

ZION'S CHRISTIAN YOUTH &
FAMILY MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

theParentLinkSM

January 2009

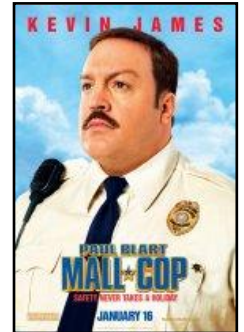


**Welcome to the
online MEDIA pages
of Zion's parent
newsletter!**

On the following pages you will find media information for teens and children. The first page applies more to children. The second page is geared more for teens.

You will also find plenty of discussion questions to spark conversations in your home.

Be sure to see the *FilmWatch* review about "Mall Cop" on the last page!



Your feedback is important to us!! Please feel free to contact any member of Zion's CYFM staff with your comments. We first added theParentLinkSM newsletter to the December Horizon. This month is the first addition of the online media pages. Let us know what you think!!

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These pages are designed to help educate parents and aren't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children listen to and watch.

What's Playing at the Movies

Movie: *Hotel for Dogs* (releases Jan. 23)

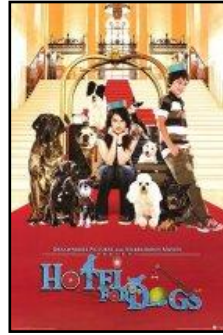
Genre: Comedy

Rating: G

Cast: Emma Roberts, Jake T. Austin, Lisa Kudrow

Synopsis: Andi (Roberts) and Bruce (Austin) are foster kids who end up in a very strict home that doesn't allow dogs. They must think quickly to find a new home for their dog, Friday. The kids transform an abandoned hotel into the perfect home for Friday, as well as for every stray dog in the city.

Discussion Questions: What are some ways you help take care of your pet (or a relative's pet)? What are some ways that God provides for animals' needs? How can you tell that your pet trusts you to care for it? In what ways do you show God that you trust him to meet all your needs?



What Music Is Releasing

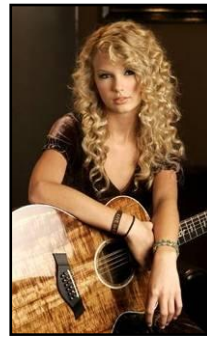
Artist: Taylor Swift

Album: *Fearless*

Artist Info: Swift, a country-pop artist, began performing at age 10. Despite much rejection, she continued to sing and write music. At 12, she was "discovered" in Nashville. *Fearless* is her second album. Swift recently had a public breakup with singer Joe Jonas, who reportedly broke up with her via phone.

Summary: *Fearless* debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Top 200 Album Chart. The album is mostly about being young, in love, and let down in love. Overall, there's an empowering message to maintain a clear perspective during breakups or when overlooked by boys. One song does allude to virginity loss.

Discussion Questions: What comes to mind when you hear the word "rejection"? How does it feel when someone rejects you, your talents, or what you stand for? Think of a time Jesus was rejected: How can his example help you get through any rejections you face?



What Games Are Out

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Club Penguin: Elite Penguin Force</i>	In this online role-playing game, kids join a secret spy force to go on missions, solve mysteries, and help other "penguins."	E; Nintendo DS
<i>Ultimate Band</i>	This game follows a band as it works its way up to playing large, famous venues. Contains mild lyrics.	E10+; Wii
<i>Sonic Unleashed</i>	Sonic battles evil robots in this adventure game. Contains fantasy violence and animated blood.	E10+; PS2, Xbox 360, Wii, PS3

GAME RATINGS KEY: EC=Early Childhood, E=Everyone (ages 6+), E10+ (ages 10+), T=Teen (ages 13+)



Culture & Trends

What's happening right now that may affect your children and family:

- Chores have gone online. Parents now ask kids to share pictures and e-mails with relatives, plan trips and parties, and look up movie listings and driving directions. (marketingcharts.com)



- More families have been applying for free school lunches lately. Almost 80% of schools polled report an increase in free lunches served. (School Nutrition Association)

Quick Stats

- In a poll of almost 3,000 parents, 56% admitted they secretly redo their children's chores to their own standards when kids aren't looking. (babycenter.com)
- Each year, more than 800,000 kids die in accidents. Easy solutions such as seat belts, childproof medicine caps, and fences around swimming pools could cut the toll in half. (Associated Press)

MUSICSPOTLIGHT



Mainstream Artist

Background: Ludacris, born Christopher Bridges, studied music management at Georgia State University. He's a three-time Grammy-winning rapper and actor. Ludacris is the highest-selling Southern hip-hop artist of all time and has had four Billboard Hot 100 singles. He also has appeared in numerous TV shows and movies.

Albums: *Theater of the Mind* (2008), *Release Therapy* (2006), *The Red Light District* (2004), *Chicken-n-Beer* (2003), *Word of Mouf* (2001), *Back for the First Time* (2000)

What Parents Should Know: Ludacris is known for his versatile, opinionated lyrics and rapid-fire delivery. His albums contain parental advisories because they're full of foul language, derogatory references to women, and much sexual content.

What Ludacris Says About Success: "At the end of the day, you either have the talent or you don't, and you either take it seriously or you don't." He adds, "It's like my job is my vacation."

Discussion Questions: What talents and gifts has God given you? What steps are you taking right now to improve those talents? Have you ever wasted one of God's gifts? If so, explain. What type of job would be best for your talents?



Christian Artist

Background: After realizing he'd lived a sinful lifestyle, Lecrae became a Christian at age 19 and began ministering to others. Lecrae now raps, speaks, and volunteers in juvenile detention centers. He co-founded ReachLife Ministries and has a heart for reforming urban culture for Christ. Lecrae has received two GMA Dove Award nominations.

Albums: *Rebel* (2008), *After the Music Stops* (2006), *Real Talk* (2005)

What Parents Should Know: Lecrae says he wants "to digest theology and spit it back out so the streets can digest it." His lyrics are transparent, relatable, and deeply impacting. Lecrae's musical style is Christian hip-hop/rap and crunk (a hip-hop genre that focuses on beats rather than lyrics).

What Lecrae Says: "I really hope we can stir people toward going against the sinful stream of ideals, values, and lifestyles.... The fall of humanity has not thwarted God's intention for us. But...we need to renew our mind."

Discussion Questions: How hard is it for you to resist your sinful nature and society's evil influences? What intentions or plans do you think God has for you? Read Romans 12:2. What are some ways you can renew your mind each day?

FILMWATCH

Movie: *Paul Blart: Mall Cop* (releases Jan. 16)

Genre: Comedy

Rating: PG for some violence, mild crude and suggestive humor, and language

Synopsis: Paul Blart (Kevin James) is a single dad trying to make ends meet as a security officer in a New Jersey mall. Although the easygoing Blart is constantly ridiculed for his job, he takes it very seriously. When a gang of Santa's helpers takes over the mall and kidnaps hostages (including Blart's daughter and girlfriend), Blart goes on a mission to prove that he can save the day.

Discussion Questions: Do people ever take you less seriously because of your age, appearance, or interests? If so, how do you respond? How firm are your convictions? Are they firm enough to withstand ridicule? Have you ever gone on a "mission"? If so, what did you try to prove to others or to yourself?

