



# Growing Families Australia

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Reaching our nation one family at a time

## Inside:

- The Princess & the Kiss
- The Gossiper and the Chicken
- People and Projects
- And more...

## Keep us up-to-date!

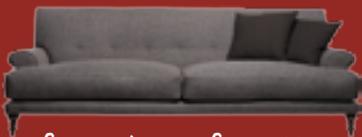
- Are you changing your email?
- Have a new telephone number?
- Planning to move in the next few months?

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

## Key Principle - GKGW Chapter 2

One of the greatest gifts parents can give their children is the confidence that Mum & Dad love each other.

## Reminder: How about this month during couch time...



*If you have forgotten what to talk about, check out your Growing Kids Gods Way manual and review the key teachings...*

## COMMUNITY **Andy & Robyn Hamdorf**

We have recently had our GFA-SA family camp and we were once again reminded of the importance of "community." It was wonderful to see the families mixing together and lots of children playing and enjoying each others company. And also the adults chatting and enjoying one another. We have been blessed to be involved with these types of events since our children were young and they probably don't remember a time where GFA camps were not a part of their lives.

We have seen the importance of making the effort in pro-actively building like-minded communities as our children have got older. While our children are young, as parents, we certainly have the greatest influence on them, and can usually direct them in the way we would like them to go. It is also easier to control the influences of others. However as they get older the pull and influence of peers becomes much stronger and often harder to resist.

As a like-minded community has been a strong part of our children's lives from early on, they look forward to GFA events and connecting with people they have now known for years. As they have attended the teen's camps the impact of like-minded relationships has been seen to be strong. They have come away with comments like "I feel like I can be myself," "No-one is judging you," "You don't have to perform," "It is relaxing being with these teens," "These are some of my closest friends." Even though

they only see these peers every couple of years they gel quickly and really enjoy being with one another and can sharpen one another also.

The same is true for us as adults, in developing and maintaining these relationships we also have those we feel comfortable with and "not judged," but know we are loved and will be held to account if necessary. In no way is this to suggest that we should only surround ourselves with people who think the same and act the same as us, but we do need to cultivate time to step aside and be refreshed with "like-minded" families.

If you have babies and toddlers the teen years can seem an awfully long way away, but they will come around very quickly. It is crucial to be putting into place now, what you would like to continue in the future. Just as you may be teaching self-control to your 2 year old which will reap rewards now and in the teen years, you need to be intentionally working on developing and strengthening a community around you which will encourage and support you in your parenting in the years ahead.

If you are not aware of any GFA families in your area, contact your State Leaders and they may be able to put you in touch with someone. Alternatively make an effort to get to your State picnics, or camps. If this isn't possible start saving NOW to get to the National Conference in 2014.

### *Dear GFA Family,*

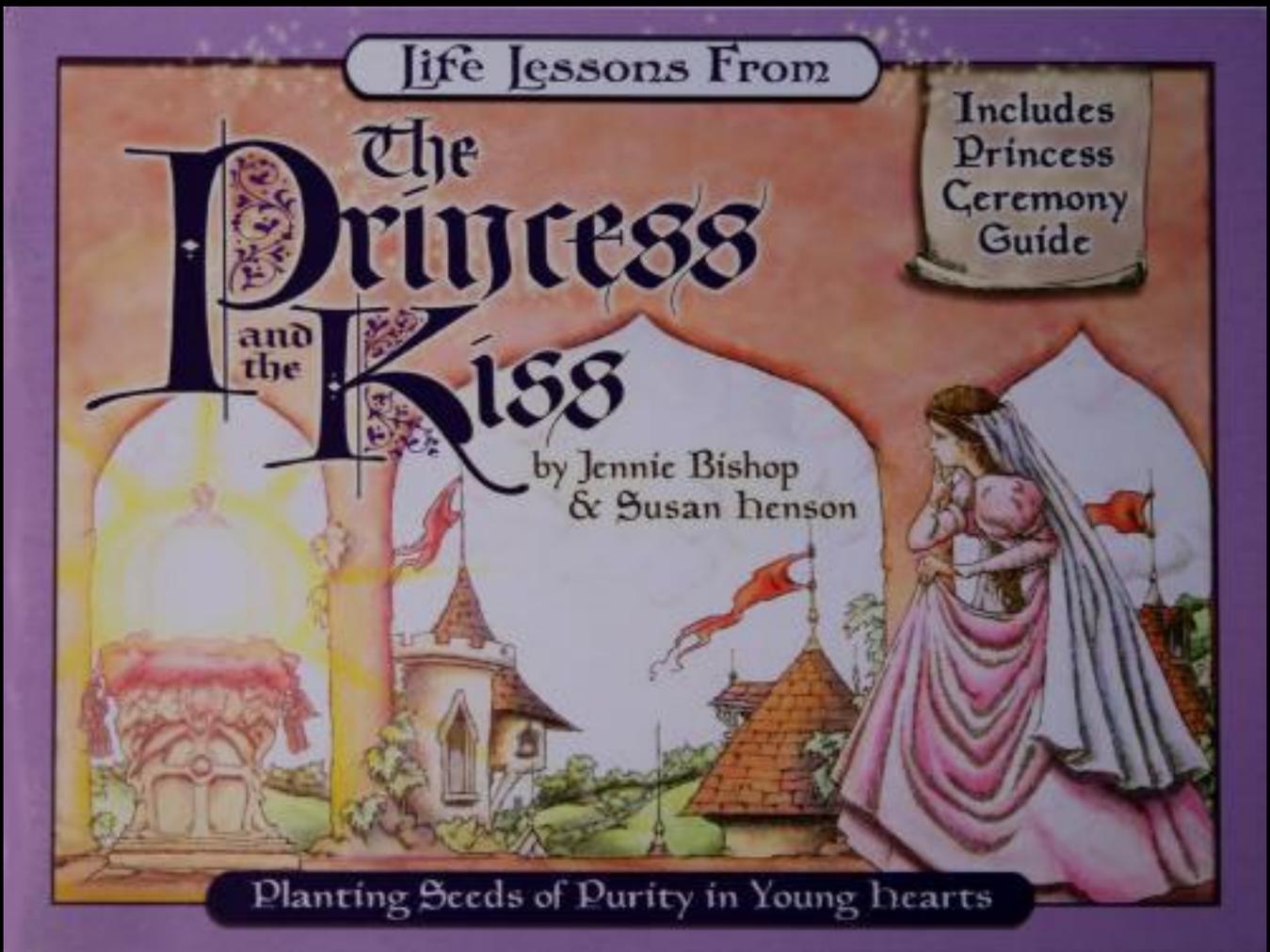
Your generous gift given to us as we have passed on the leadership baton of GFA is really appreciated. The nurture of vital godly families is still the passion of our hearts, so we plan to use this gift to equip us for the ministry in the Kimberley to the indigenous people. The first prayer news for this ministry is posted on the website. We would appreciate you joining us in prayer as we begin the journey on May 10th.

