



Growing Families Australia

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Reaching our nation one family at a time

Inside:

- Getting Ready for School
- Online support for Mums
- Making Memories by Trevor Horskins (reprinted from FACETS)
- Raising money...
- 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

Greetings from “the NC14” team

The National Conference is NEXT YEAR...

So we thought it was time to up-date you on the progress the NC14 team has made in preparing for what we pray will be an inspiring and refreshing time for families.

Firstly, Joan has commenced the prayer ministry team (and is looking for prayer warriors to come along side her to bring the teen camp and national conference before the throne - regularly and passionately).

We have nearly finalised the budget - which includes setting the conference & camp fees... We will announce these as soon as we can to give heaps of time to start saving. Our aim is to keep the prices similar to 2012.

A draft program is coming together - the Ezzo's have confirmed their attendance and we are now working on the rest of the speakers and elective leaders. So if you have something on

your heart to share - please let us know.

We also have ministry leaders appointed for Music, Crèche, Kids Program and Audio / Visual Tech. We have room for more helpers in most areas - so if you feel called, please let us know - we especially need people to help in the hospitality area.

Work is also happening behind the scenes to upgrade the GFA website so that this time around all the conference registrations etc will be on our normal GFA website. There is already some basic information up for both the teen and family conference - feel free to check it out.

So we ask that you please place attendance at the teen camp and national conference on your families priority list. We are already looking forward to the fun and fellowship...

Toddler Transitions - Summary of Visit 1

To make confident decisions in parenting, parents need to know:

- What their beliefs are about the general categories of parenting.
- What their parenting goals are, and
- How they will satisfy the why of their beliefs.

Beliefs + goals = Why + How = Solutions.



GFA OFFICE

Nicky Rawlings has been part of the GFA office/bookshop team for 4 1/2 years. God has now opened up other opportunities for her to pursue and although we are delighted for her, we are sad that she will no longer be a part of our team. We have been very

blessed by her enthusiasm, dedication and passion for Growing Families over the time she worked with us both in the office and also at our conferences. We know that she will continue to bless others as she follows God's leading in the future.

Love languages for teachers/carers –

How to do physical touch and closeness...



How do you do physical touch and closeness in the classroom?

It is challenging to touch a student and speak this love language (or language of appreciation) directly. Touch the students work on their desk when you are talking to them about it (especially when praising), this fills the need of physical touch and closeness. This works especially well with opposite sex situations.

Couch Time



Couch time this month is an ideal time to consider how the new school year needs to start... its also a great time to consider how you may get to the National Family Conference in 2014 (yes its closer than you think...)

Call for Pray Warriors WE NEED YOU



We are excited that Joan Grosser has agreed to head up the NC14 Prayer Team and she needs your help.

So, this is a call for Prayer Warriors to be the foundation of NC14 – if we do not include genuine, consistent, vital prayer we risk building NC14 on sand.

So what is involved – Please email Joan jgrosser@gfi.org.au for her to add you to the prayer list and she will communicate directly, but we are after dedicated prayer warriors. We will provide a monthly prayer calendar and encouragement along the way.

As part of our Growing Families community we invite you to partner with us to bring NC14 before the throne in involved with both the Teen Camp and National Conference – no matter where you are based.



Brainstorming

How can we get to the conference

A few of us have been thinking... how can we afford to get to the National Conference... that got us thinking about ways make this a family activity. Here is our list... We trust that this will assist you in getting to a key Growing Families event. It is simply a non negotiable for many families.

- The desire to go needs to be created – this will increase once a family has been to one.
- Make it a family activity
- Forfeit pocket money
- Substitute expensive outings for cheaper one ie: Wet & Wild for public swimming pool or friends pool, or going to cinemas for hiring a DVD.
- Put money saved aside each week
- Save up dollar or gold coins
- Create a "rock pile"
- Forfeit a Birthday or Christmas present or get a small present rather than a big priced present
- "Do Hard things" - refer Alex & Brett Harris's book by the same name
- Mow lawns for friends and neighbours letting them know why you are doing it
- Go around neighbourhood/friends/elderly asking to do \$1 jobs explaining to them why you are offering to do such jobs (\$1 jobs are small jobs that take approx. 5-10 minutes work)
- Collect aluminium cans
- Family make priority and sacrifice other things
- Garage sale and sell excess toys and stuff
- Wash cars for neighbours and friends letting them know why you are doing it.
- Bake biscuits and cakes each week (different each time) – get a set amount of clients (maybe from Dad's work, neighbours etc.) and deliver them on a set day each week . Make it a business so that the ingredients come out of the profits. Maybe charge \$4 for a tray of biscuits which cost you \$1.50 to make. 10 customers per week for 20 weeks would raise a good amount of money and connect you with a lot of people.
- Weed gardens – so much per hour, or paid by the area.
- Water gardens for neighbours on holidays
- Feed animals and collect mail for neighbours for a small donation
- Take animals for a walk for exercise (we know a man who did that 5 nights a week for 10 years and was paid for it as the owner was too sick to walk the dog – he loved the dog like his own, and was paid substantially for doing the job).
- Clean gutters
- Make cards for sale
- Whole family cook a lovely 3 course meal and serve it to 4-5 couples as a "date night" – get them to put a donation under the side plate for what they think the meal is worth! (We do this often for our mission work and raise heaps – people pay far more than the meal was worth)
- Run a Family night for your graduates of GFI classes and charge for the evening. Have lots of prizes and fun things and have a silent auction.
- Grow vegetables or flowers and sell them - plenty of time for spring flowers if you plant them soon.
- You could have a goal of raising enough for someone else to go to conference too – and surprise them with a gift voucher for conference.

