

# DIRECTIONS

Foursquare National Department of Christian Education  
A Newsletter for Christian Educators

Spring 1996

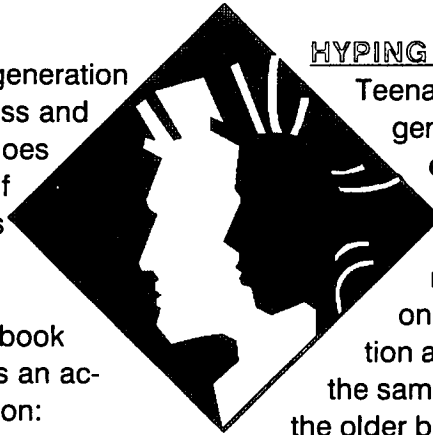
## *Renewing The Hope*

We have been told this "generation neXt" is angry, cynical, aimless and even hopeless. But what does this generation say about itself and most importantly, what is God's appraisal?

In George Barna's latest book Generation NeXt, he provides an accurate picture of this generation:

- Four out of five describe themselves as "excited about life"
- Three out of four say they are "trusting of other people"
- Three out of four claim to be "optimistic about the future"
- Two out of three see themselves as "a leader"
- Two out of three believe they are "physically attractive"
- Just over half (56 percent) contend that they are "religious"
- Two out of every five admit to being "stressed out"
- Only one out of every eight suggest they are "lonely"
- A mere 12 percent use the term "discouraged" to describe themselves

Does this sound like a profile of a group of losers and individuals who believe they possess little value, little hope and little joy? Hardly. From where, then, do we get all the media hype about a generation of disillusioned, hopeless, angry and depressed youth? The following paragraphs might help to paint a clearer picture.



### HYPING GENERATION X

Teenagers are part of the baby bust generation, which the media have enjoyed lampooning as the hapless, hopeless "Generation X." The truth of the matter is that teenagers are only a small part of that generation and do not necessarily reflect the same thoughts and behaviors as the older busters.

### PRE-TRANSITION PERIOD

A transition period seems to take place between the ages of 18 and 25. During which teens experience some of the freedoms they have desired for so long, and their idealism and hope fades.

Jobs are less fun and less lucrative than expected. Church attendance becomes a practice of the past, diminishing the significance of religion. As yesterday's teens have shifted into the independent adult role, we have watched their attitudes and lifestyles take a pessimistic turn.

### OUTSIDE INTERPRETATIONS

The behaviors and words of teens are interpreted by adults within the prevailing cultural context. Those interpretations by others, rather than the actual self-views of teens or their true motivations, serve as the description of the teen population.

### VALUES IN MOTION

The value and leisure preferences of teens are ever changing. Many social analysts

continue to characterize teens in light of traditional expectations and lifestyles, rather than in the prevailing context. This results in teenagers being cast as valueless, lazy and unsupportive of family. In reality, they are not valueless, because the absence of values is impossible. Teenagers today simply have more fluid, less influential values. Their values seem unorthodox compared to those of the builder and senior generations, but they are values nevertheless.

Psychologists tell us that happiness is a state of mind rather than a state of being. This generation may have unconsciously discovered and embraced this principle. If they believe they can cope, then they can cope. If they believe in themselves, then they have worth. If they contend that they can make the world a better place to live, then they are more likely to create the better place. (Barna, 38-40)

How does God empower this generation? The WORD which GOD has written on the heart of every person is HOPE! The book of ACTS powerfully demonstrates the ministry of Jesus being extended! What Peter said to the lame man (Acts 3:6) extends a high level of hope and realized promise to future generations—"SUCH AS I HAVE, GIVE I THEE."

