



A parent newsletter designed to help you better understand and relate to today's youth culture and your church's teenagers—including your own.



Culture Watch

According to an article at familydoctor.org, children as young as 3 years old can suffer from body image struggles. These struggles are often associated with girls, but boys are not immune from this issue. Body image struggles can lead to problems such as eating disorders, depression, and low self-esteem.

Today's media often sets an impossible standard for our children and teens to live up to. This standard is then held up at school where schoolmates long for and pursue the "perfect" body and make fun of those who don't measure up to the standard. The same can happen with friends and neighbors in the community. Even church is not always a safe place for children and teens struggling with body image. Parents must also be careful not to model such struggles.

See the Flip Side on this newsletter for a few tips. >

#HumbleBrag

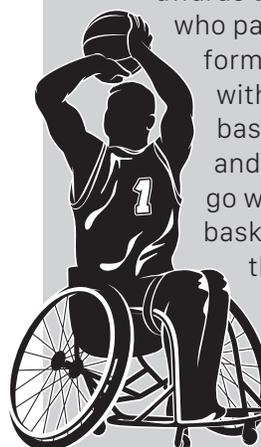
Teens doing awesome things!

When 17-year-old Logan Wilson volunteered with Special Olympics, he didn't know he would have the experience of a lifetime. His high school in New Brunswick, Canada, hosted a basketball team for the competition. Then his town hosted the New Brunswick Winter Games for Special Olympics. Logan helped to raise awareness and funds for the event, then presented awards to the athletes

who participated. He formed friendships with several of the basketball players and was asked to go with the basketball team to their Toronto tournament.

Beyond that, he was asked to attend summer

camp in Nova Scotia with one of the players. He said Special Olympics helped him realize that all people are looking for friendships and connections.





> The Flip Side

Following are some suggestions for how parents can help their teens deal with body image issues:

Don't ignore or dismiss comments your children make about their own bodies, or those of others. Talk about what they say and ask questions about what brought up that topic. Point them toward the goal of having a healthy body, and remind them that healthy bodies come in various forms.

Discuss body image issues when they appear on TV, in magazines, on social media, etc. Use these opportunities as teachable moments.

Talk about eating healthy and exercising instead of dieting and losing weight.

Talk about being a good person instead of focusing on outward appearance.

Remind your children that God says they are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Teach them that you and God love them even when they can't live up to the body image pushed by our society.



Help your teens develop a healthy body image by putting these ideas into practice.

The articles in *Forward* and *Velocity* magazines provide great discussion starters for you and your teen. Also, devotions for teens cover the same topics as the adult devotions in *Fusion Family* and *Fusion Next*, creating opportunities for family Bible study. Read them, discuss them, and use them as a tool for discipleship in the home.



on the calendar

December 2022

National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month

National Volunteers Month

Help your children strategize about ways to avoid riding with those who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Institute a no-questions-asked policy of being ready to pick them up from any event if they call you. Teens often don't have the social skills to escape a situation that turns risky, so be willing to promote trust and open conversations to keep them safe.



January 2023

Get Organized Month

Poverty Awareness Month

National Sunday Supper Month

Organizational skills matter for life. Simple tools like keeping a calendar of due dates and finding convenient storage for often-used supplies will continue to pay dividends for your teens.

February 2023

American Heart Month

Black History Month

Celebration of Chocolate Month

Develop respect for the achievements of others by learning together about important figures in history. Celebrate with a chocolate heart (on sale on February 15 and just as good!).