Facets

Facets is a magazine that includes encouraging stories and practical parenting support that will help remind parents of key principles shared in the biblical parenting curricula provided through Growing Families Australia. The Facets magazine is compiled by mums and dads, just like you, experiencing the ups and downs of parenting as they attempt to raise morally mature children and yet remain committed to their goal to be 'intentional' in the process and journey of parenting.

It is our goal to publish Facets 3 times a year (March/July/November) with back issues always available as the content is timeless. This is a very different magazine than those on the news stands with all the latest gossip from the movie or music industry that add no true value to your family life... the content of Facets is based on God's principles which can only add a depth of richness to your home. As an easy to read magazine it lends itself to enjoying an article over a cuppa and then move on with your day. We are sure the latest issue of Facets will bring great encouragement to your life.

Available at www.gfi.org.au



Godly Encouragement for Mums



Running a course this year?

Have you ever heard "...you are so lucky to have such good kids"!

Of course we know that it has nothing to do with "luck" - it is about Godly wisdom, fervent prayer, and the love of God being lived daily in your home. Even so, you have a unique gift from God - His Holy Spirit and His hand upon you as you parent daily.

Are you sharing this gift with others? We all have a privilege and responsibility to live out Christ before the world and to give back some of the blessings He has given you.

In 2013 we ask you to seriously consider facilitating a parenting class (or two) so that you spread on the wonderful blessings you have received.

Maximise your effectiveness and help out your State Teams who are trying to connect families with families. Checkout the website and register as a facilitator (and have a look around at all the goodies to help run a class). When you run a class, list it so others in your area can link in. We can also connect expressions of interest to your class. So go to www.gfi.org.au today and get started.

As the National Contact Mum Coordinator I thought I should let you know about a couple of online forums available to us.

A Facebook page "CFH Babywise and Beyond".

This facebook page is an online forum for mums to discuss issues that face us as we parent as Growing Families Parents. Contact Mums are asked to go to this page regularly and put a CM after their last sentence so we can identify it as a contact mum response.

Christian Family Heritage (CFH) website

CFH is a religious non-profit ministry established to encourage and support families through the 'Contact Mom Ministry' and GEMS - Godly Encouragement for Moms@ Fellowship Groups.

These ministries help thousands of people each year using biblical principles and the love of God as expressed through the sharing of our lives. The website is www.christianfamilyheritage.org. This website has self-helps for each room of the house and if you need further clarification then you can contact a Contact Mum.

If you have a special needs child, there are some additional resources that may be available - please contact me directly for more information (contact_mums@gfi.org.au).

Thanks

Alicia Bongers

Contact Mum Coordinator



Making Memories

Trevor Horskins

We discussed the topic of making memories at a recent SHEDs night (Some Holy Encouragement for Dads, or “boy GEMS”!!) What we quickly discovered is that every family had different stories to share about their various experiences of travelling to many diverse and wonderful places on family holidays.

Adding to those different experiences it was clear that, for some, these experiences took very careful and meticulous planning while for others the idea of a quick getaway was often the result of a spontaneous conversation or an unexpected invitation from a friend that led to an offer of “why don’t you come with us”...and off they went.

Wherever our holidays take us, and however it is that our families pull them together they do form a very important part of every family’s journey together. Yes, they help us parents unwind from the daily grind and work stresses that can so often grip us or, at times, even bind us. But it does so much more than that.

As parents, it’s important that we become intentional with building into our family relationships. Holidays help us to strip away all the distractions and to spend some quality focus time relaxing with each other and building into these relationships; not just the family unit as whole but also into each of the husband/wife relationship, the separate parent/child relationships as well as sibling “best friend” relationships.

