

CULTURE SHOCK

A GUIDE FOR LEADERS

IGNITING AN INTEGRITY
AND PURITY REVOLUTION

BY GENERATIONS OF VIRTUE

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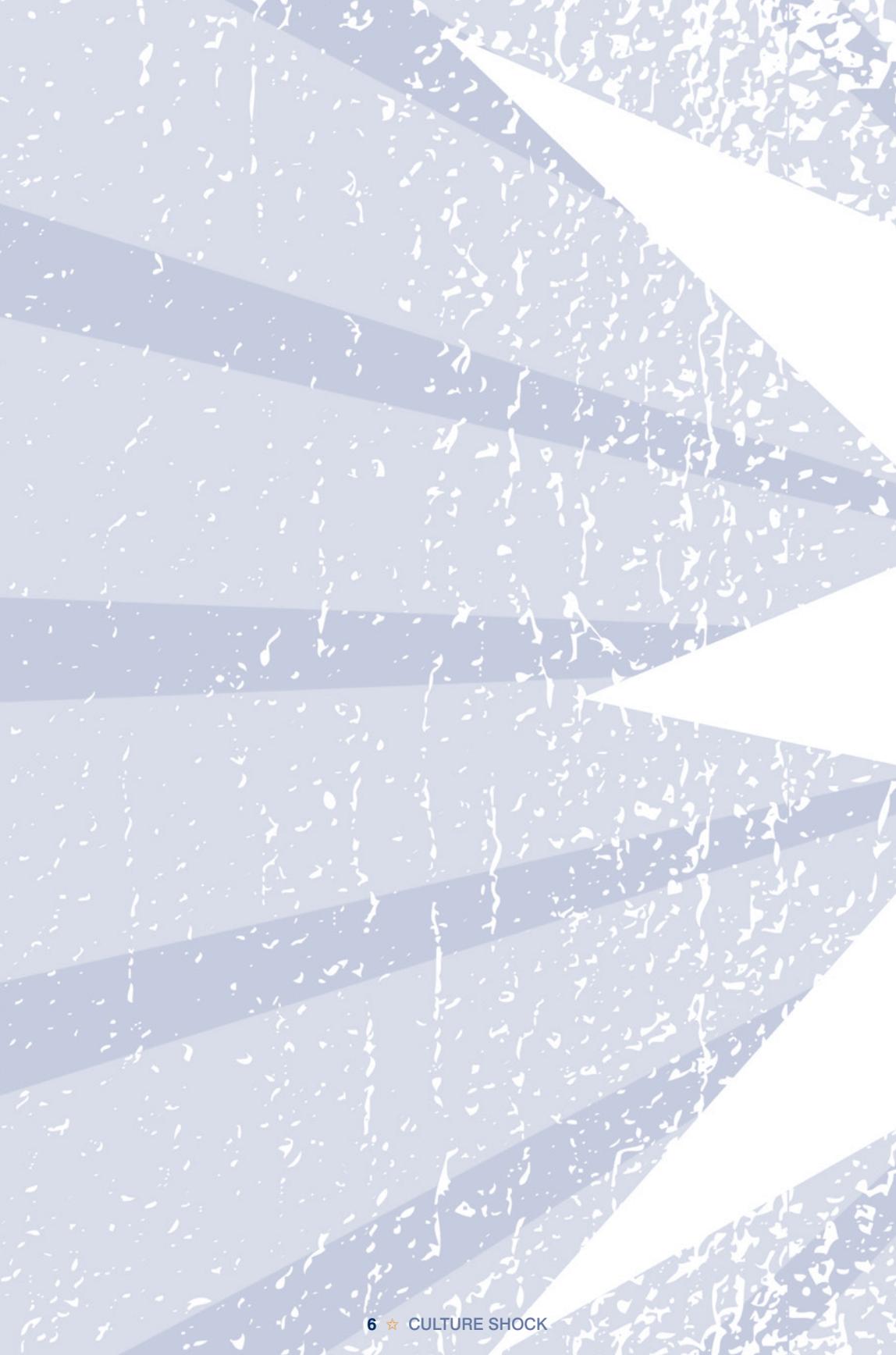


CALLING ALL LEADERS



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CINDERELLA LIED, SUPERMAN DIED

HOW MEDIA HAS SHAPED YOUR CHARACTER AND WHY IT MATTERS NOW

YOU ARE HERE

Welcome to the first Culture Shock session! We've designed this session to help your teens see the lies that they often believe, especially regarding media. Teens consume such an incredible amount of media every day that it has become the main influence for their beliefs on love, sex, and relationships—instead of God's Word. We're passionate about helping teens see where they have believed the lies of the enemy so that they can break free from those destructive influences. When they've done that, they can walk boldly in the freedom that Christ has to offer.

Before you dive into this session, take some time to

- ★ **READ**—Read through the session, of course, but also spend time in the Scriptures that are suggested throughout. The main passages to be used are: Matthew 6:24 and Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 4:8, 9; 1 Corinthians 13; Matthew 26:6-16; and Luke 14:11. Read the surrounding verses or chapters of these passages so you are aware of the context.
- ★ **WATCH**—In the time leading up to your session or event, watch out for specific examples in television shows, advertising, movies, video games, magazines, online content and elsewhere for lies that are aimed at teens. Having these examples fresh in your mind may be helpful as you lead your group.
- ★ **PRAY**—Ask God for wisdom for yourself and your fellow leaders. Pray for humility and patience as you lead discussions with your teens. Pray for specific girls and guys you know who need to hear this message.

BREAKING IT DOWN

For camps and weekend retreats, it's possible to complete this session in one day. For large groups and small groups, "Cinderella Lied, Superman Died" is an extensive session that could fill several weeks of meetings instead of just one. Here are some breakdown options for your large or small group:

1. Use this as a longer event by breaking into three sessions:

★ **Session One: Two Truths and a Lie activity and two movie clips, with discussion questions**

★ **Session Three: Wrapped in Lies and the lie notecards**

★ **Session Two: Four movie clips with discussion questions**

2. Break into two sessions:

★ **Session One: Two Truths and a Lie and three movie clips, with discussion questions**

★ **Session Two: Three movie clips with discussion questions, Wrapped in Lies activity, and the lie note cards**

3. Use this as a one-session event by adjusting the movie clips and discussion questions to fit your time.

THE MAIN EVENT

Once you've decided how you are going to organize your sessions, prepared yourself and your team, gathered your teens, and given it all over to God, you're ready to help ignite an integrity and purity revolution!