When a teenager's family involves the teen in church attendance, praying together, Bible reading and faith discussions, the teens are more likely to be optimistic about the future, volunteer to help the needy, want to make a difference with their lives, and engage in every form of religious activity. They are less likely than youth who do not attend church to steal, view pornography, use drugs, have sexual intercourse, get drunk and define the purpose of life as enjoyment and personal fulfillment. (Barna 70)

As Spring approaches, take an inventory and RENEW THE HOPE IN GOD in ourselves and this "Generation X." Our call is to make the possible practical. *"That the generation to come might know..."* Psalms 78:6

**Rick Wulfestieg**, National Minister of Christian Education

Excerpts taken from Barna, George. Generation Next, @1995 Regal Books. Used with permission.



"God has been so good to me, honey..." were the words of Margie Murphy as she reminisced about her years of teaching.

Recently, the Modesto Foursquare Church honored Sister Murphy and presented her with a plaque for her faithful service to her Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Margie Murphy recalls teaching her own children with flannel figures and then moving on to a lay ministry in our congregation that lasted for 48 years.

Today, parents and grandparents still attend our congregation and are thankful for their Sunday school teacher, Sister Margie Murphy.



Submitted by Kenneth Swett,  
Senior Pastor, Modesto Foursquare Church.

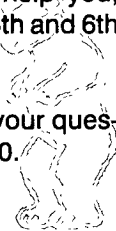


The profound and yet simple mission of the Good News Bears is to "Bring a child to Jesus and help that child take Jesus to their world," continues to break new ground in the inner city and rural areas of the United States and foreign fields.

We are currently in the ninth printing of the Leader's Manual. The new Spanish edition is being proofread and then it will be sent to the printer.

We are in the process of developing another full year of Fresh Waters, a teaching resource for the Good News Bears Club meetings. We also have many new resources that will help you, especially in the area of teaching the 5th and 6th grades.

We welcome your input as well as your questions. Please call (213)484-2400 X300.





# HOW TO PLAN A FAMILY CAMP

IN ONE WEEK OR LESS OF GOOD OLD-FASHIONED CAMPING,  
YOUR FAMILIES WILL NEVER BE THE SAME!

The room was dark and silent. Two figures stood on the stage. The music began, lights flickered, and the place erupted with laughter. My parents stood in front of an auditorium with tiny flashlights up their nostrils, turning them on and off to the tune of "Dueling Banjos." These were my role models!

Family "Talent" Night was always a highlight for our family of seven. Family camp was great because there was something for everyone. Sports, crafts, campfires, friends, and more. But what drew us together each was preparing for our skit. It was a time for everyone to participate with one goal—laughter. We wanted to bring down the house.

Now as my own son is getting old enough to memorize a few lines, I look forward to our family donning wigs and funny clothes as we make our way toward a rickety stage. Look out family camp. Here we come!

A fun, exciting element for everyone in family ministry is family camp. Family camp takes place in many shapes and forms. It moves from the mountains to back yards, and the ages range from babies to grandparents. Gathering to worship, study, praise, play, grow, sing, laugh, cry, work, and camp together can deeply impact a family.

If you are considering having a family camp, start planning well in advance. You may choose to attend an established camp with full programming or to plan and direct your own camp. Whatever your situation, consider these areas as you plan:



**1. Atmosphere** - Choose a camp setting that meets your needs. Talk to people who have attended the camp, and talk with the staff and directors. Is your potential camp on a lake, in the mountains, nestled in the wilderness, or more on the commercial side? Does it have a specific theme? Does it offer extra activities on-site or in the vicinity? Is it small, large, spread out, or compact? Does the camp setting complement what you hope to accomplish? Do you agree with that camp's mission statement?



**2. Staff** - Staffing is crucial to the total camp experience. Our leaders have so much influence on how people feel about being at camp. A spirit-led, energetic, creative staff is vital to the total camp experience. Families will grow through leaders who love the Lord.

Who will staff and lead your family camp? Will the camp staff offer all the programming you are looking for or will you provide it? In some camps the staff does everything. In other camps the staff does basic maintenance, reservation directing, cooking, and life guarding while you are responsible for providing programming. Which do you prefer?



