

# CPYU PARENT PAGE

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**"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."  
- 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)**

## ACHIEVEMENT?

BY WALT MUELLER, PRESIDENT, CPYU

**TOP 10  
ANTICIPATED  
PLAYSTATION 3  
GAMES OF 2010**  
(SOURCE: OTX  
Research and  
GamePlan Insights)

1. Gran Turismo 5
2. Batman: Arkham Asylum 2
3. Super Street Fighter IV
4. Prince of Persia: The Forgotten Sands
5. Max Payne 3
6. Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon 4
7. Fallout: New Vegas
8. The Sims 3
9. Dead Rising 2
10. True Crime

**YOUTH CULTURE  
HOT QUOTE**

"I can't believe I'm saying this — don't have sex... So it's OK not to have sex, it's OK to get to know people. I'm celibate, celibacy's fine."

- Lady Gaga, *MTV.com*,  
April 12, 2010

With summer vacation looming on the horizon, our teenagers are looking forward to getting out of school. I still remember the amazing feeling of heading off to that last day of school, knowing that in just a few short hours, "freedom" – at least for a dozen weeks – would soon be mine. The bus ride home on that last day was interrupted by an enthusiastic chorus of "No more pencils, no more books," and ended one line later with us slandering our teachers.

While the celebration of the end of the school year has not changed, the volume knob on the academic pressures many kids feel has progressively turned up to the point where many kids are caving. I was reminded of this fact on a recent visit to a secondary school where expectations run high. During the day, I moved from classroom to classroom asking kids about their lives, their cares, their concerns, and their stressors. By the end of the day, I was convinced that the overwhelming pressure these teenagers felt was academic in nature. In fact, nobody mentioned anything other than academic pressure in response to my questions. When I probed into the source of those pressures, it became obvious that there was pressure coming from multiple sources including parents, teachers, community, peer group, and even the pressure the students were putting on themselves. One student told me her parents were living vicariously through her. Another said he felt the pressure now – as a 16-year-old – so that he would be able to retire and do all the things that he wanted to do later in his life. By the way, did I mention that the school I visited was a Christian school?

In their wonderful book, *The Outrageous Idea of Academic Faithfulness*, Donald Optiz and Derek Melleby challenge Christian students to avoid the performance trap they label as "grades and accolades." Increasingly, I'm running across students who have allowed academic success and the drive for "grades and accolades" to become an idol. Academic success becomes the end, rather than a means through which to honor and serve God. We sometimes forget that when we pursue societal standards rather than God's standards, we can – as Walker Percy writes – "get all A's and still flunk life."

Let me suggest that you use this end-of-school time of the year to sit with your kids to ponder their view of academics, the pressures you might unknowingly be placing on them, and a Godly perspective on school achievement. As you do so, keep these realities in mind:

First, remember that God has granted all kids a unique mix of gifts and abilities. Consequently, some are more academically gifted than others. Our role is to help our kids work to do *their* best, not to achieve some socially-defined standard of best.

Second, remember that if you are finding your identity through your kids and their achievements, you are placing undo pressure on them. Not only that, you will facilitate resentment on their part. And, you should examine yourself to see how and where you need to find your identity in Christ and Christ alone.

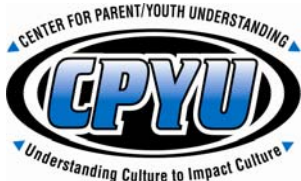
Third, teach your kids that we endeavor to do things well, not to draw attention to ourselves, but to bring God pleasure. It's not about us.

## CPYU TREND ALERT: CELL PHONE OWNERSHIP

Youth culture influences children of younger ages as well as teenagers. The recently released *American Kids Study* from Mediamark Research and Intelligence hammered home this reality once again. The study revealed that more than one-third of our ten and eleven year-olds here in the U.S. owned a mobile phone in 2009, compared with twenty percent in 2005. Ownership among kids ages six to eleven rose from twelve to twenty percent over the same time

period. While these kids are using phones to keep in touch with their parents, they also use them for talking to their friends and text-messaging.

Parents, we must be aware of the trends among older kids that are quickly filtering down to kids at younger and younger ages. Awareness is the first step towards exercising our responsibility to teach them how to handle and use technology to the glory of God.



## LATEST RESEARCH: LYING

Have you ever heard the phrase “once a liar, always a liar?” According to new research from the Josephson Institute on Ethics, the saying is very, very true. The survey of nearly seven thousand people found that people who cheat on tests in high school are considerably more likely to grow up to be dishonest later in life. People who cheat in high school are more likely to grow up to cheat on taxes, lie to customers and business associates, inflate insurance and expense claims, and lie to their spouse.

When you take into consideration the fact that today’s kids aged seventeen and under are five times more likely than people older than fifty to believe that lying and cheating are necessary steps to success in life, we have to wonder what the future will hold. God’s word is clear from start to finish that cheating, lying and stealing are wrong. Parents, what are your kids learning from your words and example? Remember, what they see and hear from you today, will shape who they are both now and in the future.



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## FROM THE WORD

The Apostle Paul devoted his life to communicating a message of integration by instructing Christ’s followers to follow their Lord in every area of their lives. In a day and age where our teenagers – and even we as adults – tend to compartmentalize our lives, this message is essential if we hope to become true followers of our Savior. The invitation of Jesus to “come and follow me” is an invitation to integrate our faith and following into every nook and cranny of our lives.

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul speaks out against the attitudes and beliefs that we tend to follow that are contrary to God’s

will and way. He writes about the need to “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (II Corinthians 10:5). In other words, everything we have, do, and *think* needs to be enlisted in service to God. That’s what integration of our faith into *all* of life looks like.

For this reason, we must regularly take stock of our lives – each and every component – to evaluate whether or not we are striving in God’s power and by His grace to live to His glory. We must teach our teens to do the same. Are you and your family endeavoring to offer your actions *and* your thoughts, beliefs, and values in service to Jesus Christ?

## IN THE NEWS: GIRL VIOLENCE

Throughout the Bible we are reminded that we are to live in peace with each other. The peaceful harmony we are to pursue is what existed before humankind’s rebellion against God in the Garden of Eden. Now, we are to pursue peace in the midst of great relational brokenness and discord.

A recent study from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reminds us just how broken we are. About one in four female teens in the U.S. is involved in some sort of violent behavior at school or work. Al-

most twenty-seven percent of our twelve to seventeen year olds had been involved in a serious fight, a group against group fight, or an attack on someone with the intent to harm in the previous year.

While violent behavior is more common among males, our teenage girls are quickly catching up. This not only reflects our girls’ frustration and lack of conflict-resolution skills, but a deep need for intervention. The answer to the world’s brokenness is Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