SEND THIS MESSAGE

Make this loud and clear to your students from the start:

★ **This generation has a calling and destiny that is amazing! You are a piece in the puzzle and fill a spot no one else can fill.**

★ **How are you going to reach your God-given destiny? How are you going to change the world? You have to start where it counts: Identify and overcome lies you believe that hold you back from fulfilling your calling in Christ.**

LEADER TIP

If your group isn't very interactive, or if your students are just getting to know each other, have team leaders sit with microphones (if needed) in different spots in the audience. The leaders can go through the activities from their seats as opposed to the stage, providing a more comfortable, approachable environment.

OPEN UP

Here's a suggestion for opening the session with prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for this opportunity to learn from you and help one another. We ask that you would meet us here and cause us to grow and change to become more like your Son. Jesus, we ask that your presence would stop any distractions that might keep anyone here from coming closer to you. We thank you for all that you are going to accomplish with this event. In Jesus' name, amen.

ACTIVITY: TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

Have each of your leaders share three brief statements—facts or events—from his or her life. All three should be things that others might find to be unbelievable about that person. Two of these points will be true and one will be false.

Let your students have the opportunity to vote for the point they think is false. Make sure to say all three of the points first and then repeat them before the teens vote.

Then as each point is said again, the students can stand up after they hear the point they believe to be false. Allow time for each leader to reveal his or her truths, and if there is a cool story behind the true statements, take a moment to tell it!

Goal: To show how easy it is to tell and believe lies, whether those lies come through relationships or the media.

Here are some (real-life) examples of Two Truths and a Lie:

Tim

1. I love to sword fight.
2. I was born premature, and without a butt.
3. I was in the army for four years.

Isaac

1. I'm part Indian.
2. I LOVE singing country music as loud as I can in the shower.
3. I once kissed a cat.

LEADER TIP

A great option if you can prep some of your more mature students beforehand: allow students to do this as well. Let one or two share their three points after the leaders. Keep the pace moving, but it's always fun to engage students with one another.

LEADER TIP

Be sure your leaders switch up the order in which they place their truths and lies so it's more difficult for the teens to guess. For instance, one leader should order the statements as truth, lie, truth. Another, lie, truth, truth.



FOR SMALL GROUPS

Everyone in your group can think of two things that are true about themselves and one that is a lie. One by one, let each student share with the group, and see if the others can guess the lies.



FOR WEEKEND RETREATS

If there's time, have the students get into small groups and try this activity out on each other! Be sure to mix up the usual groups of teens. They tend to travel in packs (as any youth leader knows!), so make it a goal to get them to hang out with other people in the youth group.



FOR CAMPS

Before your students arrive for a main session, let them do Two Truths and a Lie in their cabins with their camp counselors. It's a great settling-in game or an over-the-dinner-table game. Either way, it's a fantastic icebreaker.

Then, in a main session, allow time for all the camp counselors who will be speaking that week to stand up and go through this activity. The students will be familiar with it from having done it in their cabins or at their first meal.

ACTIVITY: LIES WE BELIEVE

To introduce the next section, a team member can describe a lie he or she believed. This can be a serious lie, such as, "I believed there were no consequences for my sexual actions," or a more light-hearted approach. After the person talks about the lie, they can share some of the Key Points About Lies (see list below) and, if time allows, ask for suggestions from the group of other common lies people believe.

Goal: To make the teens you work with feel more comfortable with revealing their experiences and also to start helping them identify the most common lies that they believe. They may be lies like "If I just had what I wanted, I'd be happy" or "If I'm not sleeping with someone, then I'm not loved or accepted." See a whole list of Sample Lies below.

The following is an example from our team:

From Kelsey: "I had a slight problem in high school with always wanting to look good. You know how it is, always trying to look perfect, to be the best. One day I decided that my sister's jeans would be the perfect way to get attention. Now keep in mind, my sister is about three sizes smaller than me. Well, I somehow managed to squeeze into the jeans and kept it together all day . . . until choir practice. When our director instructed all the students to sit down on the bleachers, my pants split from waist to ankle! Thank God it was an all-girls choir! After the embarrassment wore off, the Lord used that example to show me how I had wrongly pursued worship for myself and drawing attention to myself instead of where it rightly belongs, on Christ."

KEY POINTS ABOUT LIES

While most of us were taught not to tell lies, many of us were never taught not to *believe* lies.

- ★ **The enemy thrives on lies because getting you to believe lies will keep you from your calling.**
- ★ **In John 8:44, Jesus said to the Jews who were looking to kill him: "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."**
- ★ **Lies have a way of building on each other, creating something like a pyramid. These pyramids can get so big that we can't see the truth anymore. Lies can be blinding, but the blindness may happen slowly, over a long time.**
- ★ **In Isaiah 28, the people in power did not want to listen to God. They boasted (v. 15): "We have entered into a covenant with death. . . . We have made a lie our refuge and falsehood our hiding place." The last place we want to be is in a refuge of lies.**
- ★ **The only way to see the truth, versus a lie, is through the Word of God, because God's Word is absolute truth. "Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).**

YOUR VIEW

Write down your own notes here about points you want to remember for your group's event.

SAMPLE LIES TO TALK ABOUT

- It's too hard to serve God.
- I can't fulfill my calling.
- Celebrities have the best lives—and I'm stuck here.
- It is no big deal if I sleep with my girlfriend.
- It's totally OK to be gay.
- My parents don't love me.
- "Friends with benefits" is what everybody is doing—it's OK as long as both people agree.
- If I was drunk when it happened, it doesn't count.
- Oral sex isn't really sex.
- We love each other, so sex is totally all right.
- I'd be sooo happy if I was just with _____ (insert latest/greatest celebrity, or the most popular guy/girl in school).
- It doesn't matter what I do now; I can always ask for forgiveness later.
- It doesn't matter what I do as long as no one gets hurt.
- Nobody would miss me if I was gone.

