



Growing Families Australia

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Reaching our nation one family at a time

Inside:

- Ten talk
- DVD review
- Planting a tree (for dad's)
- Seasons of Marriage
- 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 Andy and Robyn Hamdorf

Business Administrators Growing Families Australia

We have been involved with Growing Families since 1996 when Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo first came to Adelaide for an afternoon seminar.

Since first hearing the Ezzos speak we have led classes, been a part of the SA team and are also the State Representatives for SA. In 2007 we took on the role as Business Administrators for Growing Families Australia.

We are blessed with 3 children who are now 19, 17 and 14.

Our main role is to look after the distribution of the Growing Families material to Australia and New Zealand. In doing this we process orders that may come in through the website, or via phone or email. We aim to post any order received within 48 hours. Our goal is to have enough stock to fill these orders the majority of the time, and we certainly strive to meet this goal.

We attend to all the other bits and pieces that go into running a business, with various administration tasks. The website and mailing

lists are also maintained and updated through us and we currently arrange for any bulk emails and newsletters to be sent out to the mailing lists as required.

We also work closely with Bill and Joan Grosser, the State Team Leaders and Class Facilitators. Our desire is to support each of these people and if we can help in anyway we are most keen to do that. The foundation of the ministry is relationship and we love to be able to connect and encourage people.

Even though the bulk of what we do is administration our passion is for the ministry and families. We pray that through our role with Growing Families Australia God may be glorified in all we do and families are strengthened throughout Australia.

Please feel free to contact us if we can help in any way.

Blessings,

Andy and Robyn

Couch Time



Couch time reminder. What's is our family identity?

Don't forget Phillip Island in January 2012.

Key Principle - GKGW Chapter 10

Encouragement takes a quantum leap when you add physical touch to your words of praise. It is even more meaningful when Dad does it.

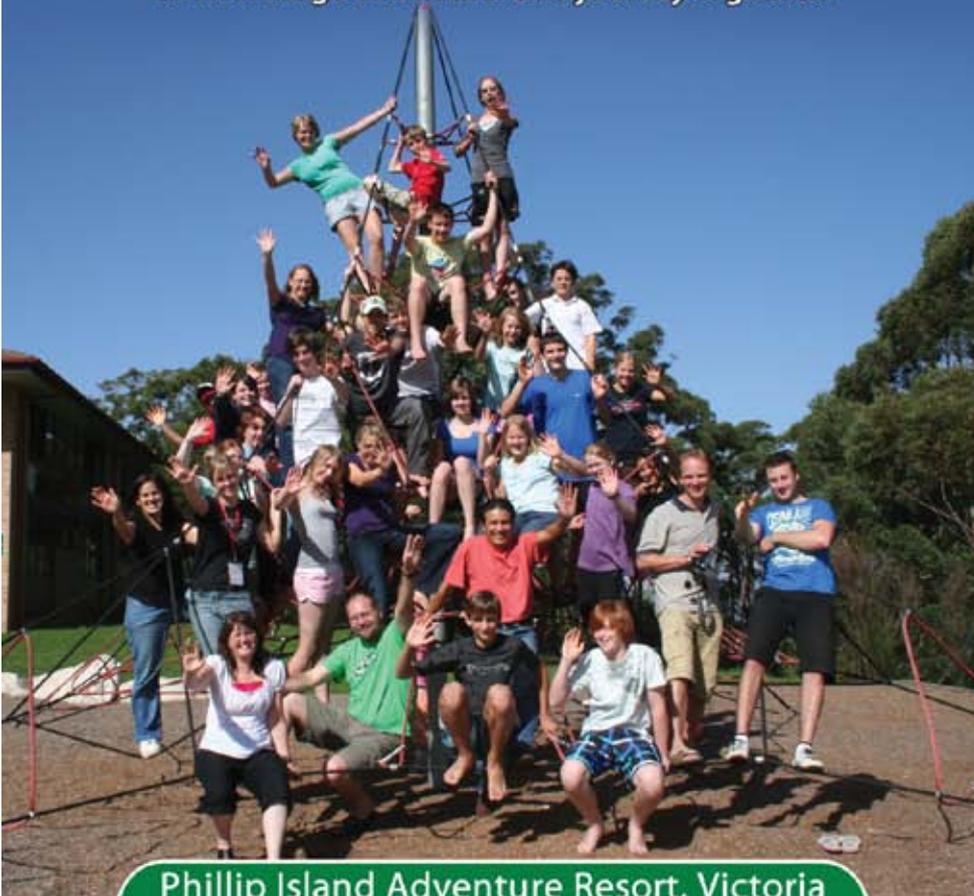
Good, better best...

