



# Growing Families Australia — Queensland News

Reaching our state one family at a time

## State Team Greeting

Hello to all our "Growing Families" families and supporters in Queensland. Hope this latest newsletter finds you all well.

How was your Easter Celebration? For me it was subdued a little, yet a time for deep reflection. Yes, it is a story we know so well. It is one that always tugs at my heart, yet it's a story that lies at the core of our faith and indeed sets our faith apart from every other faith on this planet! I still see, in my mind, the scenes from Mel Gibson's movie, "The Passion." In fact many scenes were so powerful, that after seeing the movie I went to my car outside the theatre and sat in silent prayer before our Father horrified at what my sin had done to Our Lord.

More than that and one we will never know, is the spiritual anguish and pain He suffered in separation from His Father because of our sin. I think the camera following the tear from heaven to the ground at the foot of the Cross said so powerfully for me that the Father's love for me was so great He shed tears to save me - even at the cost of His own Son! Easter is a time to reflect and re-dedicate. Hope it was a positive time for you and your families.

You will note in this newsletter, many comments about our forthcoming camp at Dakabin, on the Labour Day weekend - 2nd, 3rd & 4th May. This is because - ITS CLOSE - and we want to see you there - in fact as many as possible! These times together are so valuable because they give you time to reflect and learn more to further improve our roles as families dedicated to God. And, you know, even if you are struggling, it will give you a chance to see many others are also struggling, but together - like iron sharpening iron - we will learn and grow, with and off each other.

Won't you come and join us? We would love to meet you - we are going to have a great time and, you know the saying- "the more the merrier!" Come then and be merry with us at the Watson Park Convention Centre, Dakabin, just north of Brisbane, and grow our families a little bit more as we fellowship!

May God bless you all

Sean  
GFA Qld State Team

"Just wanted to thank you for having us in the "Preparation for Parenting" course throughout the last month. We have really benefited from this course and feel that we have grown a lot as parents already. Having a baby doesn't seem so scary anymore. It has made us discuss different issues about parenting and helped us prepare more for this special time. We thank God that he has brought you both into our lives and we thank you for your generous hospitality. Wow, you guys have some special gifts and knowledge that God has given to you both to help others. We will keep in touch. Now you can enjoy some quiet on Wednesdays before the baby comes."

Nick & Rachel — Gold Coast

Contact Leaders below for other Growing Families courses being run in your area.

## Inside:

- *Spending Family Time*
- *Teaching in Times of Non-conflict*
- *Review: Colin Buchanan*
- *Camp Topics*
- *Don't forget Camp registrations close 11th April!*

## What's Happening in Queensland?

(Please send your details into [qld\\_enquiries@gfi.org.au](mailto:qld_enquiries@gfi.org.au) to have your local event or course listed here)

State Camp 2008	3-5th May (Labour Day w/e)	Watson Park Conv Ctr	<a href="mailto:qld_enquiries@gfi.org.au">qld_enquiries@gfi.org.au</a>
Course - Growing Kids God's Way	Term 2 2008	Brisbane Northside	3851 3618
Course - Growing Kids God's Way	Term 2 2008	Brisbane Southside	3287 7550
Course - Growing Kids God's Way	Term 3 2008	Brisbane Northside	3325 3787
Course - Preparation for Adolescence	TBA	Brisbane Southside	<a href="mailto:qld_enquiries@gfi.org.au">qld_enquiries@gfi.org.au</a>

# Have you considered “Spending Time”?

My husband emailed me this song “Spending Time” the other week. The lyrics (to the right) kept drifting through my head ...

While the lyrics may sound a little melancholy the meaning is all too clear. In this day and age of fast living, me-ism and materialism — are we really where we dreamed we would be ... or do we need a re-focus?

Our culture does not present many opportunities for “*spending time growing close*” as families. “Growing close” was always part of the original plan for families, a reflection of the inherent nature of the Godhead.

.... recognising that Dad holds a unique role at the loving head of the home  
.... recognising that Dad & Mum’s relationship is the priority (not the kids interests!)  
.... recognising that children are welcome members of the family (not the centre of the family)  
.... recognising that our children’s hearts are precious — and worth pursuing;  
worth *any* amount of time, energy & prayer ...

