

ZION'S CHRISTIAN YOUTH &
FAMILY MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

theParentLinkSM

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**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 & third pages are geared more for teens.

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

Parenting Insights

These age-level insights from *Children's Ministry Magazine* show how children's view of God develops as they grow.

Ages 2 to 4

Preschoolers identify God as having a human form and characteristics. These traits most likely resemble those seen in significant adults in kids' lives.

Ages 5 to 8

Fear of the unknown prompts kids to want to believe in a God who's all-powerful, all-knowing, and everywhere all the time. Their understanding of God's love and tenderness depends on how adults express these qualities.

Ages 9 to 12

Older children's perception of God can range from a legendary superhero to a living, spiritual being. Kids often picture God the same way they view their own fathers.

Your feedback is important to us!! Please feel free to contact any member of Zion's CYFM staff with your comments. Let us know what you think!!

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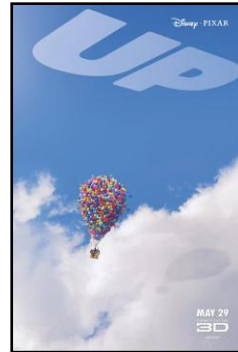
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These pages are designed to help educate parents and aren't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product.

Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children listen to and watch.

What's Playing at the Movies

Movie: *Up* (releases May 29)
Genre: Animated 3-D comedy
Rating: PG (for some peril and action)
Cast: Ed Asner, Christopher Plummer, Jordan Nagai
Synopsis: Carl Fredricksen, age 78, ties thousands of balloons to his home, hoping to reach his lifelong dream of seeing South America. But he soon discovers that his biggest nightmare, 8-year-old Russell, is a stowaway. During a wild ride, the unlikely team has to work together to get back home.



Discussion Questions: What's your biggest dream, and what are you doing to reach it? What risks have you taken, and how did they turn out? Do you prefer spending time alone or with other people, and why? How do you deal with people who get on your nerves? Think of a time you worked as a team with someone: How did you each contribute to a goal?

What Music Is Releasing

Artist: Mandy Moore
Album: *Amanda Leigh*
Artist Info: Singer-actress Mandy Moore, now 25, was a teen-pop sensation. During the past decade, she released five albums and starred in several hit films, including *A Walk to Remember*. This spring, Moore married indie rocker Ryan Adams.



Summary: Moore's new album, which has a folk-country sound, is "a collection of personal reflections about life and love." Standouts include "Song About Home" and "Love to Love Me Back." When her career began, Moore says, people told her what to sing. "The music is all a reflection of me now, not somebody else's choices," she says. "If people don't like the music, then they don't like me—and that's quite all right."

Discussion Questions: How does it feel when people make decisions for you? What are some good and bad aspects of making your own choices? What makes you unique? Explain whether we should care if people like us or not.

What Games Are Out

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>SuperSecret</i>	This online role-playing game is for preteens. Kids play at "growing up" while their avatars age.	Web site (SuperSecret.com)
<i>Patapon 2</i>	Players fight fairly tame tribal battles in this downloadable game. Figures are dark and stylized, but there's no blood or gore.	E; PSP
<i>Donkey Kong Jungle Beat</i>	This classic is updated with new play control, plus new enemies and obstacles. Contains mild cartoon violence.	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:

- America's pastime is striking out with the younger set. Enrollment in Little League baseball and softball is down, experts say, due to the recession and all the extracurricular options now available for kids.



- Of the 17,000 children injured by falling furniture in 2007, almost half were hurt by televisions. Experts say these numbers are going up as flat-screen TVs keep getting larger. (msnbc.com)

Quick Stats

- During summer, 11% of children younger than 13 are regularly without adult supervision. About 6% of kids attend summer school. (Babble.com)
- Kindergartners ate 50% more vegetables when those foods were given exciting, appealing names, such as "X-ray vision carrots." (Newsweek)

MUSICSPOTLIGHT



Mainstream Artist

Background: Green Day has been around for almost 20 years. Their sound remains as pop-punky as ever, but the lyrics have deepened—tackling issues such as war, politics, and organized religion. Green Day has sold 22 million records in the United States and has won three Grammy Awards.

Albums: *21st Century Breakdown* (2009), *American Idiot* (2004), *Dookie* (1994)

What Parents Should Know: Green Day's angry-punk attitude sounds tired, now that band members are middle-aged multimillionaires. Their new album is about a young, disenfranchised couple who feels left behind by the church, the state, and adults. The band's pessimistic outlook believes in self, leaving no room for God.

What Green Day Says: Singer Billie Joe Armstrong reflects on the state of pop culture: "People want blood. They want to see other people thrown to the lions."

Discussion Questions: When have you felt abandoned by someone, and how did it affect you? Read Deuteronomy 31:6-8. Can God's love and presence replace that of a human's? How might God's promise in these verses make it easier to deal with abandonment by others? Explain.



Christian Artist

Background: FM Static is a pop-punk side band started by two members of the Christian hardcore group Thousand Foot Krutch. Two of the band's YouTube videos have become huge Internet hits, garnering millions of views.

Albums: *Dear Diary* (2009), *Critically Ashamed* (2006), *What Are You Waiting For?* (2003)

What Parents Should Know: *Dear Diary* is an interesting comparison to Green Day's latest release. It's also a concept album about two teenagers who are dealing with big issues. The difference is that on *Dear Diary*, these questions ultimately lead to God. FM Static is a positive alternative to Green Day, while addressing some of the same tough issues.

What FM Static Says: Singer Trevor McNeven discusses the album's autobiographical roots: "There are a lot of...things that I remember thinking. Things like big life questions, and also things that seem so big when you're in high school and then you look back at them now and think, 'That's hilarious, it totally didn't matter.'"

Discussion Questions: Read Psalm 37:1-9. Why should we trust God? Is that hard or easy for you, and why? What "big life questions" do you struggle with the most right now, and how can God help?

FILMWATCH

Movie: *Star Trek*

Genre: Action-Adventure

Rating: PG-13 (for sci-fi action and violence, and brief sexual content)

Synopsis: Director J.J. Abrams is at the helm of this fun, much-needed reboot of the beloved science-fiction series. Captain Nero, a Romulan madman, blames just about everyone for his family's death. He is seeking revenge, and that's the framework for introducing us to the young new crew of the USS *Enterprise*.

Discussion Questions: Kirk has problems with authority in this film. Is it ever okay to push back against authority? Explain. Read Romans 13:1-5. What do these verses say about the source of authority? What should a Christian do if people in authority are corrupt or cruel? What if their actions go against biblical teaching? What does rebellion say about how much we trust God?