YOUR VIEW

Write down specific examples of lies the enemy wants members of your group to believe.

KEY QUESTIONS AND SCRIPTURES TO SHARE

★ **Have you ever felt like you just didn't know what was true and what was not? It is critical to guard our minds against the lies of the enemy. How do you do that? Philippians 4:6-8 might give you a clue:**

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

★ **Romans 1:21-25 (check it out below) talks about exchanging the truth of God for a lie. In what ways have you seen people you know or society in general do that very thing?**

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised.

★ **Do you know how you are being lied to? Worldly wisdom would have you believe that a counterfeit version of the truth is far greater than what God has designed for you. Remember the deceptive words of the serpent? “You won’t die. God knows that the**

moment you eat from that tree, you’ll see what’s really going on. You’ll be just like God . . .” (Genesis 3:4, 5, *The Message*). Take time this week to seek God’s wisdom about how you are being lied to—even in the little ways.

AT THE MOVIES

We’ve always considered movie clips an integral part of these Culture Shock sessions. The fun part is that you can pick and choose which clips best fit your needs and ages. Let’s say you’re really wanting to address dating and relationships; you can choose movie clips that expose lies of the enemy about love and romance. Maybe materialism is a big problem with your teens; you can choose clips that will help your kids see that money isn’t everything. Your options are endless! Mix the clips up to keep things fun and fresh with your students.

For this session, jump on a website that will enable you to legally download relatively inexpensive, legitimate film clips. (We’ve always found WingClips—www.wingclips.com—to be a great service.) Caution: Use discretion when choosing movie clips, because although a single clip can be appropriate, sometimes an entire movie is not, and you don’t want to give your teens the impression that a whole movie is OK for them to watch just because their leader showed a clip from it.

This session works best if a leader emcees the movie clips. One effective method is to make it something like a movie review show, where two team members bounce key points off of each other (star rating system not required, though it could be fun!). The team members relate the Key Discussion Points after each clip.

Or simply show the clip and then lead a freewheeling discussion with your teens about the scene, exposing the lies contained within it.

After each suggested movie clip we’ve included here, there are discussion questions that can be used whether you’re in large groups, small groups, or at a weekend retreat or a camp session (for whole groups). We’ve also added questions specifically for guys-only and girls-only groups. If you want to break into guy and girl groups, explain to the whole group beforehand how that will happen, who will go where, and so forth.

The clips that follow, of course, are only suggestions. You can choose your own movie clips, key points, and discussions questions. Go for it—be creative!

LEADER TIP

If you have the option, break out the popcorn during the movie clips! Snacks are almost always a good idea.

GOALS

Before starting, challenge your students to:

1. Discern the objective of the makers and producers of the film. Every producer, director, actor, and scriptwriter has an objective. There's a message they're trying to convey through their movie, and that message isn't always good.
2. Ask themselves, whenever they consume any kind of media: What message is coming through? Is it *helpful* to me, in my relationship with God and with others? Is it pushing me forward or pulling me back?

LEADER TIP

Teens love it when you get into it. If you have the ability, convert your meeting room, sanctuary, living room, cabin—or wherever you're meeting—into a movie-themed area. Get movie posters and pass out tickets for the event. Use stadium seating to make it feel like a real movie theater. Are your kids planning a summer mission trip? Use the opportunity to sell popcorn, candy, and drinks as a fundraiser.



MOVIE CLIP: *Robots* (2005). Play the scene where the new boss is discussing the new slogan for the company. **THE MESSAGE:** “Why be you when you can be new?”

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- ★ **One message that comes across through this clip is “You aren’t good enough the way you are.”**
- ★ **Some people or companies will influence your thoughts about yourself any way they can in order to get you to buy their product.**
- ★ **Many people say, “It’s all about the money! Advertisers, movie-makers, and so forth only want you to buy what they are selling.” Sometimes it can be hard to tell what is true and what is just for sale.**
- ★ **The enemy will always lie to you and say, “You’ll be happy when you have this, that, and the other thing.” But true contentment is only found in Christ.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR ALL

1. The lie in this clip is pretty obvious: you're not good enough the way you are. What are some ways you've seen this message in your own life? What is true or false about it?
2. What ways do you go about finding out the truth? How do you tell if you're being told a lie?
3. If you're listening to *anyone* else's view of you besides God's, you will always end up being confused about who you really are. We need to get into the Word of God and find out what our true identity is. The Bible says, “For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). That's an incredibly powerful statement! So if our lives are hidden, how do we find our identity?



BEHIND THE SCENES: HAVE YOUR STUDENTS LOOK UP, READ, AND DISCUSS MATTHEW 6:24 AND EPHESIANS 2:10.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR GIRLS

(Make sure a female leader takes your girls through this discussion.)

1. How much does media affect your self-image? From your body shape to your complexion to the car you drive, the phone you have, and the clothes you wear, media has an input on all of these things. How do you deal with the pressure culture puts on you to be “perfect” or to be someone other than who you are?
2. The objective of marketing isn’t to make you want the product being sold. The objective is to make you feel like you *need* what’s being sold. Advertisers don’t come to you and simply say, “Hey, look at this really cool *new* product we have!” They often say, “Look at this cool, new product we have. If you still have the old one, that is so totally stupid. You need an upgrade. You need the best.” If you were honest with yourself, would you say that this kind of marketing message works on you? When are you most tempted to have the newest, latest, and greatest?
3. Did you know that if you fulfill the world’s expectations of you, you won’t fulfill God’s plan for your life? You can’t be both the world’s ideal and God’s girl. A lot of times during our teen years, we feel like we can have the best of both worlds. We can be a great Christian at church, and be the life of the party every other night of the week. Does church help us grow and change and learn? Absolutely! But only if we are going with a truly repentant heart, an open mind to the Lord, and a deep desire to change. Otherwise, we will continually fall back into the same patterns of sin. How can you keep focused on God’s plan for you? What do you think might happen if you lived out your faith in every area of your life?
4. Read this story from our team.

