

# ZION'S CHRISTIAN YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

## theParentLink<sup>SM</sup>

March 2009



Welcome to the Media pages of Zion's Online newsletter-ParentLink! These pages are designed to help educate parents and are not meant to endorse any movie, music, or product.

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



### What's Playing at the Movies

**Movie:** *Race to Witch Mountain*  
(March 13)

**Genre:** Adventure, Sci-Fi Thriller  
**Rating:** PG (for sequences of action and violence, frightening and dangerous situations, and some thematic elements)

**Cast:** Dwayne Johnson, AnnaSophia Robb, Alexander Ludwig, Carla Gugino



**Synopsis:** This Disney film is a remake of the 1975 movie *Escape From Witch Mountain*. A cab driver meets two siblings who are really aliens with supernatural powers. The trio heads to a mysterious Nevada mountain to search for the siblings' spacecraft. Various pursuers try to stop the trio, who's trying to prevent an alien invasion against the whole Earth.

**Discussion Questions:** When you hear about aliens, what do you think, and how do you feel? Is exploring this topic harmless or dangerous, and why? What would you tell someone who believes in psychic powers? Explain whether you think God created life on other planets.



### Culture & Trends

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

- The number of homeless students is on the rise, so schools have become more of a safety net. In addition to free meals, some schools now offer free backpacks, clothes, and extra tutoring.
- More than half of adults play video games. For families, making music together (via *Rock Band* and *Guitar Hero*) is the hot new pastime.



## FILM WATCH

**Movie:** *Slumdog Millionaire*

**Genre:**

Crime, Drama, Romance

**Rating:** R (for some violence, disturbing images, and language)

**Synopsis:** This film, an Oscar favorite for Best Picture, is about Patel (Jamal Malik), a poor, uneducated teenager from Mumbai. After an astounding performance on the Indian version of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, Patel is arrested for cheating. As he tells investigators about his life and his struggles, we find out how Patel knows the game-show answers. Despite some objectionable content in the movie, love and hope triumph over tough conditions.

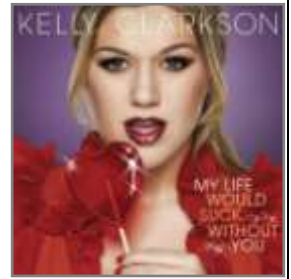
**Discussion Questions:** When have you felt like an underdog? What obstacles have you had to overcome at home or at school? Are hard work and good intentions all you need to succeed? Why or why not? When people doubt or challenge you, what motivates you to keep trying?

## What Music Is Releasing

**Artist:** Kelly Clarkson

**Single:** "My Life Would Suck Without You"

**Artist Info:** Clarkson, now 26, won the first season of *American Idol* in 2002. Since then, her albums have sold more than 17 million copies worldwide.



**Summary:** This is the first single from Clarkson's fourth album, *All I Ever Wanted*, which releases March 10. Already a number-one hit, "My Life Would Suck Without You" is vintage Clarkson, with a pop-rock sound. But her lyrics continue to get edgier, with more adult themes. This song is about a girl who, against her better judgment, takes back a boyfriend who's bad for her.

**Discussion Questions:** How do you decide whether or not to hang out with someone? Read 1 Corinthians 15:33. What influences do other people have on us? Who are the most important people in your life, and why?



## What Games Are Out

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Princess Debut</i>	Players pick clothing and master dance moves so they can date various princes.	E; Nintendo DS
<i>Viva Piñata</i>	In this family-friendly simulation game, players create a garden to attract colorful candy-filled creatures.	E; Xbox 360
<i>Elebits: The Adventures of Kai &amp; Zero</i>	This adventure game involves parallel universes. Players capture small, pulsing beings to get energy to solve puzzles.	E; Nintendo DS

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

# MUSICSPOTLIGHT



## Mainstream Artist

**Background:** This Denver-based alternative-rock band consisting of former schoolmates formed in 2002. The group, best known for its song "How to Save a Life," has a Grammy nomination. Soon after the band's self-titled second album released in February, it knocked Bruce Springsteen from the number-one spot on the Billboard charts.

**Albums:** *The Fray* (2009), *How to Save a Life* (2005)

**What Parents Should Know:** The Fray's piano-rock songs feature moody, minor-key melodies and introspective lyrics. "You Found Me" is about an imagined encounter with God. The band's songs have received some airplay on Christian radio.

**What The Fray Says:** Frontman Isaac Slade says, "I have a lot of baggage with [God], and the things I'd like to say to him aren't totally nice. It's like, 'Where were you?' ... If I'm going to be a believer...then I need to have some answers.... Help me make sense of this."

**Discussion Questions:** If you could meet God, what would you want to say to him (both positive and negative)? What questions do you have for God? To have faith, how much clarity or understanding do you need first, and why?



## Christian Artist

**Background:** This alternative-rock band from Cincinnati formed in 2004. With some friends, brothers Aaron and Ryan Morgan hastily recorded three songs in Aaron's bedroom to meet a "Battle of the Bands" deadline. They placed second, and Seabird was formed. Seabird's songs have been featured on TV shows such as *Pushing Daisies*, *Numb3rs*, and *Grey's Anatomy*.

**Albums:** *Til We See the Shore* (2008)

**What Parents Should Know:** Seabird's British-influenced sound has been compared to Coldplay, Ben Folds Five, and The Fray. Lyrically, the band moves beyond Christian clichés to address tough topics such as loss, doubt, and relationships.

**What Seabird Says:** About the song "Rescue," frontman Aaron Morgan says, "I felt like everything good I was trying to do was ending up in failure and only God could turn it into something beautiful and life-giving... I know many times in my life I've felt like I've had no way out."

**Discussion Questions:** Read Psalm 72:12-14. Why do we need God's help so often? Think of a time God came to your rescue: How did he help you, and who or what did he use? What are some ways God has transformed your life and your faith?

