



Growing Families Australia

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Reaching our nation one family at a time

Inside:

- Couch Time
- How can I afford the conference
- Conference update from the team
- How to respond to foolishness...
- 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

National Greetings from Geoff & Alicia

Don't panic... Bill & Joan are fine and are still in role. Its just that they decided that every now and then a word from a State Team Leader would be a nice change. So here is the first 'nice change'...

This newsletter is heavily focused on the next national Growing Families conference. It is major highlight for our family (our kids were already planning how to get to the conference in 2012 on the way home from 2009 conference). It is such a key part of our family identity now that we cannot really imagine not going. Its not just about the fun and the holiday, for us it goes deeper. It gives us a chance to mingle and talk with like minded parents and have that strong sense of community and encouragement. For our children it has a similar deeper sense - they enjoy being around other children with a similar moral compass and have a strong feeling of belonging to something bigger than their own family.

Another passion of our Growing Families ministry is equipping and training leaders. You may have noticed in the last newsletter and in this one an advertisement for a leaders manual. We have strived to put into the hands of new and experienced facilitators alike, a very helpful

resource. It aims to make facilitating a class a much easier task. We encourage all class facilitators to get a copy - the next manual which will cover Reflection of Moral Innocence, Preparation for the Middle Years and Reaching the Heart of your Teen should be out soon...

As a Queensland State Team we are currently finalizing the last minute details of our State Family Camp in June (all still welcome - even from far away). It is a key activity for us along with "plays in the park." We strive to keep families connected and in community, supporting each other.

A final thought - please pray for Bill & Joan as they strive to lead the miracle of Growing Families Australia. Many of us who have been around for a while have a "Bill & Joan" story... and we love them all the more for it. We also ask the you support your State teams where you can. We all in our own way strive to support, connect and encourage parents to have a biblical mindset.

Thanks

Geoff & Alicia Bongers

Qld State Team Leaders

Encouragement

think about what to pray for – or where to serve.

Love over Hate

Ever wondered what to pray for or what ministries may be a useful family activity. Think about the following advert in "The Big Issue" recently...

Hate the Homelessness - Love the Homeless
 Hate Loneliness - Love Community
 Hate Addiction - Love Freedom
 Hate Hunger - Love Hospitality
 Hate the Cold - Love Shelter
 Hate Poverty - Love Donations
 Hate Ignorance - Love Understanding
 Hate Evil - Love God

Key Principle - GKGW Chapter 6

Parenting in the mind of God is a Kingdom issue.

Reminder:

How about this month during couch time...

This month is a great opportunity for a series of discussions around why a national conference should be on your agenda. It may be a back to basics discussion about community, priorities, where the family is at, who is spending time with the children and what do they believe or what is important. An extended discussion about priorities and how to pay for such a memory building opportunity may also be part of the couch time agenda. How about listing 10 reasons why to go and why not. Then discuss the results and what it means.

www.gfanc.com



Come and connect with the Growing Families community to encourage each other and journey together.



Phillip Island Adventure Resort, Victoria

Main Conference: 21-24 January 2012 | Teens Camp: 18-21 January 2012

For further details and to register, please visit www.gfanc.com



National Conference Update

Have you registered to come to the GFA National Conference in January 2012 (NC12)? It's only on once every 2-3 years, and the positive effects it will have on your family can not be described in words, they must be experienced! Our keynote speakers for the main conference will of course be Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo again, but make sure you check out some of the other speakers and session topics at the GFANC.com website too. While you're on the NC12 website, check out and join the growing Online Community of GFA families, where you can connect with people you may already know but lost touch with since the last conference, or start developing new friendships. You are free to join the Online Community at GFANC.com even before you register for the NC12.

If you have teens in your family, make sure you check out the Teens Camp pages with them. Marten and Sarah Jak will be heading up the National Teens Camp again just prior to the main conference, and this unique experience for your teens is absolutely priceless! There just aren't many opportunities like this available for them in their teen years, and you won't want to miss this one. By the way, young adults in their early twenties from the GFA community are very welcome to join the Teens Camp too.

So, get a cuppa, head over to GFANC.com to find out what you need to know about the Main Conference and the Teens Camp, join the Online Community, and register to attend this great event.

The Interrupt Rule

Teaching your children how to properly interrupt a conversation is another practical way of showing respect to others. *Remember how this is done....* **when your child needs to interrupt, have them rest their hand on your arm, side, or shoulder and then wait silently until you acknowledge them.** They should not pull, tap, or shake you for attention. This gesture beautifully displays respect for you and the one to whom you are speaking.

Have you also reminded your child why they are doing this? Respect for their parents and others!

How to respond to foolishness

Session 5 of Parenting the Middle Years is a timely reminder for parents to **continue** in the way we began in GKGW... Parents – stay mindful of the four considerations before responding to foolishness (have you forgotten the difference between foolish and childish... have a chat with your spouse or consult your GKGW manual):

1. The punishment must fit the crime
2. The commonness of the offense
3. The context of the moment
4. The overall characterisation of behaviour.

