



theParentLink

Children's Edition

MAY 2007



Lafayette Church Of Christ

Meeting your kids where they are...

One of the goals of *relational parenting* is to find activities members of the family can participate in together. Through the quantity of time a parent and child spend together, the life changing moments are often experienced. The challenge lies in finding an activity that you both enjoy. Unfortunately, one of the favorite past times of kids, playing video games, or "gaming" as it's called in the technological world, can be one of the most divisive ones when it comes to family relationships.

As one parent put it, "Technology is the wall between my son and me. He could spend all day playing video games. I never graduated past Atari. I have asked him time and time again to join me in the garage. Working on cars is so much more enjoyable and beneficial than sitting in front of a video screen."

If your child's gaming habits have become more of a wall than a bridge, maybe it's time for you to embrace technology and use it as a bridge into his or her life. Here's how:

Enjoy the game without worrying about winning. Today's games are difficult to master. Don't let your competitive nature distract from the goal of relational parenting. Enjoy the smile on your kid's face when they beat you!

Buy extra controllers. There is a difference between sitting in a room watching your child race motorcycles and having a controller in your hand jumping ditches along side him/her. Share the experience with your child.

Keep the system somewhere out in the open. Game systems are like good babysitters – they occupy the kids and free parents' time. But relational parenting, or complete family inclusion, will never occur when families are in separate rooms.

Choose the right games. Make sure you have games that allow people to play together – as a team or in friendly matches or races.

Learn more. See "Gaming for Kids and Parents" at www.nintendo.about.com.



PowerSource

Pray That:

1. God would give you discernment regarding the activities in which you allow your child to participate.
2. God would give you the desire to spend time with your child.
3. You would look for and create moments to be in your child's world.
4. God would help you find moments during any activity to teach your children life lessons.
5. God would show you how to get involved in your child's life doing things that they enjoy.
6. God would protect your child and help them see how to be in the world, but not of it.

Healthy Parenting...



While there are benefits to using video games as a bridge to building family relationships, consider the following cautions:

1. Children have a difficult time distinguishing between reality and fantasy. Exposure to high levels of violence may lead to aggression or fear.
2. The entertainment industry markets games designed for more mature audiences to younger children. Don't allow your parenting choices to be dictated by slick advertisements or pressuring kids.
3. The majority of video games are designed for males. The female characters are often victims. Watch out for unhealthy stereotyping.
4. Quality family time needs to be enjoyed in various ways. Be sure to turn off the video game and enjoy other experiences.

OpenTheBook

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven...a time to embrace and a time to refrain."

Ecclesiastes 3:1 and 5b (NIV)

Teachable Moments:

God is ultimately in charge of time and what happens in our lives. But He has also given us the ability to choose how we spend the time He has given us. When we make time for our children, it teaches them all kinds of important life lessons.

Examine the hours you have in your day; maybe journal the things you do in a day. Use broad categories such as "work" or "spend time with kids" or be as specific as you want. After a few days to a week, look back and see how much time you are actually spending with your kids and family.

Choosing to spend time with your kids doing the things that they enjoy shows them:

- **They are important!**
- **They are valuable!**
- **They are LOVED!**



"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds... Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk **Along the Road when you lie down and when you get up."**

Deuteronomy 11:18-19

Are you spending enough time with your child?

Ask them some of these questions to see if they think so!

1. What is your most favorite thing to do? Why do you like this?
2. How much time would you say that you spend with Mom and/or Dad? Too much, just the right amount, or not enough?
3. If you could pick one thing that you enjoy doing and do it with Mom or Dad, what would it be?
4. Is there anything that you enjoy doing that you would like for Mom or Dad to either watch you do or do it with you?



The Entertainment Software Association conducted a recent survey regarding the gaming industry. Here are a couple of their findings:

- More than one-third of American parents play computer and video games, and 80% do so with their children.
- Of the parents surveyed, 66% believe playing video games with their children creates closer family ties.

(lockergnome.com)

Healthy Habit: A Head start to Bike Safety

Each year, about **176,000 kids visit the ER** due to bicycle related injuries. The number one step to reduce risk of a head trauma while biking is wearing a helmet.