“I could have posed as the poster child for *Good Christian Girl Magazine* (if there ever was such a thing). Well, maybe not every night of the week, but certainly at youth group, Bible study, and church! I truly believed that as long as I maintained my “Christian” schedule, what I did the rest of the time didn’t really count. I figured that my good works would outweigh my mistakes and I would come out on top in the end. I desperately wanted to be just like the girls I saw on MTV, but just go for a little more Spirit and a little less cleavage around the Christian crowd. I allowed media to shape who I was, totally and completely. If I saw some superstar wearing an outfit in *People* magazine, I’d go get it. If I knew there was a new celebrity diet on the market, I’d try it too. It wasn’t until I gave up watching and reading and listening to all of the secular media that I had allowed to influence me that I was truly able to change. I had to let go of the world’s version of me in order to gain God’s perspective on my life and why I was created.”

Can you relate to this story? Why or why not? How have you allowed media to shape who you are, what you do, and what you view as valuable? What do you feel convicted to change?



BEHIND THE SCENES: DISCUSS MATTHEW 6:24.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR GUYS

(Make sure a male leader takes your guys through this discussion.)

1. From your body shape to your complexion to the car you drive, the phone you have, and the clothes you wear, media has an input on all of these things. How do you deal with the pressure culture puts on you to be “perfect” or to be someone other than who you are? How much is your self-worth tied into how well you perform? What’s wrong with that picture?
2. Marketers are smart. They don’t just tell you about a product, they make you feel like you *need* that product to get what you want. And what do you want? Well, they’ll tell you that too. Media messages shape what you think of as the “good life” and show you the way to get there. They may even try to convince you that the way to Heaven can be earned—through being the best athlete, or having the coolest stuff and the hottest girlfriend. They tell you that you *can* get satisfaction. But what do you think? Where can you find fulfillment?
3. Advertising can be really distracting. Trying to get the newest, latest, and greatest thing can be a never-ending quest. Be honest with yourself—how many times a day do you think you get distracted by media messages? What are three things you could do every day to keep your focus on God’s plan for you?
4. Read this story from our team.

“I spent years masking who I was from the church crowd. On Sunday mornings, I’d roll out of bed—hungover from the night before—show up at church to play in the worship band, and then leave early to have a Saturday-night repeat. It was a vicious cycle that kept me bound for most of my teen years. I never really thought anything of it, because everything I watched and listened to told me that my actions were totally fine. Over time, I began to believe what the shows said to me and what the songs sang to me was . . . truth. However, even when I had everything I thought I wanted, I still wasn’t happy. Something huge was missing in my life. I began realizing that although my mind kind of wanted God, my body wanted nothing to do with him. That strain and stress, having the knowledge of truth but no follow-through, began eating me up inside. It wasn’t until I was willing to acknowledge God as my Lord and Savior—not just over who I pretended to be, but who I really was—that things really changed in my life. I came to such a broken stage that I willingly gave up all of the trashy shows, songs, and movies to pursue an incredible relationship with my Lord. It was one of the best decisions I ever made.”

Can you relate to this story? Why or why not? How have you allowed media to shape who you are, what you do, and what you view as valuable? What do you feel convicted to change?



BEHIND THE SCENES: DISCUSS PHILIPPIANS 4:8, 9.



MOVIE CLIP: *A Cinderella Story* (2004). Play the batting practice scene.

THE MESSAGE: Virtual relationships are just as good as face-to-face ones.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- ★ **Lie: Virtual relationships are good enough. Talking and interacting with someone face-to-face is overrated.**
- ★ **Lie: You can really “know” someone as a person in the virtual world.**
- ★ **Lie: Love is a one-shot deal. If you don’t jump on the first relationship that comes along, you will miss out on love for the rest of your life. It’s now or never.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR ALL

1. Have you ever known someone who was one way face to face and completely different online or through texting? Can you see how you can use the Internet to become anyone you want to be versus who you actually are? When you’re online, do your profile and conversations reflect who you *really* are? In what ways are you pretending to be someone you’re not?
2. Let’s take a minute to talk about your text messages. Do they honor God? your parents? your pastor? If you were face to face with the person you were texting, would you still say the same things? How would your messages change if you knew they were all going to be posted on a big screen at church? Give examples.
3. There is an overwhelming lie in our culture that says, “You only have one shot at love!” But if you are following God’s commands and pursuing his purposes for your life, do you think he will just let your love life go under the radar and not care about what happens to your relationships? God cares about every detail of our lives, especially the people we choose to give our hearts to. The person that God has designed for you is crafted to fit you perfectly. If you are pursuing the life Jesus wants for you, he will bless your future love life exceedingly, abundantly—beyond what you could ever imagine! When you’re tempted to start writing your own love story, take a minute and just *slow down!* The person sitting next to you is probably NOT your future spouse. Pop a chill pill and wait for God’s timing! Are you willing to take a leap of faith and turn your love story over to God? What does that mean for you?



BEHIND THE SCENES: LOOK UP 1 CORINTHIANS 13. DISCUSS THE IDEA OF LOVE BEING PATIENT. OFTEN WE FEEL THE PRESSURE OF THE MEDIA MESSAGE “I HAVE TO HAVE THIS NOW!” IT’S TOUGH TO COUNTERACT THAT MESSAGE IN OUR OWN LIVES. IT IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTAND THAT REAL LOVE IS WILLING TO WAIT FOR GOD’S PERFECT TIMING.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR GIRLS

1. Have you ever noticed how easy it is to pour your heart out to a guy through media (texting, instant messaging, online social networks)? Have you ever said or sent anything from your phone that you now regret? Talk about that time.
2. Have your private messages ever been shown to people you never intended to see them? How did you respond? If it happened in the future, what would you do?
3. Consider this: What if your pastor was looking over your shoulder at every message you sent? Guess what—he is. His name is Jesus. Will this revelation change what you say through texts and online posts? Can you honestly say that your messages and posts honor God? What needs to change?
4. If you know how you shape your own image through text and online sites, what does this tell you about how much to trust the messages and images of others? What's the best way to tell fact from fiction in what people say or do?



