work? This doesn’t mean that you can’t ever miss a Sunday or that you can’t have any extracurricular activities. Instead, it is a sobering reminder that we shouldn’t put the things of God at the bottom of the priority list, because it tells our children that Christ is at the bottom of our priority list. And the God of this universe does not belong there.

My prayer is that we all would improve in this area. But beware, maybe we don’t see this because Christ isn’t a priority in our lives. And if He isn’t a priority in our lives, then our children will know and follow suit.

speakingtruthwithlove.wordpress.com/2016/07/04/how-skipping-church-affects-our-children (July 26, 2016)



August

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4 Care Kit Packing Event	5	6
7 Sunday School Conversation After worship	8	9	10	11	12 <i>The Incredibles</i> 7:15 PM	13
14 Backpack Blessing Sunday	15	16	17 Grill Night 5:30-7:00 PM	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			