



Bi-monthly Update Extra : Training and Conference Digest

Letter from Lorraine

This is our third training and conference digest and we hope that these are proving interesting and useful to you. We hope that twice a year is about right and that we are sharing just the right amount of information. As always, we do appreciate any feedback.

Ongoing training is an invaluable part of our role, keeping our skills and knowledge up to date and enabling us to share this with you.

If you want to know more about any of the issues raised, then feel free to contact the CYDO or team member in question and I am sure they will be more than happy to share their full notes with you or chat about what they have learned.



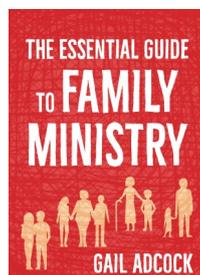
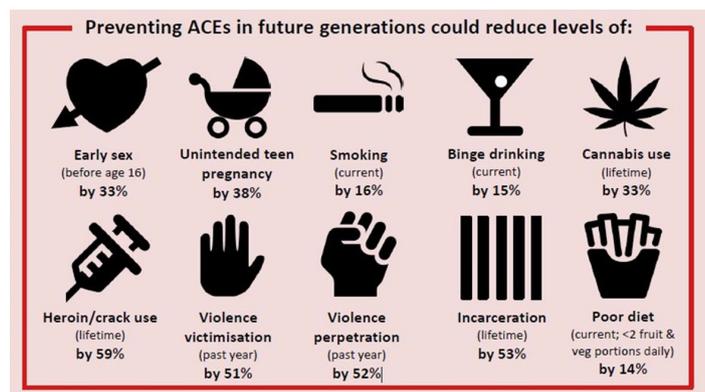

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NETWORK CONFERENCE : *Statistics about ACEs and the Good Childhood Report from the Children's Society and Girl Guides research delivered by Sam Richards. More details in our March online resource page.*

'ACEs' is the acronym for ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES. Recent research has shown that exposure to adverse childhood experiences can have lasting effect into later years—the more of these a child experiences having multiple and cumulative effects on their life chances as toxic stress influences brain and organ development.

- ACEs include a family history of (not exclusively): Maternal depression, emotional and physical neglect, divorce, mental illness, incarceration, homelessness, domestic violence, substance abuse, emotional and sexual abuse . They may be exacerbated by discrimination, poverty, lack of opportunity, poor housing, community disruption etc.
- 23% of children and young people have experienced one ACE,
- 16% have experienced two to three ACEs
- 9% have experienced four ACEs.
- Living through four or more ACEs can reduce life expectancy by up to 20 years!

Children are less happy than in the past, with more mental health issues occurring in under 18s, fewer feeling secure in their friendships, more being concerned about their appearance (with this now affecting an increased number of boys as well as girls).

There is an online training course about Adverse Childhood Experiences and Early Trauma which discusses ways of building resilience at: http://courses.e-learningstudios.com/aces/story_html5.html?lms=1



BOOK REVIEW : *The Essential Guide to Family Ministry* by Gail Adcock (Reviewed by Judy Harris, CYDO for Synod of Wales)

This book is useful to those who are new to family ministry and those who are experienced practitioners. It is an easy read which guides you through firstly the theology and theory behind family ministry, and then in the second part, it looks at the seven aspects of family ministry from 'be strategic' to 'be reflective' and everything in between.

At the end of each chapter you are posed some questions which enables the reader to reflect on their own practice and consider for themselves how to develop in their ministry.

HOMEGROWN—Methodist church streamed conference (*notes from Lorraine Webb, Programme Officer for CYW*)



This was a two day conference, the first day as part of a live audience for a live-stream which can be viewed in full on the Methodist Church website <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/children-youth-family-ministry/upcoming-events/homegrown-8-october-2019/the-streams/> and the second day as small group discussion. The focus was how to promote the nurturing of faith at home and there were speakers from Care for the Family, Who Let the Dads Out and BRF Parenting for Faith.

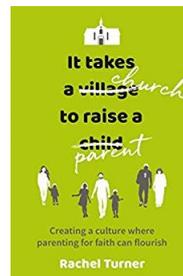
Children will have spent an average of 21,900 daytime hours at home by the age of 10—it would take a church 421 years to have the same amount of contact with a child! The reality is that children will undoubtedly learn more from their parents and from their home environment than ever they will from our teaching in church, so it is vital that churches become more aware of how to encourage and equip parents to be confident in sharing their own faith, including their doubts and questions, with their children so that they model faith in a realistic way. There are many hurdles: time, confidence and a sense of inadequacy for the job, but these can all be overcome.

As church families, we need to shift our focus from planting seeds to nurturing the soil—supporting and encouraging parents. We need to remove the culture which sets us up as the “experts in faith”, dispel any sense of guilt (an integral part of being a parent before we even start to mention faith), help parents take the lead and encourage them to see the simple things they can do which will make a difference. The church can make very practical changes to get to know and to support parents, including thinking about meeting and social times so that parents are able to get to them and feel an integral part of the community.