**3. Theme** - What are you looking for in programming? Strong programming has goals, vision, and a plan for offering life-changing experiences for participants. Families will grow through drama, creative movement, arts and crafts, music, Scripture study, speakers, group sharing and discussion, active learning, games, books, videos, puppets, and clown ministry.

Tie all of your programming into one unifying theme. Suggested themes:

**Servant Camp** - Families serve others around the camp area through projects such as home renovation or building handicapped-accessible trails.

**Winter Adventure** - Families enjoy dog sledding and skiing or other types of adventures with mountain climbing and wilderness skills.

**Camp Allegro!** This is a vocal and instrumental camp with a final production featuring all the families.



**4. Cost** - How much can your families spend? Maybe a tent and trailer-camping site is best for your family camp—or maybe someone's lake home or country property. You could also consider holding your camp on your church property, at a community facility, or at someone's home.

Be creative in budgeting and setting fees for camp so that costs will be covered while still allowing an attractive and affordable time for families. Many churches offer "camperships" to help families who need financial aid. Also, it's helpful and fun to have fundraisers to help families raise monies.



**5. Length of Camp** - A family camp can take place over a variety of time schedules. Consider one week, weekend, 10 days, and overnight, a whole summer, or one month. Your choice of camp duration depends on the camp location, the time of year, and the length of time families are willing to spend. Families vary in their interests, so it may be necessary to consider several camping experiences running during a variety of time frames.



**6. Advertising** - Get the word out early enough for families to arrange their work, child-care, and vacation schedules. Begin with an announcement of the camp dates, location, and fees. Then market your family camp so families will not want to miss it! Invite families personally. Use your local cable-TV network to advertise your camp. At church-group gatherings, have families speak and promote the camping program and encouraging others to join them.

Family camp is exciting and fun—it's inspiring and filled with discoveries! Bond together in planning, preparing, and praying for your families' journey of spending time together in camping. Gather around a campfire in song, hike together, study Scripture, tie-dye a shirt, praise God, and build incredible memories that will last a lifetime!

To receive a list of 65 camps in the united States, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Camping Out, CHILDREN'S MINISTRY Magazine, P. O. Box 481, Loveland, CO 80539.

Excerpted from Lennartson, Sue "How to Plan a Family Camp" Children's Ministry Magazine ©Group Publishing May/June 1995

# Vacation Bible School

Contact Foursquare Publications for more information. (213) 484-2400 ext. 300 or 307



Gospel Light's  
**KINGDOM OF THE SON**  
The Lord's Prayer

1. Our Father in Heaven:  
The Lord's Prayer
2. Our Daily Bread:  
Jesus Feeds the 5,000
3. Forgive Us Our Debts:  
The Unforgiving Servant
4. Lead Us Not into Temptation:  
Jesus Is Tempted
5. The Kingdom, the Power and  
The Glory:  
Jesus Overcomes Death



Radiant Life's  
Life Call 9-1-1  
God To The Rescue - S.A.V.E.D.

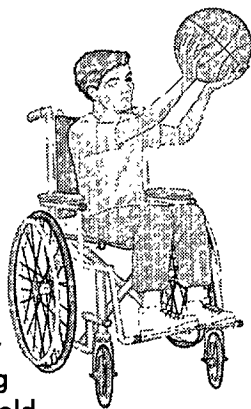
1. Saved From **SIN**: We are trapped in a prison of sin and need Jesus to rescue us.
2. Saved From **AFFLICTION**: Jesus has power to heal.
3. Saved From **VIOLENCE**: Trust in God's power to deliver us from even the most difficult circumstances.
4. Saved From The **ELEMENTS**: Have faith in Jesus to protect us from dangers in nature.
5. Saved From **DEATH**: Those who have Jesus living in them need not fear death.



