



# the Parent LINK

Children's Ministry Edition



## February 2012

### Creekwood Christian Church Disciples of Christ

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## POWERSOURCE

### ASK GOD:

1. To protect your children from harmful messages about physical attributes.
2. To help your children view themselves as God's creation.
3. To heal any body-image struggles you've been facing.

## Promote Positive Body Image

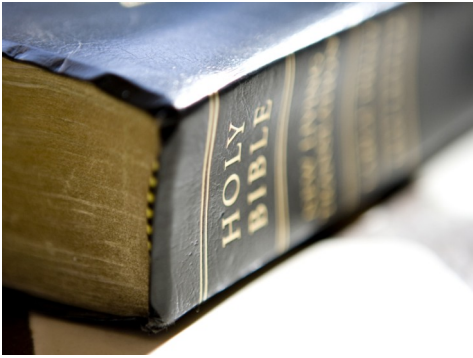
The topic of body image is usually associated with teenagers, but it's becoming an issue for younger children now, too. Media and advertising, toys, and peer pressure are among the many factors that make kids question their appearance and build.

But what's said and seen at home matters, too. Often parents inadvertently contribute to their child's body-image issues with their comments or through their own weight issues. A parent's focus on body image can make a child think his or her value is based solely on appearance. Here are tips for promoting healthy body image in your children:

- Emphasize that God created our bodies, which he calls "the temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- Model healthy eating. Show children how to make wise food choices, and don't require them to always clean their plates.
- Accept yourself. Resist an obsession with calories and pounds.

### INSIGHTS

- 80% of girls in third- through sixth-grade report displeasure with their bodies. Young girls say they're more afraid of becoming fat than they are of cancer, nuclear war, or losing their parents. (U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services)
- 36% of third-grade boys have tried to lose weight, and "muscle dysmorphia," an obsession with body size and shape, is on the rise among young males. (Time)



## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

**1. Turn to the Book**—Read and discuss Bible passages about beauty (see 1 Samuel 16:7; Proverbs 31:30; 1 Peter 3:3-4) and strength (see Isaiah 41:10; Ephesians 6:10-11; Philippians 4:13; 1 Timothy 4:8).



**2. Branch Out**—Encourage children to try new things. These experiences help affirm kids' bodies in unexpected ways. Also look for activities that diversify children's experiences, fortify their emotional strength, develop their talents and interests, and widen their circle of peers and mentors. Your church or children's ministry is a good place to start.

**3. Unique Creations**—Make clay sculptures of things that are important to each of you. Then talk about why you cherish and care for that item. Remind children that God cherishes and cares for us—and wants us to do the same with our bodies.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.  
(Psalm 139:14 NIV)

Everything God created is good, including our amazing bodies.  
One of the many things we can do with our bodies is praise  
God for caring for us physically.

### Chat with your children about body image by using these discussion starters:

1. Why did God give us bodies? What are some special things you can do with your body?
2. What does God want us to do with our bodies? How does God want us to take care of them?
3. What are some ways we can be kind to our bodies—and to other people's bodies?

## FAMILY EXPERIENCE

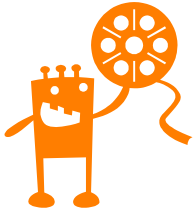
Try these activities to celebrate God's gift of our bodies. The first works well with younger children, and the second works well with preteens.

• **Hopping-Popping Bodies**—Help children draw a gingerbread-cookie-type person and then draw arrows from different parts of the body to the outer rim of the paper. From the head, help children write words that describe what they like to learn about. From the hands, write things they like to do. From the feet, places they like to go. From the stomach, things they like to eat, and so on.

Read aloud Psalm 139:14 and use your bodies to express the information on the papers. Have children act like kernels of popcorn. Have family members "burst" open with their answers as you mention each body part. For example, say: "We thank God for our minds to think about...." After everyone has popped up and shared an answer, move on to the next body part.

• **Wonderfully Made**—Remind older kids of how wonderfully God has made them. Read aloud Psalm 139:14. Discuss messages that today's society communicates about beauty and body image. Then describe what God sees in each person. Together, create a poster that communicates either Psalm 139:14 or our worth and image in Christ. Hang the poster near a mirror as a reminder of how much God values each of us.





# MEDIA MADNESS



## MOVIES

**Movie:** *Big Miracle*

**Genre:** Drama, Romance

**Rating:** PG (for language)

**Cast:** Drew Barrymore, John Krasinski, Kristen Bell

**Synopsis:** This film is based on the 1989 book *Freeing the Whales*. An Alaskan reporter and a Greenpeace volunteer work to save a family of gray whales trapped in ice in the Arctic Circle.

**Our Take:** Nature lovers and fans of *Dolphin Tale* will likely enjoy this movie. It can spark discussion about people's responsibilities to care for God's creation.



## MUSIC

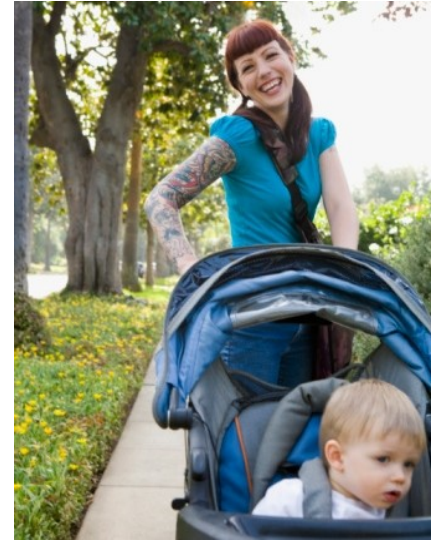
**Artist:** Kari Jobe

**Album:** *Where I Find You*

**Artist Info:** Jobe, a 30-year-old worship leader in Texas, knew her career path by age 10. Her self-titled debut album from 2009 was accompanied by a Spanish-language version, *Le Canto*.