We need to equip, empower and support rather than just dumping responsibility on the parents. Rachel Turner described parents as seeing the church like going to the dentist—a place where they are made to feel vulnerable and guilty (do you floss daily??) - but that it should be more like IKEA which says “you are unique and different—we are here to serve and help you find your way to help your family flourish”. We need to cast a vision of what their child has in Christ.

Parenting for Faith has 5 key tools in “It takes a church to raise a parent”:

- create windows—allow kids glimpses of what your relationship with God looks like
- Unwind— gently unwind misconceptions, building in a broad and balanced understanding of who God is.
- chatting and catching—encourage children in prayer and hearing God’s voice; chatting to him about everything that is on their hearts and catching his response, however he chooses to speak
- surfing the waves -spot what God is doing in a child’s life
Rachel Turner
- framing—explaining – what God is doing, why things happen, who he is. Show kids how God works in all of life, show them how to explore the Bible well and work through any question they might have.



RHYTHMS OF GRACE CONFERENCE FOR CHURCH-BASED TODDLER GROUPS IN LONDON—(notes by Lorraine Webb, Programme Officer for Children’s and Youth Work)

There are estimated to be over 20,000 church-based toddler groups in the UK , reaching out to families in a non-threatening way and demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ in a tangible form. The 1001 critical days: healthy social and emotional development during the first 1001 days from conception to age 2 lay the foundations for lifelong mental and physical health and their future development. Early relationships between babies and their parents are incredibly important for building healthy brains. Tackling adversity and supporting early relationships leads to better futures.

Setting up a bumps and babies group can provide much needed support for new mums, especially if they are struggling. Focus is on the mums rather than on the babies. Try enlisting some older congregation members to interact with babies! Toddlers and older children not allowed as they change the dynamic. Have soft start and end times—breakfast is good!

<https://parentinfantfoundation.org.uk/1001-days/campaigning-resources/>

www.1277.org.uk A national strategy group for church-based toddler groups in the UK—also has facebook page 1277make themcount

www.careforthefamily.org.uk/working_with_families/churches/playtime Regular newsletters, training events, handouts etc

<https://let.theirlightshine.com> Excellent craft ideas for a church-based toddler group

www.wholetthedadsout.org.uk a growing movement which encourages and supports dads to engage with preschool-aged children

London Network of Parent and Toddler Groups



TACKLING THE CRISIS OF MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

(notes by Megan Tilbrook, C and YP Development Practitioner for Yorkshire Synod)

Organised by: ACC (Association for Christian Counsellors), Pastoral Care UK & Premier Lifeline

Lynne Souter Anderson: Director or Bridging Creative Therapies Consultancy in Cambridgeshire



Play therapy is a young branch of psychotherapy and used particularly in work with children and young teenagers (but not exclusively). Play is a natural part of a child's development and a way in which children communicate and interact with one another, adults and the wider world. Play therapy allows children and young people to 'talk through the metaphor' to identify and process difficult situations and feelings that they are experiencing.

Lynne Souter Anderson works primarily with children using sand and clay therapies.

Books; Making Meaning: Clay Therapy with Children & Adolescents & Seeking Shelter, Seeking Safety: Clay Therapy with Families and Groups

Ronnie Lamont : Faith and Nurture Advisor and Author based in Canterbury

Ronnie has worked in parish ministry in various capacities (and written about her experiences). She is currently conducting a project to investigate what enable young people to flourish.

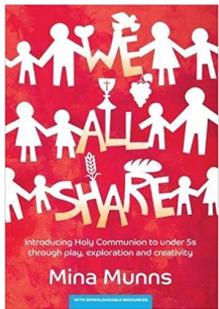
Her research builds on Rebecca Nye's Spiritual Foundations; Space, Process, Imagination, Relationship & Intimacy, and Westerhoff's Guidelines for including Young People (Share Story, Authority, Ritual & Life).

I found Ronnie to be a really interesting individual with lots to share, easy to listen to and relate to.

Cecilia Essau : Research Explorer based in Roehampton

Key Learning: Low self-esteem, worry and loneliness are the main contributors to development of anxiety in young people. Anxiety and depression is 30% in our genetics, 50% associated with our primary environment and 20% related to our shared environment. Anxious behaviours are modelled, learned and reinforced which places responsibility on primary caregivers to model effective strategies of managing anxiety and supporting children and young people. This was demonstrated in a study where children were instructed to prepare for a presentation. Half of the participants were closely monitored and instructed by their parents and the other half given more freedom in preparing their work. The prescriptive, controlling parenting led to more anxious behaviours in children compared to parents who granted autonomy.

Super Skills for Life: Prevention and Early Intervention for Anxiety and Depression in Young People <https://www.superskillsforlife.com> (A global school based program)



BOOK REVIEW *We all share.* Mina Munns

(Reviewed by Jane Henderson, CYDO for East Midlands Synod)

https://www.amazon.co.uk/We-All-Share-Mina-Munns/dp/1848679394/ref=sr_1_2?keywords=we+all+share+mina+munns&qid=1578057811&sr=8-2

We all share is a book that explains how under 5's can engage in worship and holy communion. It is written by an Anglican priest and a lot of the case studies used are based on Anglican churches, but there are lots of examples and suggestions that work across denominations.