A helmet should:

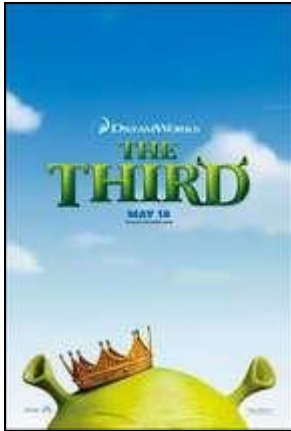
- **Be certified.** Contain a CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission) sticker.
- **Fit properly.** It should not be too big or too small. Never wear a hat under your bike helmet.
- **Be worn correctly.** It should be worn level and cover the forehead.
- **Have the straps fastened.** The straps should always be fastened and adjusted so that they are snug so that the helmet can't be pulled or twisted around the head.
- **Remember to take good care of helmets.** Don't throw them around. After a major crash, replace your helmet with a new one! (Kidshealth.org)





MOVIES...

Some movies that appear on the surface to be kid friendly, may not be in reality. Make sure you know if they are appropriate for your child or not.



Shrek – The Third

Genre: Comedy, Children’s, Animated
Network: Paramount Pictures
Release Date: May 18, 2007
Cast: Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz, Eddie Murphy, Antonio Banderas, Julie Andrews
Warnings: Rated **PG** for some crude humor, suggestive content, and swashbuckling action.

Spider-Man 3

Genre: Action/Adventure, Superhero
Network: Columbia Pictures
Release Date: May 4, 2007
Cast: Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst, Thomas Haden Church, Topher Grace, James Franco
Warnings: Rated **PG-13** for sequences of intense action violence.



Games...

Just like the movies, the gaming industry also targets younger audiences with games intended for older kids. Be aware of the contents of each game your child plays. (commonsensemedia.org)

Title	Rating	Content	Age	Platform
NBA Street Homecourt	E	Play is a bit raw – no referees, pushing, and taking the ball. Contains constant trash-talking without vulgarities.	7+	XBOX 360, PS3
Hotel Dusk: Room 215	T	Mild violence, tobacco and/or alcohol use, and foul language	12+	Nintendo DS
Battlestations: Midway	T	Foul language, mild suggestive themes, use of alcohol, and violence	13+	XBOX 360, PC



Every family member needs to feel important and to know that they are loved by those in their own family.

Try this activity and see how fun it is to encourage those that you love!

1. Choose one family member per day or per week depending on your preference.
2. Announce that he/she is the “special family member”.
3. Have all of the other family members do something special for that one person. It could be clean his/her room, draw them a picture, make them a favorite treat, etc.
4. For dinner that night, go visit the selected member’s favorite restaurant or cook his/her favorite meal.
5. After dinner, have everyone gather together in a common family area.
6. Have that person sit or stand in the middle of the circle.
7. Let each member go around the circle and tell at least one thing they love about that person.
8. End the activity with a prayer thanking God for that member.
9. Have a group hug or dog pile, whichever best suits your family!

May 2007

		1	2	3	4	5
		HCU Dinner @ Hartsville Pike @ 7:00 PM		National Day of Prayer		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Teen-Appreciation Banquet Jr. & Sr. High Devo. after PM service		Youth Ministers Meeting Millview Church of Christ in Franklin		MCHS Awards Day		Elder's dinner with the Sr.'s @ 7:00 PM @ Linda's
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Mothers Day Camp Applications Due					Last Day of School MCHS Graduation @ 8:00 PM	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Elementary Devo. after PM service				Jr. & Sr. High End of school Lock-in @ "The Refuge"		
27	28	29	30	31		
Jr. & Sr. High Devo. after PM service	Memorial Day			Beach Bend Park Trip for all ages		



Beach Bend Park Trip will be May 31st. Please sign the list if you are planning on attending.



Maywood Christian Camp in Hamilton, AL will be June 3rd – 9th. See Terry for application. Applications are to be turned in by May 15th.



Hillmont Christian Camp in White Bluff, TN will be June 24th – 29th. See Terry for application. Applications are to be turned in by May 15th.