

## PREPARE YOUR TEENAGERS FOR LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Making the transition to college (or the world of full-time work) is a major step not only for young people but also for their parents. It's what many people view as the "end" of their major parenting duties. But in fact, your kids need you now more than ever. As high school seniors start to grasp their move to adulthood, many feel compelled to re-engage their parents in meaningful ways—though they rarely admit it.

Parents can use this brief window of opportunity to strengthen their relationship with their teenagers and also to help their teenagers strengthen their relationship with God. Ideas for doing this include:

- Spend one-on-one time with your soon-to-be-graduate, possibly at a retreat-like setting. Make fun memories, share a meal, and engage in discussions about life beyond high school.
- Embrace the emerging adult lurking inside your teenager. Begin talking to him or her more as an "equal," sharing your own stories of stepping out into the real world.
- Connect your kids with thriving college-age adults. Seek your youth minister's help to provide positive examples and mentors.

## TIPS >>>

### Dare 2 Share founder Greg Stier suggests ways you can prepare to help kids "keep the faith" in college:

- Wake up! Be aware of the statistics, which show that up to 50% of evangelical college freshman forsake their faith by their senior year of college.
- Prepare! Make sure your teenagers know *what* they believe, *why* they believe, and *that* they believe. Train them to know and live the core truths of Christianity.
- Discuss! Sign your kids up for Soul Fuel at [www.dare2share.org](http://www.dare2share.org). These free training devotions deal with Christian basics in a powerful, relevant way. You can discuss them together each week.
- Talk! Have conversations with your teenagers about the temptations that await them. If you suspect your kids won't be able to withstand the onslaught, consider sending them to a solid Christian college. The odds go way up for long-term commitment to Jesus in a thriving Christian setting.

## THE VIEW

- Although estimates of faith abandonment by college students run as high as 94%, some researchers show otherwise. They say college attendance can actually *prevent* young people from losing their faith. According to one study, 86% of college students retain their religious affiliation.

(University of Texas, Austin)

- Attendance at religious services decreases dramatically between the freshmen and junior years in college, yet older students consider themselves to be more "spiritual."

(UCLA Higher Education Research Institute)

## FOR DISCUSSION

- What aspects of college life are you most excited about, and why? What aspects are you the most hesitant about, and why?
- What do you expect it will be like to be a Christian at your college? How easy or difficult do you think it will be to express—and grow—your faith?
- Do you think it will be safest to hang out with only Christians on campus? How can you witness to non-Christians without being influenced by them?
- How do you think your faith will help you face the challenges of college life? What steps can you take now to help keep your faith strong?



# GOING DEEPER

Expert Insights for Parents of Teenagers

By Chuck Bomar

**At SimplyYouthMinistry.com, author and pastor Chuck Bomar explores ways that young people can connect at college:**

College-age kids are about to enter some new struggles. This next stage can be tough and lonely. Getting involved in a campus ministry is key not only for making it through but also for possibly helping young people dodge obstacles and challenges.

Many great Christian campus ministries are active on college campuses. Here are some thoughts on them that are worth exploring:

- They provide a community of friends that can be very healthy. These people can serve as a great source of accountability and connection. Some could become best friends with your kids.
- They offer exposure to people who have completely different church and family backgrounds and who view things entirely differently from your student. Kids are forced to think through why they believe what they believe—possibly for the first time.
- Most of these ministries have a mission on campus. This is great because college students often tend to lose their sense of mission. They'll be focused on themselves, homework, and social activities and can easily lose sight of the fact that people need to know what they know—the gospel. So ministries can really encourage young people to stay strong.

When God places young people on a college campus, they should embrace the experience with everything they have. Encourage your teenagers to get involved, meet people, and make waves for Christ.

## RESOURCE



This three-book graduation gift set, available from Simply Youth Ministry, helps young people explore their beliefs and prepare for the challenges and opportunities of college life.

## BIBLE FOCUS

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

**Jeremiah 29:11**

# MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

## MAINSTREAM MUSIC



### BEASTIE BOYS

**Background:** This 25-year-old hip-hop band shows no sign of slowing down. Influential and successful, they've won numerous accolades. Recently, they've supported a free Tibet. Although the band's subject matter has matured, they use course language to get points across.

**Albums:** *Hot Sauce Committee Part 2* (2011), *To the 5 Boroughs* (2004), *Ill Communication* (1994)

**What Beastie Boys Says:** “[We’re] caught up in all these ideas that having a lot of money or having somebody beautiful to have sex with or having some cool objects...[will] make us happy,” says founding member Adam Yauch. “[But] ...compassion or altruism actually brings a person happiness.”

**Discussion Questions:** Why don't the world's sources of happiness always succeed? What makes you happy, and why? Read Matthew 5:1-10. How is Jesus' idea of happiness different from the world's? How might Jesus' concepts of happiness change your life? What is the source of true happiness?

## CHRISTIAN MUSIC



### AS I LAY DYING

**Background:** Despite the niche style of this metalcore band, their fourth album reached #8 on the Billboard 200 and #1 on the Top Rock chart. All the members are Christians, and their crossover success lets them share their faith.

**Albums:** *The Powerless Rise* (2010), *An Ocean Between Us* (2007), *Shadows Are Security* (2005)

**What As I Lay Dying Says:** “We don't really call ourselves a Christian band,” says drummer Jordan Mancino. “We're musicians who happen to be Christian. Obviously, being Christian is the main focus of our lives.”

**Discussion Questions:** Do you prefer to listen to “Christian” bands? Why or why not? If people don't broadcast their faith, are they hiding from it? Explain. Read Mark 8:34-38. Is being a Christian the main focus of your life? Why or why not? What are some natural ways to show your faith?

## MOVIE



**Movie:** *Thor*

**Genre:** Action-Adventure

**Rating:** PG-13

**Synopsis:** When the son of the king of gods is forced to come to earth as a man, he learns the meaning of “hero.”

**Discussion Questions:** Thor was forced to come to earth and become a mortal; did Jesus have a choice to become a man? Why would someone give up that position of authority and humble himself? What makes someone a hero? Can you be scared and still be a hero? Explain. Read John 3:16. What was heroic about Jesus coming to earth?

For more media discussions and ideas, go to [www.MinistryandMedia.com](http://www.MinistryandMedia.com).

## VIDEO GAME



**L.A. Noire**— In this multiplatform game from Rockstar Games—maker of the infamous “Grand Theft Auto” series—you're a police officer in 1940s Los Angeles, trying to solve a series of murders. This is a change from a company that usually has you playing a bad guy who murders people. Players interview subjects and inspect crime scenes as they piece together the puzzle of these murders. The game uses groundbreaking technology to capture every aspect of the actors playing the characters.

Rated: M for Mature.