We have copious amounts of individual skill-based or interest-based activities offered to our families. Tennis, swimming clubs, golf, basketball, footy, soccer, music, cadets, community & volunteer groups such as emergency services of fire brigades, brigades, youth groups & youth events ... the list goes on.

Now don’t get me wrong ... these activities have value; and can be great — in balance. I was speaking to a Mum of six the other week who was re-evaluating her priorities when she realised that she, her husband and their children had activities every day of the week ... good activities, but leaving no time to return to just “being” a family.

If you added all the hours in a week your children are away from you (school and individual activities, and your being at work) and compared that calculation with the number of hours spent together as a family — how does that compare?? While your kids are away from you — do you know what they are watching on TV? What people are influencing their lives? What they are learning? What they are struggling with?

Family Camp 2008 is **not THE** answer.

**But** this **IS** an opportunity to have a “whole” family weekend;  
.... with “whole” family activities;  
.... be inspired to build a “whole family” attitude through the parenting sessions  
.... and meet and fellowship with others doing the same  
.... *spending time growing close* ....

*We hope you can come!*

## Spending Time

Long ago she was working with  
dying people  
And she let me know some of their  
lonely wisdom  
She’d never met anyone who on  
their death-bed  
Wished they spent more of their  
time at work

*And spending time growing close  
Thinking of what matters most  
Spending time is all we have  
Let’s change our lives while we  
still can*

They were young when they met  
and fell in love  
He worked hard he was paid well  
and got promoted  
“It’s all for you!” he said he  
couldn’t understand the distance  
She said she felt years alone had  
killed their romance

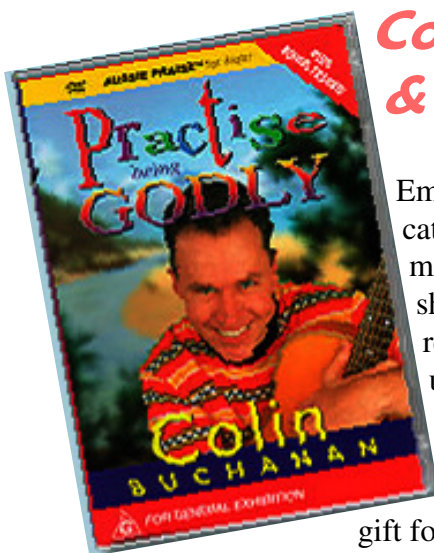
*And spending time growing close  
Thinking of what matters most  
Spending time is all we have  
Let’s change our lives while we  
still can*

*Part of the lyrics of song “Spending Time”  
by Paul Colman from his album ONE  
VOICE ONE GUITAR (1998)*

“Our family enjoyed spending a relaxed time with other like minded families. Our children had heaps of fun in the kids programme and we learnt new insights from the GFA material. We are looking forward to the upcoming state camp and so are our children!”

Mick & Maree — Ferny Hills

## Colin Buchanan - CD's, DVD's & Videos



Embraced across the denominational spectrum, Colin’s Christian songs for kids are catchy, deliberately biblical and, musically speaking, refreshingly eclectic. His musical Bible memory verses, including the well-known Isaiah 53:6 (“We all like sheep have gone astray...Baa baa doo baa baa...!”) have helped thousands learn and remember the scriptures. With their lively arrangements, biblical foundation and unique Australian attitude, Colin’s CDs and videos are popular among parents and children alike! Songs include, “Follow the Saviour”, “Practice being Godly”, “Remember the Lord” and many others. Colin, a former presenter on ABC’s Playschool and 7 Network/Disney Channel’s “Playhouse Disney”, has a gift for sharing biblical truths to kids of all ages with great Aussie humour. Either visit his website at [www.colinbuchanan.com.au](http://www.colinbuchanan.com.au) or your local Christian bookstore to view his selection and catch the regular specials.

## Monthly Tip — Teaching our children Key Character issues ... at Key Times!

Often we forget to be intentional in teaching our children key character issues **during the times of non-conflict**. Choose times around the mealtime table, driving in the car or some other time of the day when you can set aside time to talk.