Last weekend we began the process of sorting the "paper trail" (and photos) of the last 20 years with GFA. It has been

such a blessed time as we have relived the journey of GFA. So many role books; so many names; so many inspirational messages from so many godly parents; so much delving into God's Word to seek His will and way; so many pictures of families all over this country and in other countries. Looking back has been an inspiration to look forward with joy to what God has in store as we all continue to journey with Him to raise a generation to the glory of God. Thankyou is somehow not enough.

With much joy and continued prayer and praise to our great God.

*Bill and Joan.*



In "The Princess & The Kiss: A Story of God's Gift of Purity", a loving king and queen present their daughter with a gift from God - her first kiss - to keep or to give away. The wise girl waits for the man who is worthy of her precious gift. Where is he and how will she ever find him? The surprising answer in this marvellous parable will touch the heart of parent and child alike.

"The Princess and the Kiss" beautifully portrays the ageless message that "love... comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:5 NIV)

"I asked God how I could teach my young daughters the value of their purity, how I could begin in their early years to stress the importance and beauty of saving themselves for marriage. This is God's poignant answer. My prayer is that this simple story will fulfil the same purpose for many other loving parents."

- Jennie Bishop, Author

These are available for \$20 from the GFA website.

# The Princess & the Kiss in action



"...we have made "The Princess and the Kiss" a regular story we share with our girls. Sarah (4) and Emma (2) adore it.

We had restricted a lot of the more conventional fairy tales because of the not so great morals in a lot of them and this seems to have filled the void in their imaginative world beautifully that was left as a result. It is gorgeous and heartwarming to see the girls dressing up with tea-towels (!) on their heads as the princess!

Ben & Nicole (& Sarah)



# The Chicken Story

## A Tale of Regret

**Gossip... and why James 3:1-12 is worth pressing into the heart of your child's heart.**

Once there was a foolish woman in a small village, who spread some gossip about another woman in the village. Before long the foolish woman began to feel remorse about what she had done so she went to the wise man of the village to ask him what she could do to make things right. The wise man listened carefully to her story, thought for a moment, and then told her to go to the market and buy a chicken. On the way home from the market she was to pluck that chicken letting the feathers fall along the path. The next day she was to come back and see the wise man again.

The foolish woman did as the wise man suggested. She bought a chicken and plucked it on the way home. When she came to him the next day she told him that she had done what he asked her to do. The wise man said to her, "Now, I want you to go home today by the same road you took yesterday, and pick up every single feather you dropped along the path." The woman was distraught, and protested that there was absolutely no way she could find and pick up all those feathers. The wind would have surely blown them everywhere!

The wise man quietly responded, "You are correct...and you see, just as you can never retrieve all those feathers, there is no way you can ever restore the reputation of the woman whom you harmed with your words."

## Lousy Timing

Dear Friends,

Many of you are in the middle of leading a Growing Kids God's Way class. We trust that your classes are going well, and that the members choose to embrace the principles they learn. The following is a blog by Bev Linder.

