



Growing Families Australia

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Reaching our nation one family at a time

Inside:

- Training in Character
- Ethics of communication
- Key Leaders Camp report
- 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 2014 National Conference Team

Did you know it's less than 12 months before the 2014 teen camp, family conference and key leaders meeting are scheduled to happen.

The NC14 team is getting excited about the task at hand and some exciting progress has been made with God's grace.

So what's happened...

Information has been placed up on the website so families can start preparing for their journey to the Sunshine Coast and **REGISTRATIONS ARE NOW OPEN**... while the web module has taken longer than we planned, the great work done will help GFA run camps and conferences for years to come. A big Thank you goes to Marten Jak for all he has done. Key people have been placed in leadership roles for the children's program and that all seems to be coming together now. The prayer

warriors are placing the needs of the team before the Lord daily.

So if you want to come to the Teens Camp or the Family Conference in 2014 - get to the website, register and start planning. We are looking forward to presenting a conference to inspire, encourage and challenge you to Parent with a Purpose and pass your faith along - all for His purpose and glory.

Thanks

Geoff & Alicia Bongers

On behalf of a whole bunch of dedicated volunteers.

P.S. go to www.gfi.org.au and follow the link to the National Conference page to see the information we have put together for you to register.

Key Principle - GKGW Chapter 6

Parenting in the mind of God is a Kingdom issue.

Couch Time



Why is couch time important...

...what is so magical about you two sitting on a couch for 10 minutes that gives your children such a boost... how come your "quality time" spouse loves it sooo much... why is it so essential an ingredient in your parenting and marriage... why is it so hard for us to **DO IT...**

For a few couch times this month - we challenge you to talk about couch time and how to make sure your children know why you do them and that they become a regular habit for you both...



The Scary "Transition"

When ever possible parents need to transition conversations with their pre-teens from "I think you should..." to "God says you should..." Don't be afraid to ask you pre-teens... "what do you think God thinks about... and when you have done some research - come back to me". We are called, both parents and children, to immerse ourselves in God's Word.

So as a round the dinner table why not have a discussion about what God says about what we need to do with His Word...

A good place to start is Proverbs 2 1-9.

Happy transitioning.

What does it look like to practically train our children in Character?

To teach what is good.

Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. Titus 2:3-4

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

First, make a plan. In your daily routine allow time during those periods of "non-conflict" to work on your children's character.

Choose one virtue at a time to work on. Using Scripture, make a craft or read stories to teach and reinforce God's thoughts on that particular virtue. This will help reinforce the virtue in the mind and heart of your children.

Be intentional about observing your children throughout the day, looking for those times they are demonstrating the virtue. Acknowledge the right action or attitude with words of praise and encouragement.

Most Commonly Asked Questions of Contact Mums

Q : My 16 month old seems to have forgotten everything I have been teaching her. Am I doing something wrong?

A : Actually, your 16 month old is demonstrating that she is becoming her own person and what you are experiencing is the 'nature' of your child. In the mind of a 16 month old, life is "all about me".

As mentioned in both Preparation for the Toddler Years and On Becoming Pre-Toddlerwise, your goal as a parent is to "not worry about gaining ground (behavioural speaking) but rather focus on not losing ground" [setting right goals]. During this time a pre-toddler will challenge the established boundaries and your authority, so it is up to Dad & Mum to make sure those boundaries and your

parental authority are enforced. Parenting is an ongoing process and repetition is important as you train a child of this age.

It would be helpful to review the teaching on "The Funnel". Is your daughter taking more freedoms than she's capable of handling at this point in her life? If so, taking appropriate measures to bring her back in the funnel will help in 'not losing ground' that was established in the first year of her life. There are also many parenting 'tools' to be found through taking the next age appropriate parenting class [The Toddlerhood Transition] or reading the next On Becoming book. Stay consistent in planting the seeds of obedience in your child's heart (begin as you mean to go) and in due time the beautiful harvest will come.



**Parenting
with Purpose**

Passing the
faith along

**National
Family
Conference**

**13 – 16th
April 2014**

**Sunshine
Coast
Queensland**



The Ethics of Communication

(from Preparation for the Middle Years)

Speaking

Proverbs 15:1 speaks of the tone of our words: "A soft answer turns away wrath, but harsh words stir up anger."

Proverbs 16:21 describes the influence of our words: "The wise in heart will be called prudent, and sweetness of the lips increases learning."

Proverbs 15:33 and **15:20** speaks of the importance of timely words: "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold." "Like one who takes away a garment in cold weather and like vinegar on soda, is one who sings songs to a heavy heart."

Proverbs 16:24 speaks of the care we should take in selecting positive words: "Pleasant words are like a honeycomb. Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones."

Colossians 4:6 encourages us to employ well-chosen words: "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."

James 5:12 speaks of our integrity as demonstrated by our words: "But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other. But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes' and your 'No' be 'No' lest you fall into judgment."



Key Leaders Family Camp 2013



For those of you who have spent time away with other GFA families, you will know the huge blessing it can be. Well, that blessing was felt by 20 key leader families from all over Australia who accepted an invitation to attend the first Key Leaders Family Camp run by Peter & Michelle Foote, our Key Leaders Coordinators. It was such a special time of fellowship and fun, where existing friendships were strengthened, new friendships forged, and hearts encouraged by what the Lord is doing in GFA. Our hearts are so thankful to God for His grace and presence that made the weekend what it was.

The camp was held at El Shaddai in Wellington SA, and went from Thursday afternoon to Sunday lunch. It is part of an increased focus within Growing Families Australia to invest more in our key leaders community ie those who have been consistently leading GFA ministry for at least 3 years, as they play such a key role in shaping the future of GFA. Some of the highlights from the camp included:

- A family concert on Friday night with many families putting on inspiring, funny, and profound performances. Mr Grosser did a hilarious rendition of "Little Bo Peep".
- Activities like rock climbing, Giant Swing, archery, canoeing, and Vertical Challenge proved to be great fun.
- Late night chats over coffee, with some people still going at 2am.
- A team challenge that ran over the whole weekend, including GKGW quizzes, physical activities like human tunnel ball and leg squats, and a Treasure Hunt, with the winning team "The All Rounders" being awarded the Key Leaders Family Camp Shield.

- Sharing time on Friday morning where each key leader couple shared their passion within GFA, and discussion time on Saturday morning where several "strategic" topics were discussed eg GFA leadership, new key leaders model, online classes, new structures to support national events, "Parenting from the Tree of Life" video series from the Ezzos, etc.

Here are some quotes from the camp:

- "The main thing I got from the camp was meeting with other families involved in GFA ministry and connecting with them and their children in an intimate setting. Also being encouraged and finding out more about what is happening on a broader level."
- "It was wonderful to witness God's blessing over the GFA ministry and the unity we enjoy. It was also great to see everyone again and I loved having the time to get to know a few families we didn't know well. I appreciated being updated on how all the states and ministry are going, and discussing the plans for the future. Our children enjoyed seeing old friends and making new ones."
- "My heart is overwhelmed with the sense of like-mindedness, the sharing of heart passions, and the Christ-centred fellowship. My passion for Jesus, the GFA community and our Great South Land has been ignited to greater heights from this weekend."
- "Can't wait for the next one!"

In Jesus beautiful name

Peter & Michelle Foote



National Teens Camp

10 – 13th
April 2014

Sunshine Coast Queensland