BEHIND THE SCENES: MEMORIZE 1 PETER 4:5.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR GUYS

1. So by now you know that guys and girls are really different. But guys, listen up: did you know that when you're texting that girl out of pure boredom, or even to ask nicely how her exam went, she may take that totally differently? Here's a clue: girls overthink everything! Even though you totally don't mean it "like that" she'll take it "like that." In later events, we will talk more about how you can avoid leading a girl on, but for now, remember this: be careful who you are talking to and how often and what you are saying. She may take it totally differently than how you intended it. Has that ever happened to you? Have you ever led on a girl unintentionally? Talk about that time.
2. How do you make your intentions clear when casually chatting (in any form) with a girl? In the future, try this: if you're just friends, act like it. Make it clear. You're not being rude by saying, "Hey, just to make sure we're on the same page, I just want to be friends." Girls need to have clear boundaries from you so that there is no confusion. What are your boundaries in this area? Are you clear with them?
3. What do you think about your messages and online posts in general? Do they honor God? How would you feel if your sister or mother saw the way you talk to or about girls? How would you feel if someone spoke of or to your sister or mother in the same way? How might thinking this through change the way you text or shape your online image?
4. If you know how you shape your own image through text and online sites, what does this tell you about how much to trust the messages and images of others? What's the best way to tell fact from fiction in what people say or do?



BEHIND THE SCENES: MEMORIZE 1 TIMOTHY 6:11.



MOVIE CLIP: *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (2005). Play the Turkish Delight scene with Edmund and the White Witch on her carriage.

THE MESSAGE: The enemy will often tempt us by giving us a little bit of what we want (in Edmund's case, it was power and control) in order to enslave us to him forever. This happens with every kind of sin. Anything from power to worship to lust to greed—Satan has a way of giving us what we think we want, and then before we know it, we're held captive to him.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- ★ **For a time, Edmund believed that life was all about him and his desires. His drive was simple: glorify self, me, my, mine—who cares what anyone else needs or wants?**
- ★ **We have to realize that if we allow selfishness to rule in our lives, it will drive us to turn our backs on everything we know and love just to get what we think we want.**
- ★ **The enemy will almost always make it a point to give you just a little taste of what you want, just to get you hungry for more, to drive you to sin. This clip is a fantastic example of this. When the White Witch sees Edmund, she finds out his desire, gives him a sampling of his favorite treat, then promises him she has rooms full of it in her palace. She feeds his lust for more.**
- ★ **Another great example of a selfish life is that of the disciple Judas Iscariot. Judas managed the finances for Team Jesus. Everything seemed fine until later in the story when we learn that Judas was actually stealing from the treasury (so he was stealing from Christ himself). The Pharisees (the religious leaders in Jesus' time) wanted to get rid of Christ and convinced Judas to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Different sources translate that amount of money into different things, but one thing is certain—such an amount could not have been worth a human life, and definitely not worth the life of our Lord. Imagine coming to a place of such envy and selfishness that you would willingly betray the Savior of the world. It is an incredible and terrifying thought. What is even more concerning is the realization that if we allow the same motivations into our lives, we too could do outrageous and horrible things in order to get what we think we want.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR ALL

1. We may look at Edmund and think "I'd never do that!" But do you gossip and backbite against one another? Do you aim to make yourself number one and put other people down? That may not be as extreme as what Edmund did, but it is betrayal all the same. Has your greed ever driven you to trample on someone else's feelings?

2. Guarding our heart against selfishness can be a really tough thing to do. We will talk more about this concept during the event “Escaping Normal.” But for now, can you identify any area where you have been self-seeking instead of Christ-seeking? Talk about that.

3. How can these areas be changed in your life? What are some easy things you can do to change your selfish desires into Christ-driven desires?



BEHIND THE SCENES: LOOK UP MATTHEW 26:6-16. CONTRAST THE TWO STORIES IN THIS PASSAGE AND DISCUSS.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR GIRLS

1. For a few painful moments, think of yourself as Edmund. Actually, most of us have a lot more in common with him than we'd like to admit. Can you think of any similarities?

2. Can you see how Edmund had believed the lie that he was the special one and that he ought to be higher than those around him? Have you ever felt a similar desire to be thought of above others? What did that desire lead you to do?

3. Edmund's seemingly innocent desire for a tasty treat led him to desire even grander things, more than he needed or deserved to have. Has your indulgence in a small desire ever led you to want more? Talk about that time. How can knowing where your weaknesses are be a strength?



BEHIND THE SCENES: LOOK UP MATTHEW 25:40 AND DISCUSS WHO IS IMPORTANT IN GOD'S EYES.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR GUYS

1. Do you operate with a competition mentality? Did you know that always having to come out on top, being the best above all others, gives you the same motives that Edmund had? Edmund wanted to be number one, even within his family. His drive to be the best led him to betray his entire family. How do you think the drive to compete affects the way you treat those around you?

2. Think about times when you have felt the need to be superior or treated like someone special. Why do you think you felt that way? What does the Bible say about who is the greatest? Check out Matthew 18:4.

3. Has a small temptation ever led you to want something more? How can focusing on what's bad in your life or feeling sorry for yourself actually make you more likely to give in to your desires? Instead of feeling like we deserve special treatment, what feelings or thoughts can we focus on to combat temptation?

4. We at GOV have found that it's the little things that encourage humility in life. Let's consider this: Next time a buddy is behind you in line, let him go first. Someone insults you? Let it go, don't try and

fight back. Didn't win in that basketball game? Go congratulate the winner. These things will encourage humility in your life and cultivate an attitude of meekness. There isn't anything in the Bible about Jesus always having to win or defend himself or seek his own will. Jesus' life was all about honoring God the Father in every area, and he seriously wasn't after bringing glory or fame or honor to his name. When you honestly look at your life, what do you see? Of course none of us are perfect, but are you aiming, each and every day, to bring glory to yourself—or to God?

LEADER TIP

Look up the definition of meekness and share it with your guys.



BEHIND THE SCENES: LOOK UP LUKE 14:11. HAVE AN HONEST DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW THIS PASSAGE RELATES TO OUR LIVES.