But parents must stay mindful of the three levels of correction:

1. Minor infractions that call for a verbal reminder
2. Infractions that need some action
3. Offenses that call for the full weight of correction.

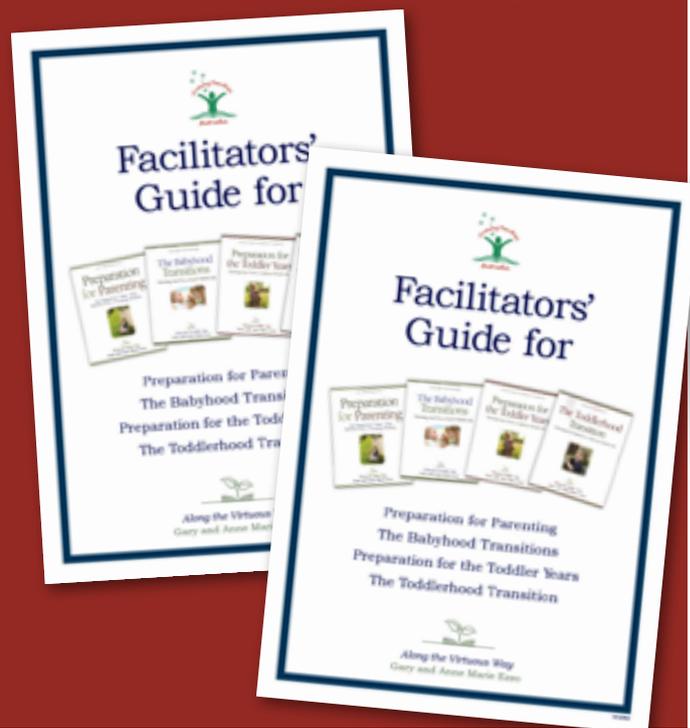


What can I do as a dad...

I am a new dad, what can I do to help?

- Listen to your wife, provide support & encouragement.
- She can apply the principles at her own pace.
- Bring a glass of water at each feed.
- Encourage mother to rest (2 naps a day initially, or at least lie down).
- Work out ways to reduce mother's stress.
- Organise relatives to help so that they don't get in the way at the wrong times.
- Identify postnatal depression - often not easily diagnosed by mum herself.
- Settle baby between feeds (often works well because you don't smell of breast milk).

New Facilitators guide



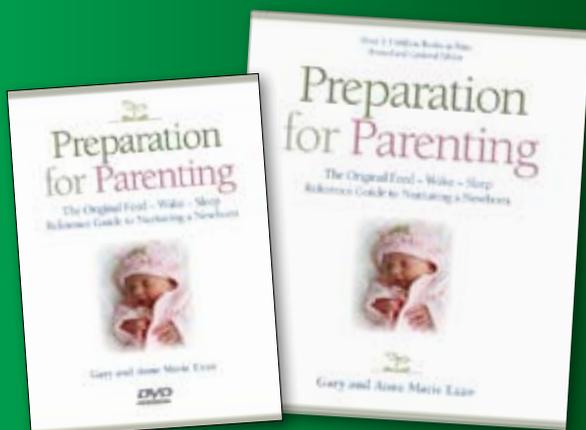
Looking to lead a class this year... there is a new resource for available to assist class facilitators. It covers Preparation for Parenting, The Babyhood Transitions, Preparation for the Toddler Years, The Toddlerhood Transition. This great new manual has tips on starting a class, first class helps, all the answers to the session outlines, suggestions for discussion questions, couch time topics ideas and all the answers to the homework questions. It should be on the lap of every facilitator - if for nothing else - to make you look good...

This new Facilitators guide provides very comprehensive information and help for all those facilitating any of the first four courses offered by Growing Families Australia. The material covers:

- Preparation for Parenting**
- The Babyhood Transitions**
- Preparation for the Toddler Years**
- The Toddlerhood Transitions**

Includes possible discussion questions, couch time topic suggestions, answers to the homework and more. Ideal for both new and experienced leaders.

New Preparation series



We are very excited to announce the New Preparation series has arrived.

Preparation for Parenting has been completely upgraded and we are very excited by the look of the new DVDs. There is a new workbook to accompany the DVDs. The DVDs are available at a **SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY PRICE of \$70** until the end of April. After this time the regular price will be \$110.00

The accompanying workbooks are \$25.00 each.

We have a number of the OLD DVDs and workbooks available for the special prices of:

- DVD set \$50** (RRP \$132)
- Workbook \$15** (RRP \$26.40)
- Audio CDs \$25** (RRP\$48.40)

BRAINSTORMING...

How can I afford to get to the National 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 our 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 "rockpile"
- 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 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 sideplate 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.