Take the following idea;

**Right is right even if no one else is doing it.**

**Wrong is wrong even if everyone else is doing it.**

For a preschooler to mid primary child it might be sufficient to give them the information and then an appropriate example. An upper primary or teenager could be asked “*so what do you think about this statement?*” “*Have you seen this in action?*” “*Why do you think some people have problems doing this?*” “*When do you think it would be hard to remember this advice?*” Remember to leave lots of time for them to talk and to let it be a non-confrontational discussion! Study ahead Proverbs 4:14,15; Prov 14:7; Prov 22:24,25; Prov 6:16-19 or use these as a basis for a family devotional that everyone can study and bring a conclusion to. Biblical examples are numerous; try Noah, Daniel & Joseph to start with.

If you have studied the temperaments remember to highlight to the sanguine child their love to be popular; the phlegmatic child their love of non-conflict. If you're not sure what the temperaments are and their relevance to assisting your kids - come to camp; one of the training sessions will address “Parenting according to your Child's Temperament” using Growing Families principles.

## Godly character:

A priceless quality.

It cannot be bought.

It cannot be sold.

It can only be grown.

The precious seeds are sown,  
take root and bring forth a beautiful blossom.

May your children surround you  
as a beautiful bouquet.

## What they said ...

Our kids loved playing with children that were held to the same standard and made friends quickly. It's comforting to hear others parents using the same tools as we do and for our children to see it is the norm.  
Geoff & Alicia — Eatons Hill

The best thing about the camp was making a friend. (David Aged 8)

I really enjoyed the food and loved playing with the other kids. The kids program was really great especially the Treasure Hunts.  
(Nathan Aged 10)

## Your Say ...

We bought the tapes from last National Conference and having three and a half teenagers in the house it is very applicable to us.

If you're late, **phone me**

If you're away, **write me**

If your friends stay, **tell me**

If you have a problem, **trust in me**

If you're happy, **share it with me**

If your dinner's not ready, **help me**

If you love me, **hug me**

We printed this out and have it on our fridge (somewhere **all** teenagers are sure to see it!)

David & Jenny — Loganholme

## 2008 State Camp - Seminar Topics

- **Parenting according to your Child's Temperament**
- **Purity** — ways to approach this topic with your children along with resources to view
- **Workshop: How to lead a GKGW course**
- **Workshop: Building Family Identity**; including resources
- **Mum's & Dad's discussion time** — bring your questions
- The **children's activities** will include age-appropriate (and sensitive) purity program with take-home lapbook for Mum & Dad to do a follow up activity. The **teen program** is designed to challenge the norm.
- *Along with many opportunities to talk, play and encourage your own and other families.*

Come along! Email us on [qld\\_enquiries@gfi.org.au](mailto:qld_enquiries@gfi.org.au) for a registration form.

**Be quick — the deadline (11th April) is fast approaching!**

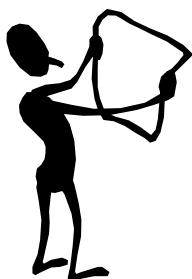
"GFA Conferences and camps have the same value - they let you, as a parent, rub shoulders with other parents of like mind and then of course there is the issue of the kids being able to play and interact with other kids who have been raised to the same general standard. All in all its a great way to reinforce what you are doing as a parent and also to see that we don't have perfect families but we are all on a journey to the same end - a family raised to the glory of God!!! What can be better than that?" Sean — Bundaberg

## Next Newsletter ... please share!

Have you anything you'd like to share in the next newsletter?

We are looking for tips, anecdotes, questions and any other contributions .... we'd love to hear from you!

Contact us on [qld\\_enquiries@gfi.org.au](mailto:qld_enquiries@gfi.org.au)



## Keep us up-to-date!

- Are you changing your email?
- Have a new telephone number?
- Planning to move in the next few months?

We would love to know your new details so we can keep you informed and connected with the Growing Families family! Email us on [qld\\_enquiries@gfi.org.au](mailto:qld_enquiries@gfi.org.au)