**Summary:** Jobe uses music to bring people to Jesus, where they find peace, life, and healing. In her hit single "We Are," she reminds Christians that we "impact people's lives in everything we do."

**Our Take:** Jobe's voice and message shine in her pop tunes and acoustic ballads.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

- More new moms are getting inked to honor their offspring. Mothers say tattoos bearing their children's names leave little room for regret, unlike other types of tattoos. Tats also remind moms they're still "cool," even though they're parents. (babycenter.com)

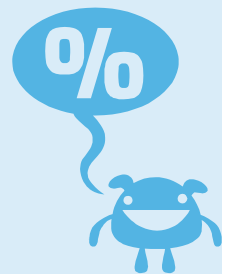
- Last year at ClubPenguin.com, children adopted more than 25 million Puffles, or virtual pets. The *Club Penguin Times* is read as much as *The New York Times*. (Mashable.com)

## QUICK STATS

- One-quarter of America's 16 million Latino children live in poverty. (pewhispanic.org)

- 80% of a person's brain develops by age 3. The intellectual, social, and spiritual information you instill early on sets an important foundation. (firststeps.us)

- 52% of families have been members of their current church for 10 years or more. (Children's Ministry)



## GAMES

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>National Geographic Challenge</i>	Players can brush up on geography, science, and history as they answer questions and complete puzzles. Best for kids ages 8 and up.	E; Xbox 360, Wii, PS3
<i>YourSphere</i>	This kids-only social-networking site offers blogging, games, social interaction, and more. Parents can view all their children's online activity.	YourSphere.com is appropriate for preteens.
<i>iSock</i>	A sock puppet's mouth mimics your speech as you talk. Young children—and their parents—will have fun being creative with this app.	Requires a smart phone with sound; 99 cents at iTunes.

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't 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.



## Mirror, mirror...



It's true, children learn a lot from their parents — some of it we want them to learn, some of it we'd really rather they didn't notice. I've always wished for longer legs and skin that tans (rather than burns and freckles) — but those things are not in my control. My niece was born with albinism, something certainly not within her control, or that of her parents. I know there were challenges, as there always are when we are different in any way, but her family affirmed that although her skin and hair were not like those around her, she was a beautiful child of God.

Perhaps the things that are so obviously beyond our control are easier to accept. While something (like weight) which is at least partly in our control, is tougher. As stated in the lead article, the media and peers can have a great deal of influence on our kids, but as parents and church family, we still count - a lot! Being aware of our own attitudes (and keeping them in check if need be) is an important starting place. Providing healthy food and opportunities for kids to be kids — and be physical are the next steps. Then it's up to all of us to affirm the immeasurable value of each little body — as a wondrous creation and a special child of God.

Blessings,  
Suzan Hendrickson, Children's Minister

*1 Samuel 16:7b For the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.*

## Ministry Teams Now Forming

### Nursery Team



It's time to put together a ministry team in support of the youngest among us! We know that a visitor who brings a baby or toddler to church will only return if they are 100% comfortable with the facility and care available for their child. Our little ones are precious and deserve our best! If you are interested in helping to make sure they receive our best, contact our Children's Minister, [Suzan Hendrickson](#).

### Teacher Appreciation Team

What would we do without those special people who teach our children in Sunday School and lead them in Godly Play, week after week?



If you want to be part of the team that shows our volunteers how much we appreciate them, contact [Suzan Hendrickson](#).

## Dreaming Big !!!

We're dreaming big for Vacation Bible School at Creekwood!

- ◆ Could we share our VBS with children who wouldn't otherwise benefit from the experience? If so, how and where?
- ◆ How can we fund VBS and not charge a fee?

This year's VBS (June 11-15) is a return to the "marketplace" theme Creekwood does so well; however, to make it happen we need your help and ideas!

Join us **Sunday, February 19 at 1:30PM** (after Lunch Bunch) in the New Perspectives room. Can't make it to the meeting, but interested in volunteering? Please email Stacey Hammond [staceyhammond4701@gmail.com](mailto:staceyhammond4701@gmail.com). We can't do it without **you!**

Planning a summer vacation?

Journey to **BABYLON**

without leaving town!

**DANIEL'S COURAGE  
IN CAPTIVITY**

VBS is June 11-15, 2012

## Your child is a Prayer Partner

Creekwood children age 3 through 5th grade are matched with an adult who has committed to pray for them at least once a week throughout the year. And in return your child is asked to pray for their adult partner. What a wonderful opportunity to teach your child to pray for another (beyond his/her family).

The Prayer Partner ministry invites us to give the gift of prayer to one another — what a blessing!

## Discover new ways to pray

There are so very many ways to pray, yet we tend to use just one or two most of the time. Check out the "Ways to Pray" rack on the table under the Welcome Center window on Sunday and pick up information on some prayer methods that may be new to you. Be adventurous! You just may find a way that draws you closer to God. Some of these are great to practice with children and as a family - especially, take a look at examen and examen for children.



## Prayer Day for Children

I observe a monthly "Prayer Day for Children" on the third Thursday of each month, unless otherwise noted. Please feel free to contact me at [shendrickson@creekwood.org](mailto:shendrickson@creekwood.org) with any special needs you'd like me to be aware of in this time of prayer. — Suzan Hendrickson