An interesting way to think about "good better best" is to add the phrase that "when we cease striving to be better than we are... we cease to be good".

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



The Growing Families Australia National Conference (NC12) is now less than 4 months away, and this short time will fly, I'm sure, with the usual busyness that the end of the year brings. We are delighted to have over 350 parents and children registered for the NC12 already, and there are now less than 10 rooms left for on-site accommodation at the Phillip Island Adventure Resort!

The Teens Camp preceding the main Conference is also very close to capacity, and with over 45 teens already booked to attend, it will be the largest GFA Teens Camp so far!

We are also very excited about the Children's Program being prepared for the kids to enjoy and learn during the Conference. Brian Ellis, from Character First Australia, with his assistants and his army of teen helpers will be teaching our children about Attentiveness, Obedience, and Forgiveness. This teaching content and approach is so fun, engaging and effective, that children will remember what they learn for many years to come. This experience alone for your children will truly be a worthwhile investment for them.

Here is a selection of highlights from children who attended previous conferences:

"Learning new poems and actions to them"

"Still remember the poems we learnt at the conference in SA (2005)"

"Making good friends"

"Learning new songs"

"Going on walks with my new friends and getting to know them better"

"Doing the kids activities and playing around with the leaders"

"Watching Mr and Mrs Ezzo doing silly dances at the conference in NSW (2009)"

"Being with other kids that also know the Interrupt Rule"

"Looking forward to the Teens Camp and helping with the Kids Program"

If you are planning or considering coming to the NC12, but haven't registered yet, please get in now as on-site accommodation is truly limited and running out fast. For more details and to register online, please visit the conference website at www.GFANC.com.



Life at home would be different if all people did this !

We All Need A Tree

I hired a plumber to help me restore an old farmhouse, and after he had just finished a rough first day on the job: a flat tire made him lose an hour of work, his electric drill quit and his ancient one ton truck refused to start. While I drove him home, he sat in stony silence.

On arriving, he invited me in to meet his family. As we walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands.

When opening the door he underwent an amazing transformation. His face was wreathed in smiles and he hugged his two small children and gave his wife a kiss.

Afterward he walked me to the car. We passed the tree and my curiosity got the better of me. I asked him about what I had seen him do earlier. Oh, that's my trouble tree," he replied "I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing's for sure, those troubles don't belong in the house with my wife and the children... So I just hang them up on the tree every night when I come home and ask God to take care of them. Then in the morning I pick them up again." "Funny thing is," he smiled, "when I come out in the morning to pick 'em up, there aren't nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before."

FACILITATORS CORNER



Love Languages handout / gift pack

As part of the love language lessons in both GKGW and Reaching the Heart of Your Teen a great practical teaching tool is a "love language bag". It's fun to be creative asking the class which one represents which language...

Use a small gift bag (ones with hearts on it are often on special after Valentines Day)

Words of encouragement

Small Blank Card or "Pass it on" card

Quality Time

Tea and Coffee Bags

Acts of Service

Superglue & Clothes pages

Gift Giving

Chocolates

Physical Touch & Closeness

Small Teddy, H massager or massage oil (this is the most expensive portion of the gift)



PARENTS ARISE

How do you teach your children God's principles in a way that is fun, relevant and will become an integral part of your child's life? One mother's quest to answer this question began in the family lounge room, where the children discovered the power of learning Scripture through music and then applying its principles to everyday life. This concept gave rise to the production of the Children Arise CDs which

have inspired families around the world. The stories in this book are just some of the amazing miracles that the Targett family experienced, as they learned to apply God's Word to their daily lives.