The book has downloadable resources as well as sample session plans for junior church sessions with under 5's.

There are ideas for how to enable and engage children in the whole service, if they stay in. The book explains under 5's in both worship and at communion, with practical ideas as well as stories from church leaders and parents. There is also a section on how to use ideas in the home to continue to explain faith and worship especially around mealtimes. There are links to web resources such as www.nurseryrhymemass.org.uk and suggestions for liturgy boxes – boxes of things to engage under 5's.

This book is great for all those who lead worship or work with under 5's in church and are looking for ways to engage them.

NATIONAL YOUTH MINISTRY WEEKEND 15TH-17TH NOVEMBER 2019 (notes by Steven Mitchell, CYDO for Mersey Synod)

Venue: Resorts World, Birmingham Theme: Infinite Possibilities

Over 1000 youth workers from across the UK and beyond attended for a series of seminars and main sessions.

Each of the main sessions looked at a different aspect of infinite possibilities. Friday night main session- Dealing with disappointments; Saturday am main session- Infinite possibilities in politics; Saturday pm main session- Exploring the life of Josephine Butler; Sunday am main session- Joy as an act of resistance

Some of the seminars I attended throughout the weekend The Feast- interfaith dialogue. Produced a great resource of sessions looking at how we disagree well; Theology of the female body. Looking at how adverts and the church view women and sex; Radically listening to Young People- A student who is doing her doctorate around this idea shared some of her findings. ;Experimenting with Jesus- New research by Christian charity Youthscape, looking at the impact of leading young people in the practices of Christian faith rather than teaching them (fasting, prayer etc); Youth Ministry for the long haul- a panel discussion from older youth workers exploring what has helped them in their ministry.

There were at least forty or fifty seminars you could attend so I only got a small sample. You can buy all of the talks for £30.

A really great event which has a broad range of speakers and topics and caters for many different theological positions.

The 2020 event has almost sold out but tickets are still available. <https://www.youthscape.co.uk/nymw>



RESTOR(Y)ING THE IMAGINATION - JAMES KA SMITH 26TH SEPTEMBER 2019 @LICC (*notes from Sam Richards HCYW*)

1. You are what you love:

Not enough to have right ideas (think and believe) - need to attend what we love, long for, desire. Faith needs to be more embodied for a deeper formation than just our head, which enlists our heart.

2. You might not love what you think:

Our most fundamental desires are our habits - instilled by practices we give ourselves over to. Our hearts are trained and aimed by what we have practiced our way into. This explains the gap between knowing and doing the right thing. The rhythms, practices and patterns (rituals, liturgies) of this culture recruit our affections. We are not always aware of how we are formed by them (eg as consumers).

We need to be intentional if we are to learn to love what God loves – we need to give ourselves to practices that foster this, new habits.

3. You make what you want:

God has made us to be makers - image-bearers to cultivate creation's possibilities, entrusted with the culture-making work of what God desires for creation, across a range of vocations (artists or parents, farmers or financiers). Our culture-making work arises from our loving - so we want this to overflow from hearts that love God and what God loves.

So we need to curate our hearts by being intentional and attentive to the routines and practices we give our hearts over to. This is what Worship does. Worship is where we catch vision of what we are to be and of what God wants for the whole world. It is where we are confronted with the rival visions we have been captured by. This is the work of Spirit: formation for work, for mission.

Worship is everything that the people of God do when they gather around Word and Table. It is an invitation into the life of the Trinity. Worship is a centripetal gathering for centrifugal scattering. The end of worship is outward. Worship re-centres us in the story. There is no dualism of worship or mission, sacred or secular - we worship for mission, we gather for sending, we are the body for the sake of the world.

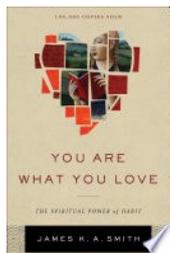
Restor(y)ing our imagination:

Worship forms us (not just informs us) through immersion. It affects our hearts and transforms our imaginations. All humans are animated by an implicit story that tells them who they are, what the world is, and what they should be doing. We are storied animals, narrative beings. We all live as though we are a character in some type of story.

What God is doing in us in worship is sanctifying our imaginations - restorying us into God's story. We need to be moved (not just convinced). Reformation of our loves is more like reforming our habits. It is a transformation of imagination. We are embodied creatures - worship gives us embodied practices. Church is that re-centring community where Biblical narrative is most intentionally rehearsed communally.

People want the haunting, enchanting experience of encounter with the divine they can't control, and of friendship through community.

Discipling children and young people needs to move away from being informational to being formational. Children are naturally ritual-loving. Family is gateway into this, the formation of habits. There is no formation without repetition.



You Are What You Love

James K.A. Smith

https://www.amazon.co.uk/You-Are-What-Love-Spiritual/dp/158743380X/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=You+are+what+you+love&qid=1569939803&s=gateway&sr=8-1

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Our Data privacy note is here: https://www.urc.org.uk/images/Children-and-youth/documents/CYW_Data_Privacy_Notice.pdf