ACTIVITY: WRAPPED IN LIES

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- ★ **scissors**
- ★ **three spools of ribbon or yarn, enough to wrap around a person several times**
- ★ **a card with various “sample lies” (see list below) so you can keep the activity moving and not delay it as you come up with new lies that don't repeat ones already used**

The next illustration is one of the most impactful that we share. We believe that if teens can see how lies keep them tied up and cut off from reality, they're much more likely to move in a direction that will set them free.

You'll need at least three team members and one volunteer to participate in this activity. The team members will be the “wrappers” and the volunteer will be the “wrappee.” Three team members proceed by circling the wrappee with their ribbon or yarn. Before doing the first circling of yarn or ribbon, they speak a lie about the wrappee's life. The wrappee signifies that he or she accepts the lies by grasping hold of the ribbon. A number of sample lies are listed below.

Goal: To demonstrate how Satan gets a foothold in a person's life and how the power of lies can stop us from being the people God created us to be.

Begin with this suggested scenario (or feel free to make up your own!): “Here we have Scott. He's fourteen years old and sits behind you in math class. Although he's a nice kid, he's been believing a lot of lies lately . . .”

LEADER TIP

Who you use for *Wrapped in Lies* is important. Be sure to pick someone whom your students view as a leader for this activity. You don't want to choose someone who is struggling with their faith (this could damage them) or someone who would set a poor example for your group.

Leaders now tell him lies, taken from your list. “Scott” signifies that he believes each lie by accepting the ribbon and holding onto it. (Remember: the ribbon or yarn represents the lies.) Begin speaking more sample lies over Scott, and as each lie is spoken, wrap Scott once fully around with the ribbon.

SAMPLE LIES

- I have to be tough to fit in.
- My parents don't really love me.
- God doesn't really care about me.
- In fact, God's holding me back from all the good things.
- Sexy girls/hot guys are worth more than the “normal looking” people.
- I have to be a snob to fit in.
- My parents love my brother or sister more.
- I don't have a purpose.
- God doesn't love me.
- I can do whatever I want.
- I've done things so bad, God could never forgive me.
- My choices don't have consequences.
- Watching porn doesn't affect me.
- Nobody is a virgin anymore! That idea is so stupid.

YOUR VIEW

Add more lies to the list, perhaps ones that have been revealed as you've gone through this session.

LEADER TIP

This session can address specific issues with your group. You know your students best; hit the tough issues hard during this exercise.

- I can have sex with my girlfriend—we love each other!
- If I was drunk when I had sex, it doesn't count.
- My teen years are supposed to be for fun! I can catch up with God later. I can't have any fun as a Christian. I mean, there is always forgiveness, right?
- Cutting myself only hurts me; it doesn't affect anyone around me.
- I deserve to have this done to me; I'm no better than this.
- I have to do this to survive.

As you continue with the activity, team members can explain how lies work to keep us wrapped up:

- ★ **It starts with one little lie—no big deal.**
- ★ **But soon it's tons of lies—one after another—and Scott is stuck.**
- ★ **Now the team leader shouts to Scott: "Run after God!" But . . . Scott can't move at all. He's completely tied up.**
- ★ **The team leader says: "God wants you to be a worship leader. So raise your hands to God!" Scott can't; he's totally and completely stuck.**
- ★ **The team leader says: "God is calling you—answer your phone!" Since Scott's hands are tied up, he won't be able to move. (For fun, if you can arrange it; actually call Scott's phone, which will be in his pocket.)**
- ★ **The team leader announces: "Scott can't do anything. He's tied up in lies."**

Team members can then go on to explain Scott's despair: "Scott feels like he has wandered so far from the truth, he isn't sure what to believe. One night after a huge party, Scott feels he has nowhere else to turn. Not knowing what else to do, he reaches for the Bible his parents gave him on his twelfth birthday. He opens his Bible to Hebrews 4:12: 'For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.' Scott knows in his heart that God and his Son, Jesus, are able to set him free from the dangerous mind-sets he has chosen. Scott keeps reading his Bible, and over time, this is what he finds . . ."

At this point, team member(s) pull out scissors. Our team likes to emphasize Hebrews 4:12 as they do this part. It's worth reading through the Scripture again! Sure, we might be using scissors instead of swords, but you guys get the idea!

As each truth is stated (see Sample Truths), one cord of the ribbon or yarn is cut.

SAMPLE TRUTHS

- I am called and created by God (Genesis 1:27).
- I have a purpose and destiny in Christ (Jeremiah 29:11).
- I am a child of God (1 John 5:19).
- There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).
- I am forgiven and free (Matthew 26:28).
- My purity is valuable (Matthew 5:8).
- I am a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- I am a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- I am accepted by God (Isaiah 41:9).
- God completely understands what I'm going through (Hebrews 4:15).
- God loves me as much as he does everyone else (Romans 2:11).
- I *don't* have to look like the celebrities I see on TV (1 Peter 3:3, 4).
- No matter what happens to me, God will never abandon me (Psalm 27:10; Isaiah 49:15).
- I am made wise by the Lord (Proverbs 2:6).
- I am being made complete (Romans 12:2).
- I am never alone (Deuteronomy 31:6).
- I am strong in Christ (Philippians 4:13).

Before long Scott is free! Your team leaders can encourage him by saying, “OK, Scott! Now run after God!” Explain that true freedom comes in Christ and in the power of his blood! He is able to free us from anything from lying to a bad self-image to lust to anger. Jesus said, “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!” (John 8:36). Here are a couple more Scriptures about freedom you can give to your group:

★ **“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18, 19).**

★ **“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (2 Corinthians 3:17).**

Allow students to share from the audience following this activity. This is a great time to teach, but also to listen. You may have students who want to talk openly about feeling trapped in lies, or wish to talk one-on-one or in small groups. Before you move on to the next exercise, make sure to emphasize the Key Points About the Truth.