Bev and her husband have seen both of their children with special needs go home to be with our Lord. She continues to write her blog, and I am grateful for her insights that are very insightful. The following are thoughts that we can all use in our marriages and parenting. With her permission we have included it in the newsletter.

The Linders have been involved with GKGW and are advocates of GFI parenting classes. The book we now carry in the Mom's Notes Bookstore for parents of children with special needs is written by her. Take a few minutes and read it today!

*Thanks  
Carla Link*

We recently got a kitten, and my biggest fear was that he would not use his litter box, but have "accidents" all over the house (we've had kittens before so we know the dangers!) Happily, he took right to the box. However, every morning while I'm engaging the unpleasant task of scooping out, Durango chooses just that moment to use the box, making the chore even harder!

So I say to him, "Durango, I'm glad you use your box, but you sure do have lousy timing!"

Lousy timing...that phrase coming out of my own mouth gave me pause, because I realize how often I have had lousy timing with my kids and with my husband.

For example, correcting kids is a good thing. It's one good way that they learn. But often I chose to correct them during a heated moment: when they spilled their food all over the floor; when they embarrassed me in public; when they were upset over something that only their young hearts and minds understood.

A child's ability to learn heart lessons about behaviour during a time of conflict or high emotion is ZERO in my opinion.

Here's something to remember: the louder and more emotive we talk, the less our kids hear!

Yet, in those times when I acted more wisely, and corrected and taught my kids after the incident and when everyone was calm, their hearts were open to my instruction, and they learned lessons that would help them be motivated from the inside, as opposed to merely externally and not from the heart. It was a time when we could talk about the "whys" of behaviour, and therefore when they could embrace convictions of their own.

It's the same principle with a spouse or any other close relationship. Timing is everything when it comes to effective communication that leads to heart-felt changes.

I'm an impulsive person by nature, but that doesn't excuse those times when I have a poor sense of timing.

Proverbs 15:28 says, "The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer..."

The word "ponder" is defined in my dictionary as "to weigh in the mind; to reflect upon." Pondering brings about words that are spoken at the right time.

Avoid "lousy timing." Cats don't know much about timing (save maybe in catching mice and bugs) but God has given us humans the ability to ponder and to use good timing to help our kids learn lesson of the heart that will stay with them for life.

*Bev Linder -  
www.special-heart.com*



# FACETS

Our Australian GEMS (Godly Encouragement for Mums) umbrella encompasses three areas - Contact Mums, our magazine "Facets" and our fellowship groups. Contact Mums is a network of Christian women available to help parents think through the principles taught in classes, as well as the application to specific needs. Facets contain teaching, testimonies, Q&A and many other articles of interest to Mums. It builds on and supports the teaching contained in the GFI curricula.

Compiled specifically for Australian parents, the journals give encouragement and support for mothers who have completed GFI parenting courses, or are being introduced to the same. They include biblical teaching, practical parenting insights, testimonies, and much more.

Contact the GFA office to subscribe on 08 8322 3770 or enquiries@gfi.org.au.

Facets is produced an expected 3 times a year at \$10 an issue.



## A Simple Reflection for Busy People.

“People are always more important than projects”

**Andre Furmanov (Growing Families in Russia)**

This may sound something obvious but it is harder to do than you might think. It is hard to put people before what might be a carefully planned event or project. There have been times when I have prepared a Bible study, been really looking forward to it and then got to small group and discovered that there was a crisis that we needed to pray for and people needed comforting. So we drop the Bible study. It might be a small group meeting but people's needs come before convention. This is the Jesus way – it was what he was talking about when he was challenging the Sabbath rules. We have to be so careful that we don't put our own plans or ideas of how things should be done before the needs of others. This is something I will always carry it with me.

## Mummies and Daddies should love each other

Sometimes we can't see the forest for the trees and forget why we do things... here is a gentle reminder.

“After learning about Couch Time we had a hard long look at ourselves as parents. We did make some changes already and especially the couch time is wonderful. Especially for our marriage. More often than not, couch time starts with us (15min) then ends up with one child on both sides and we talk for another hour! We are looking forward to the couch time everyday!” Name withheld, 2012 — This family was new to GKGW and found Couch Time a powerful tool – this should serve to remind us of the importance of demonstrating love to our spouse in front of our children.

## Ever wondered what is going on with your little one... The NAP APP is here to help

Your baby has always been a good sleeper, especially at naptime, but is suddenly waking 30 to 45 minutes into his nap with a forceful cry. The cry is not the problem but it does signal a problem that must be solved. discovered.

The Babywise Nap App is an analysis tool that can help any parent isolate the underlying cause of nap disruptions and sleep disturbances for infants between 2 to 12 months of age.

By working through five basic question, the App will help reduce the hundreds of nap disturbance variables to the most likely cause for a baby's sleep disturbance and create a list of the most appropriate solutions based on the data provided.

The App is intuitive! The application can distinguish between the naps of a three month old and a six month old, a breast fed baby and a formula fed baby; and babies already taking solid foods.

Now available through the Apple App Store.

You can also watch the Babywise Nap App Video at [www.pocketparenting.com](http://www.pocketparenting.com).