This book is available for \$19.95 from the GFA book shop.

Sharing your life stories

Sharing your life stories with your children is an important way to establish trust and help your children invest in the family.

"I know how you feel, when I was about your age..."

"I've been there, when I was in high school..."

It is beautiful to know about your parents in their youth – bless your children with your stories so they can relate to your history. The best time to share these is not after something has happened and you have a "story to tell". Try having a family night where you share your life stories as husband and wife... prepare a list of them during couch time...



Seasons of marriage

Why do some marriages survive and thrive while others don't?

It seems that the vast majority of Australians, 76.8% at least in 2007, believed that the 'try before you buy' and 'you have to make sure you're compatible' philosophies would be the answer to true, life-long love. Sadly though, Australia still ranks in the top six world-wide for the highest divorce rates.

If just living together is not the answer, then what is? For the past 26 years during my journey with my wife Cornelia I've come to understand two very important elements of a strong marriage.

Just before I was married I was given a piece of wisdom from a long married couple in their seventies. The counsel was based on Genesis 2: 24, where we are told that ... "a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." Genesis 2: 24 NIV (emphasis added)

How true it is that those who have strong marriages have a oneness about them. As an old aunt said, remember that 'we' comes before T in wedding. Where two are entwined together as one, their strength is multiplied.

Acting and thinking in concert is not easy and takes a lot of commitment, give and take. Having a mindset of putting the other first is Christ-like and the basis on which this oneness grows.

The second lesson I've learnt can only occur after the first; that marriage has seasons. Let me warn you first that this does not mean that you only experience one of each of the seasons of marriage. In fact the climate of marriage is characterised by us moving from one season to another and back again. A strong marriage learns from each season and prepares the couple for the next.

Summer is the hot season in your marriage. It's the time of great emotion, physically its exhausting and its wonderfully passionate. That's the way God intended it to be. Just read the book, Song of Solomon and you will see that passion is a key part of your relationship. It's during your summer marriage that you explore new things together, learning and stretching yourselves. It's a time to release your passions, to focus on a vision for the future and begin laying the foundations for a life of God's purposes.

Autumn heralds a new time when your relationship is buffeted by children and changed circumstances. Work pressures build up and finding time together is more difficult. And while many homes become afflicted with the swinging door syndrome, it is in these

times that your family's relationship with Christ should be strongly nurtured. As you experience the kaleidoscope of colours in your relationship, it is the extent to which Christ is given centre stage in your relationship that will provide you with the resilience you need when times are tough.

Winter is inevitable. In marriage there are times when you sense a loss of intimacy, when you seem to do nothing more than chase your tail, or your world becomes an isolated island in a social landscape. Although this is the most difficult of seasons it's also the season that gives us the greatest opportunities to use the gift of oneness that God gave us.

Strong marriages are characterised by one person helping the other during these times. Jesus sent his disciples out in twos for this very reason. When one is down, the other supports. It's a simple concept and very effective, but requires a joint commitment.

For a moment think of the rings of growth on a tree. The dense rings that grow during winter will define the strength of the tree. With guidance from the Word, and a willingness from both of you, your winter periods will define your marriage.

Spring is the time of new beginnings. When we start to feel the warmth of summer approaching, we are revitalised and refreshed. And while the memories of tough times might linger, it is the promise of a new day and new opportunities that causes us to come out of our cocoons, shedding the dreary and becoming all that the Lord has predetermined us to be. For many marriages the rut of winter has become the grave. For those who have welcomed Spring together, their love will flourish and the impact of their relationship will pollinate others.

Marriage is the most important union on earth, given by God for His glory. But being human we know that relationships don't always work this simply. In the couples I've spent time with over the years I've found that the oneness with which they started in marriage has been broken. The combined commitment to work through the seasons of marriage has been eroded for a range of reasons.

Be strong, encourage and support one another. Remember the WE in wedding, and have fun on the journey.

Your enjoyment is His pleasure.

Peter Tyrrell serves as the Executive Director of Insight for Living Australia, based in Melbourne.