KEYS POINTS ABOUT THE TRUTH

★ **Your calling is incredibly important, and it’s a job that only you can do! You are incredibly valuable to the kingdom of God. Regardless of your life situation, YOU ARE HERE for a purpose. It doesn’t matter how you were brought into this world. Whether you feel like your parents wanted you or not, whether you were adopted or your mom was a teenager, only God has the ability to give and take away life. If you are here, it is for a reason.**

★ **If you want to be set free from these lies, you’re going to have to begin replacing these disgusting lies with the amazing truth of God’s Word. That means you will have to begin reading your Bible regularly—daily! Nothing else is able to defeat lies like the absolute truth. God’s Word is absolute truth.**

★ **The enemy knows this—so he is always out to make the Bible seem boring and irrelevant. Satan knows the amazing power that the Bible holds. The Word of God holds the ability to radically and permanently change your life forever.**

★ **The Bible says that God himself inspires all Scripture—and God is definitely not boring! He is the all-consuming, all-knowing, all-loving creator of the universe. Every sight you see, every tree, plant, ocean, animal, people group—everything your eyes can see, and even things you can’t see—he has created! That is not boring!**

CLOSING DOWN

When you close “Cinderella Lied, Superman Died,” ask the teens to take a few minutes to identify some of the lies they’ve believed in their own lives. Ask your leaders to pass out note cards and have the teens write down three lies they now recognize that they have been accepting as truth. It’s a good idea to ask team members to share some sample lies while the teens are writing down their lies. This sort of vulnerability will help your students think deeper about and identify the lies in their lives.

Often, this session is surprisingly powerful, as many teens have never realized how much garbage they’ve believed throughout their lives. Be sure to explain to the teens that these note cards are completely anonymous. They should not put their name on the cards, and no one besides the youth leaders leading the group will be looking at these.

Note: It’s a MUST that you use discretion with these cards. Don’t lay them in a place where someone who is not supposed to read them could have access to them and do not share the content with anyone, unless there is some legitimate and intentional reason (such as in the case of the threat of harm to a student). These are extremely sensitive areas that many teens will be bringing up, and your discretion will make the difference between a teen sharing about the lies he or she has believed and not sharing. Lies are powerful things that we hold on to, and often bringing them into the light is the most important step in giving them up.

Instructions for leaders to give after passing out the cards:

- ★ **What we’d like you to do with the card you have is to write down three lies you’ve identified through this session that you had previously believed.**
- ★ **Listen to this list of Sample Lies to see if you relate to any of these. Or simply write the ones that come to your mind. (Review the list of Sample Lies with the group.)**
- ★ **These are completely anonymous; we won’t share the contents of these cards.**

KEY POINTS FOR CLOSING

Give your students five minutes to work on their cards. Remind them to keep their note cards a secret!

When your students are finished writing down their lies, let volunteers go around and discreetly collect the cards. A team member—preferably someone in authority over the meeting—can pray over the lies and pray for the group of teens. Ask specifically that God will break the ties that these lies have held over the teens’ lives. Ask him to speak to each teen in the weeks to come about freedom in Christ. Ask him to give them a passion to learn and use his Word to defeat the lies of the enemy. As a leader, it may be a good idea

to note the most common lies, or to refrain from disposing of the lies immediately so that you can pray over the power of the lies on a regular basis.

After prayer, dispose of the cards, symbolizing that God will help your students throw away the lies they've believed.

Or you can have the teens dispose of the cards themselves. Some ideas include:

★ **Burn the cards in a fire (you must be sure the fire is legal and safe) to represent the power of the lies being broken.**

★ **Let the students tear up their lie cards and throw them away.**



FOR SMALL GROUPS

In small groups, it often works well to have the leader take a quick look at the cards, and then one by one, tear them up. This is a powerful representation that these lies can be broken in your students' lives.

(Note: To ensure the teens' privacy, be sure to dispose of the torn-up cards after the session. Again, burning them can be a good idea.)



FOR WEEKEND RETREATS

A weekend retreat is a great opportunity for kids to take a step back from their everyday lives and view things from another perspective. Be sure to take advantage of this time in this way. Again, the fire disposal method can be especially powerful.



FOR CAMP

A camp is a great opportunity for kids to take a step back from their everyday lives and view things from another perspective. And come on, if you're at camp, you have to use the campfire method! Sing some songs or have open sharing (never forced); this can be an incredibly powerful time. Then burn the note cards in the fire and close with prayer or an appropriate song.

LEADER TIP

Expect different reactions during the closing session. Some students may be deeply moved, while others may respond more casually. Have a prayer team in place to help the students while they process their emotions.

LEADER TIP

If you choose to burn the note cards in a fire: After the students fill out the cards, take them outside and have them put their lies "in the fire." Explain that our God is a consuming fire (read Deuteronomy 4:24; this is very powerful), and by the power of the blood of Christ, we are set free from the lies of the enemy. (Again: be sure the fire is safe, legal, and always monitored. After you're done, make sure the fire is completely extinguished.)

THE REVOLUTION CONTINUES

Below are several suggestions for follow-up with your teens using their favorite forms of communication. We encourage you to use technology to connect with your students to aid their purity walk.

Here are a few sample text messages, Facebook updates, Tweets, or e-mails you can use to connect with your group. (Shorten them as needed.) If your church's website has a youth page, use that space as well. Use the media that you know will best connect with your students.

SAMPLE MESSAGES

- What lies are you believing? Be on guard! Read Ps 119:30.
- How many lies have you believed today? Read Prov 23:23.
- Check out Phil 4:13 today!
- Don't be deceived! Read 1 Cor 6:9 today.
- Don't let the enemy wrap you in lies! Matt 16:23.
- How many lies have you cut through today with the Word? John 8:32.
- Are you living your life like a world-changer? Take the challenge! Read Mark 16:15.
- Where did your thoughts drift today? Read Col 3:2.
- Remember: Movie-makers have messages they want you to hear. 2 Cor 5:16.
- If Jesus were hanging out with you today, would you be embarrassed? Read 1 Cor 5:6.
- Remember how God spoke to you? Now let's live like it! Ps 143:5. (post as a caption with a picture from the last session)
- Have you used your sword today? Eph 6:17.
- "Virtue is nothing more than voluntary obedience to the truth." Check out Deut 30:15, 16.
- Stand up for right, even if you stand alone. Look up Ps 62:2.
- When you stand before God you can't say, "But I was told by others to do this." Read 1 Peter 4:1-5.
- "Guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Prov 4:23.

