

ZION'S CHRISTIAN YOUTH &
FAMILY MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

theParentLinkSM

February 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

"Confessions
of a

Shopaholic" 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. In January we added the online media pages. Please let us know what you think!!

Danielle Acay

dacay.zionkent@comcast.net

Kelly Mullin

kmullin.zionkent@comcast.net

Debbie Boyce

dlynnboyce@comcast.net

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: *Coraline* (Feb. 6)

Genre: Animated Fantasy/Adventure

Rating: PG (for thematic elements, scary images, some language, and some suggestive humor)

Cast: Dakota Fanning, Teri Hatcher, Dawn French

Synopsis: When a girl walks through a secret door in her new home, she discovers an alternate version of her life. It's very similar to her real life, but she actually perceives it as much better. This adventure soon turns dangerous when Coraline's fake parents try to keep her in this alternate life forever. She must figure out a way to get back home to save herself and her real family.

Discussion Questions: What might it be like to have a different life or different parents? Why do you think God has placed you in this family and in these circumstances? How can we discover God's plans for us?



What Music Is Releasing

Artist: David Cook

Album: *David Cook*

Artist Info: When he picked up a guitar at age 13, David Cook knew rock 'n' roll was the style for him. He reluctantly auditioned for *American Idol* season seven and eventually won. A week later, he broke chart records when 11 of his songs debuted on Billboard's Hot 100 chart.

Summary: Cook's debut album deals with relationships, loneliness, and life on the road. The songs, ranging from ballads to rock anthems, are full of poetic, heartfelt lyrics. "Permanent" is about his brother's struggle with brain cancer. Cook calls writing music "therapeutic," saying it's "an outlet to express negative energy."

Discussion Questions: What are some positive and negative ways of expressing tough emotions? When you're having a bad day, what's your best outlet or stress-reliever?



What Games Are Out

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>WordJong Party</i>	This simple puzzle game has a low level of difficulty. Players compete to spell the longest words possible.	E; Wii
<i>Prince of Persia: The Fallen King</i>	A cartoon hero battles corrupt forces. This game is tamer than its more-mature versions. There's no blood or gore.	E; Nintendo DS
<i>SPRay</i>	This adventure game features an angel and a devil who spew gross liquids from their mouths. The game contains mild cartoon violence, as well as burping and flatulence.	E10+; Wii

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:

- Facebook is the hot new hangout for parents. Millions of them now use the social-networking site to keep family and friends informed about their growing children.
- More parents are turning to home remedies for the sniffles. Now that cold and cough medicines for children are out, chicken soup and nasal washes are in.

Quick Stats

- In an online survey, 73% of respondents said they secretly love their kids more than their spouse; 17% said they love both the same; and 11% said "my spouse comes first."
(nymetroparents.com)
- About 1 in 200 children is a vegetarian. The rate for teenagers might be four to six times higher, surveys suggest.
(Associated Press)



MUSICSPOTLIGHT



Mainstream Artist

Background: Lady GaGa, born Joanne Germanotta, is a singer-songwriter in the electronic genre. She worked her way to the top by playing New York City clubs, and last October her debut album released atop Billboard's Electronic Albums Chart. The single "Just Dance" hit number one in the U.S. Lady GaGa recently toured with New Kids on the Block and is now on the road with Pussycat Dolls.

Albums: *The Fame* (2008)

What Parents Should Know: Lady GaGa's musical style is pop and electro-pop, rock and disco. Her album addresses fame, glamorizes partying and alcohol, and uses some foul language. Lady GaGa's musical acts are eccentric and full of self-designed scant clothing.

What Lady GaGa Says: "I've just been growing. I think everybody grows.... I'm constantly changing. I am constantly pushing the envelope to be more and more creative and different and original to create this beautiful, graphic, important imagery."

Discussion Questions: Is being different a good or bad thing, and why? In what ways are you growing and changing? Do you like to "push the envelope"? What are some God-pleasing ways that young people can stand out from the crowd?



Christian Artist

Background: Stephanie Smith's debut album is driven by her compelling redemption story. At age 14, she met her father, who called her the wrong name, wounding her deeply. During the next few years, Smith did lots of soul-searching. After going on mission trips, she won a vocal contest and was signed to TobyMac's Gotee Records. Smith's music expresses the healing power of forgiveness.

Albums: *Not Afraid* (2008)

What Parents Should Know: In the vulnerable piano ballad "First Words," Smith opens up about the encounter with her father. The catchy breakup song "Not Afraid" reminds listeners what relationships are all about. "Beauty" deals with having inner peace.

What Smith Says: "I ended up going to Guatemala on a mission trip. If anyone is struggling with pride or self-righteousness, you need to go haul cinder blocks up a mountain. The hard work will cure you!"

Discussion Questions: Read Proverbs 11:2. How would you define pride and self-righteousness? Do you struggle with either of these traits? If so, explain. What experiences humble you? What are some ways to ensure that you're characterized more by humility than by pride?

FILMWATCH

Movie: *Confessions of a Shopaholic* (releases Feb. 13)

Genre: Comedy

Rating: PG (for some mild language and thematic elements)

Synopsis: Despite mounting debt, New Yorker Rebecca Bloomwood (Isla Fisher) lives out her passion for shopping every day. She dreams of working for a favorite fashion magazine but instead writes a financial-advice column. Rebecca goes through extreme, funny adventures to hide her inexperience and reach her ultimate dream job.

Discussion Questions: How important to you is financial success? Would you be happy working in a career that pays little money? Why or why not? What's your dream job? What steps are you taking right now to achieve it? While trying to reach an important goal, would you be willing to compromise your integrity? to go into massive debt? to sacrifice friends or relationships? Explain.