The holiday destination is usually irrelevant. Our kids (Erin almost six and Jayden almost four) love family holidays. Almost as much as we do...! Whether it’s a simple weekender or a two-week Growing Families “conference” holiday, it’s met with the same level of excitement and expectation of the fun and games and adventures we all know are waiting for us along the way.

Of course, holidays aren’t the only way family memories are formed.

We all have a number of traditions that each family builds differently, or even adjusts according to the season of life you’re in; Christmas, Easter, the way we celebrate birthdays, Mothers’ Day, ANZAC day, Australia Day, Boxing Day, New Year’s Eve and on it goes. Hopefully husbands and wives have “date night” as a regular diary entry.

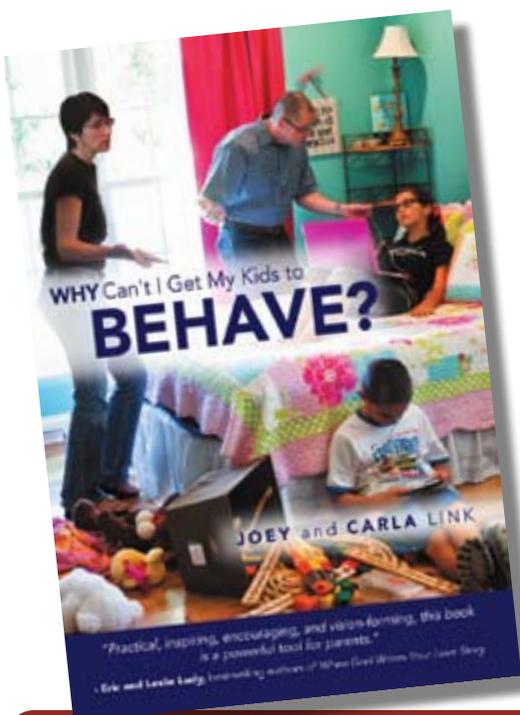
I would also encourage you to take up the option of dates with your kids. They certainly need not be elaborate, and the reality is that, once again, the destination is usually irrelevant. The destination is purely the tool to go on the journey together.

For us, we also have “family time” as a regular diary entry. Belinda and I will take turns in organising family time; which can include anything from games, puzzles, a tea party, watching a family video, looking through family photos and so on. We recently gave Erin the responsibility of organising Family time, and the joy she took from carefully planning out every last detail has meant that she’s been permanently put on the rotation. Not as often as Mum and Dad, but she knows the next time for her is coming.

Beyond this, even in our daily lives there are so many other ways and so many different opportunities for us to be consciously and intentionally seeking to build our family identity; daily devotions and prayers, focus time, talk time and even the way we go about our family chores.

It all has an impact. The key message in all of this is to be intentional with your parenting. Be intentional with creating, developing and harnessing your family memories. Be intentional with taking time together to build into your family relationships.

Start the journey early. And let it become a natural part of who your family is as it shapes your family identity for a generation. And remember, just as Gary Ezzo says “Peer group pressure is only as strong as family identity is weak”.



NEW BOOK from Joey & Carla Link

“Why Can’t I Get My Kids to Behave?”

Do you want to know how to get your kids to do their chores? Do you want to stop lecturing, reminding and nagging your kids? Are you wondering if it is worth disciplining your children when they won’t stay in a chair for a time-out? Then you should read Joey & Carla Link’s new book “Why Can’t I Get My Kids to Behave?” It is an awesome resource for all parents with children of all ages and would be an ideal resource for any Growing Kids God’s Way Class. Typical of the Link’s, this is a very practical resource that all parents should read. It has honest understanding, encouragement and practical instruction for parents to help them get their kids to behave. They also explain what obedience is and importantly, what it is not, in a way that helps parents get their children to obey. It certainly encourages single parents too and encourages us that it never too late to change our parenting to make a difference. It has lots of practical examples that we can all relate to as parents and then shows us how to deal with them.

This book is a combination of Joey & Carla’s wealth of pastoral experience in youth and family ministries. It contains much of the essential teaching and wisdom found in Mom’s Notes, but is not a substitute – so if you like this book we recommend that you get your hands on either the Mom’s Notes audio or written notes.



2014 Parenting with Purpose

Passing the faith along



National Conference | Sunshine Coast - Queensland

Sunday 13th April - Wednesday 16th April 2014



National Family Conference

13 - 16th April 2014

Sunshine Coast Queensland



National Teens Camp

10 - 13th April 2014

Sunshine Coast Queensland