BUILDING THE BRIDGE

Youth leaders often come to us asking how to get parents "up to speed" on what was taught during Culture Shock. Use the ideas below to connect with parents to make sure they know what their kids are being told regarding purity, relationships, dating, media, and the many other things we cover. We've also included ideas on helping the parents connect with their teens about these issues. For more resources, including weekly parent updates and key resource recommendations, visit us online at: www.generationsofvirtue.org.

OVERVIEW OF CINDERELLA LIED, SUPERMAN DIED

Today's media is bombarding your kids like never before. The influence that it has is immense, ranging from who your teens imitate, to how they talk, to what they wear and who they choose to date. The problem is, media and technology often draw our teens away from God instead of toward him by lying to them and giving them a false perception of reality and truth.

We took a significant amount of time to explain to your kids how to discern what messages are buried in media. We showed them movie clips from some popular films and talked about the lies transmitted through those scenes, helping them to learn how to view entertainment with a discerning eye. If they can understand the objectives behind the media, they will be better able to pick out the lies that the enemy is trying to tell them.

After completing the movie clips portion, we encouraged the teens to recognize the lies that they've believed in their own lives. We then asked them to write down three lies on note cards that they have believed about themselves.

Some common lies that we often hear from teens are: 1. My parents don't love me; 2. My parents love my brother/sister more; 3. God doesn't care about who I am or what I do. Does this come as a surprise to you? It did to us! But it confirmed what experts have been saying and what we have known all along: Parents, you matter! You have incredible impact, influence, and authority in your teens' lives. They NEED you. They NEED to be loved and encouraged by you. Don't let this window of opportunity pass you by!

After the teens were able to identify the lies that they believed, we destroyed the note cards to symbolize the breaking of the power of lies in their lives.

FIVE GREAT DISCUSSION POINTS FOR PARENTS AND TEENS

1. How has media shaped the way you view yourself? When you watch shows (like sports, reality shows, and so on) what do you walk away feeling? Do you ever feel like you're not good enough the way you are?
2. How has media affected the way you view relationships? What about the way you view sex? (Parents: If you haven't talked to your teens about sex, now is the time to do so!)
3. Talk about some lies you believed as a teen. Then ask: Are you able to filter out the lies you hear? What ones are harder for you to keep out of your head? If you're comfortable with it, will you share with me the three lies you wrote down on the note card?
4. Since a lot of lies come through the media—things like songs, TV, music, movies, and the Internet—what are some things our family can do to protect each other from these messages? Let's think of three practical things we can do in our home.
5. What is the most significant point that you took away from the event?

Connect: An activity for parents and teens

To continue the lessons learned in “Cinderella Lied, Superman Died,” we want you to evaluate your family’s media habits/intake this week. How much time do you spend as a family *without* input from media? As individuals, how much time are you spending *with* media? It may be helpful to make a chart for each family member to fill in for one week.

At the end of the week, arrange a time for your whole family to discuss media use in your home. Discuss what appropriate viewing standards should be for your family. These media standards should cover the following: movies, music, TV, Internet viewing, video games, and more.

Write or print out your family’s standards, and post them around the house, especially next to the computer, by the TV, and near the stereos. You could also make digital files of the standards and put them up as pictures on your portable devices, phones, and other screens.

Here is one example of a family standards list:

OUR FAMILY’S MEDIA GUIDE

1. We will only watch TV and movies that don’t dishonor God.
2. As a family, we choose to shield our hearts, minds, and bodies against things that are impure. This means that we choose not to watch or listen to media that encourages sexual behavior or includes explicit content or anything else that might cause us to stumble.
3. As a family, we want to fulfill our God-given destiny. We commit to limiting the time we spend watching TV or movies, listening to music, playing video games, and surfing the Internet to one hour a day (total) to ensure that we have more than enough time to accomplish the things that really matter.
4. We are committed to purity. If we see or hear anything that would compromise our purity, such as pornographic content, we will turn off whatever we were doing and go tell Dad and/or Mom right away.
5. As parents, Dad and Mom commit to modeling appropriate viewing standards for our own lives and for the entire family.
6. As a family, we don’t want to be caught off guard by our movie choices, so if we are going to the theater, we will read a Christian media outlet’s review on the movie first.
7. If we are ever placed in a compromising situation regarding media when we are not at home, we will call Dad and/or Mom and let them know, “I need a ride home.”

Whatever you come up with, make sure that it is tailored to your family's needs. Establishing clear standards for your family's media intake is critical in helping your teens develop safe and healthy media choices.

For more tips on connecting with your teen, visit us online at: www.generationsofvirtue.org.

PLUG IN

Youth leaders should be sure to e-mail parents to communicate with them about what their teens have been discussing and learning about. Feel free to include the Overview of the session in an e-mail and also the Five Great Discussion Points. Introduce them to the idea of the Connect activity as well.

Include your contact information so the teen's parents can reach you if they have questions. For tons of resource help and parenting tips, check out: www.generationsofvirtue.org.

Make use of Facebook updates, Twitter messages, texts, and e-mail to send messages of encouragement and connection to the parents of the teens you work with. If they don't use any of these forms of communication, find out what works best for them (a phone call, brief meetings). Just make sure to keep the communication lines open!

SAMPLE MESSAGES

- Had a great time with your teens! Want to know more about what they learned? Check your e-mail!
- Your kids are learning how to discern the lies of the enemy vs. the awesome truth of God's Word! We're learning together! Are you learning too?
- We're setting the captives free in this event! Don't forget to ask your teens what they got out of it!
- Have you used the Five Discussion Points yet?
- Be sure to do the parent/teen activity sometime this week!
- Help your teen break the power of lies over their life. Before they leave for school today, pray for them! Speak God's Word into their life.
- Rent a movie tonight to watch with your teen. Help them see any lies that the entertainment industry might be trying to feed them. (For example: Is the main character involved in terrible behavior? Is that real life? Do their choices reflect actual consequences?)
- How many of you have seen a difference in your teen this week? Message me back and let me know how it's going!
- Need good recommendations to keep up with your kids? Check out: www.generationsofvirtue.org for a lot more!