Group's  
**Bible Ship**  
Anchoring Kids in God's Love

1. Noah's Floating Zoo:  
God loves us
2. Jonah Gets a Second Chance:  
God loves and forgives us
3. Jesus and the Sudden Storm:  
God loves us and takes care of us
4. Jesus' Death and Resurrection:  
God loves us and sent His son,  
Jesus
5. Gone Fishin'—for People:  
God loves us and wants us to  
share His love.

# Kids With Disabilities



When a boy's arms are paralyzed, how does he "raise his hand" in Sunday school? How does he manage eating lunch at a church picnic when he can't hold his Kool-Aid or squirt mustard on his hot dog? Crowded Sunday school rooms and events are challenging enough for any child, but set that kid in a wheelchair, and even the ordinary challenges of a kids' play seem insurmountable.

## Jesus and Kids with Disabilities

A casual glance through the gospels will convince anyone how much Jesus loves children. When he said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." I'm certain he didn't utter those words in a pious, standoffish way. Rather, I imagine him bouncing little boys on his knee, tousling girls' hair, or kicking a ball with kids. I'm sure he felt a sting in his heart when he saw a child abused, ignored, or neglected.

If this shows His compassion for strong and healthy boys and girls, oh, how his heart must have been moved when He saw a disabled child! Of course, we know that Jesus healed many children, but there were many more who never experienced freedom from being blind, deaf, epileptic, mentally retarded, or paralyzed. Yes, Jesus loves the little children, but especially children who are gripped with a disability.

When we pray for a child with a disability, we wrestle not against the flesh and blood of cystic fibrosis or muscular dystrophy. We wrestle against powers and principalities that would relish nothing more than to keep that child in despair. That's why we must pray for them with Christ's heart for the disabled child.

## Understanding Needs

The disability creates the context for the gospel to be shared. It's impossible to declare Christ's love to a disabled child without also addressing in some way the child's physical needs.

**"Perfect love casts out fear"** - Never is this advice more true than in reaching out to a child with a disability. Learn to look past a child's physical appearance -- the twisted smile and drool of a little boy with cerebral palsy or the bulky metal of the oversized wheelchair of a little girl with a spina bifida. Look into their eyes and communicate the love of Christ with your smile. Kneel down to the child's level. Use age-appropriate language, not

"baby talk". Talk to the child about hobbies, pets, vacation memories, and school. At some point later on, you will have paved the way to ask a sensitive question.

**Use appropriate terminology** - Avoid words such as "physically challenged" or "motion-impaired." Such trendy labels can communicate a sterile attitude that avoids the obvious realities of a physical disability.

**Develop ministries to families** - Most families struggle with financial strain, social isolation, lack of information, and the burden of the day-to-day routine. When I talk to mothers who have a child with a disability, I most often hear, "I am so tired." Think of ways you can help. Depending on your level of commitment, offer to learn the child's routine so you or a church member can baby-sit. Run errands or pick up groceries. Such compassionate actions will win you the right to enter a deeper level of friendship with the disabled child.

**Make church accessible** - Access is the key word -- not only in the rooms and worship center, but also in programs and fellowship activities. If a child is in a wheelchair, a ramp may need to be hammered together out of wood. Or suggest that your church pour a permanent concrete ramp that will say to all disabled people, "You are welcome here".

**Assign helpers to children** - If a child is learning disabled, autistic, or mentally retarded, church programs can be made more accessible if he is assigned a helper - a secure and sensitive peer who can assist with navigating the church campus, turning pages, writing, cutting, or pasting Sunday school materials. Train peers in how to help a disabled friend. Once children complete the training, they receive a special license to help out.

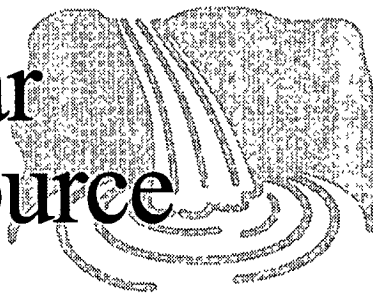
**Request information** - If a disabled child is starting Sunday school, get information or health care concerns from the parents and then alert teachers. Arrange an informal meeting between you, the parent, and the child's Sunday school teacher to discuss potential problem areas and to explore solutions. Keep the communication open, honest, and yet sensitive between parents and Sunday school teachers.

Yes, you have a lot to share with children who have a disability—little boys who are blind can see the Light, girls who are deaf can hear the Word, and even children with Down's syndrome can have the mind of Christ. You can give them HOPE.

For more information contact: JAF Ministries, P. O. Box 3333, Agoura Hills, CA 91301 or call (818) 707-5664.

Excerpted from Tada, Joni Earkson. "Developing a Ministry to Kids With Disabilities" *Children's Ministry Magazine* ©Group Publishing September/October 1995: 31-32. Used with permission.

# Drawing Near the Power Source



**W**e huddled in our yellow slickers, while a deafening roar engulfed us, shaking the earth like Jack-in-the-Beanstalk's angry giant. What a foolish thing to do...in a flash we could be sucked under and swallowed live!

Our boatload of petrified gawkers inched toward the rocket-like thrust produced by six million gallons of water a minute bursting over the falls. We felt awe-struck in the presence of such raw power. For decades Niagara's Maid of the Mist has shuttled tourists safely to the brink of disaster for the sheer terror of being close to the source of power. None who venture there ever forget the experience.

Prayer should be like that—drawing near to the source of indescribable power. It is being dwarfed by realizing how small and vulnerable we are in life's grand scheme. It is an exhilarating encounter with Almighty God.

If you are not a faithful pray-er, accept the challenge to try an experiment in prayer for an entire month. Step out in faith by committing yourself to an extended daily season in prayer. Be ruthlessly faithful and see what happens!

Come to the Source and discover the power of God's presence. Come to the Source and abide. A boatload is headed out right now. Don your yellow slicker and join those who are venturing by faith into the power of God's presence through the mystery of prayer.

Nees, Larry. "Drawing Near the Power Source." Dallas Theological Seminary Kindred Spirit Spring, 1995. 13-14. Used with permission.

## Special Convention Workshop!

On Thursday, April 25, 1996 at 2:30 p.m., an informal dialogue session will be held featuring the renowned authors, Dolores Hayford, Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo, and Wes Haystead. This will be a special time for church leaders to discover new ways to empower their church families.

There will also be a book signing session with Dolores Hayford. She will be signing copies of her new family devotional, "As For Me and My House," based on the Ten Commandments.

This book retails at \$14.99 but Four-square Publications is offering the book at \$9.99! Order through Four-square Publications or purchase it at the National Church Office booth at the International Convention.

To order call: 1(800)992-7444

U.S. News and World Report, in polling Americans about their spiritual lives, asked them: "What best describes your beliefs about God?"

- 76 Percent said God is a heavenly father who can be reached by prayer.
- 11 percent said God is an idea, not a being.
- 8 percent said God is an impersonal creator.

Clearly, according to this poll, Americans believe in prayer. Certainly Christians do. Yet the average believer spends less than two minutes a day in prayer. The average pastor fares little better. We believe in prayer, but we don't pray.

### What Prayer is not:

- Prayer is not an occasional tourist excursion to the source of power.
- Prayer is not a New Age feeling of oneness with Mother Earth.
- Prayer is not a grocery list of "gimmies."
- Prayer is not an alternative to action.

### What Prayer is:

- Prayer is abiding.
- Prayer is intimacy with the Father.
- Prayer is a personal relationship with the Savior.
- Prayer is a warm embrace with God.

## Idea Share

Do you have a super idea that has worked well for your church? We would love to share it with others.

The ideas can include after school or club programs, Sunday school, VBS and outreach. The ages should include preschool, children, youth, adults or senior adults.

Please submit the activity or idea and try to send a clear snapshot if appropriate to:

Department of Christian Education  
 IDEA SHARE  
 P. O. Box 26902  
 Los Angeles, CA 90026-0176