



Winter 2010

Sharing our ministry to youth in Kitsap and Mason Counties

Torched by Religion...Angry at God

By Maudi Newman, CL, Shelton Area Director

Last year 6 of the 7 students I took to RockRidge Camp had been "torched" by religion and were angry at God. Carl and Tom, enjoyed the games and engaged in activities, but never let their guard down. My four girls shared their stories, but never got involved. In fact they worked their hardest to sabotage any encounter with God so they could come home and say, "We gave God a chance and He failed!"

I sobbed the entire drive home. I realized the only thing I could do for these students was to remain engaged in their lives - no matter how little they would let me - and pray.

For years Carl attended Wednesday night elementary Bible study. But unanswered questions, harsh judgments and unmet needs for acceptance at "church," jaded him.

Tom knows all about Jesus, but in his mind, Jesus hasn't done anything for him. His mom was a "great Christian" but one day, in a fit of rage, she tried to kill him. She drove her car, as fast as she could, straight at him. Tom still goes to church with his dad, but he's only biding his time until he's old enough for "life" to begin.

Melissa and Angela both have dads who have rejected them. Literally, kicking the girls out to make room for the new "women" in their lives. Now, their concept of God as a Father leaves them not wanting a Dad at all.

Sarah and Susan lost their mom, even though the local church prayed for her healing. In their grief, they suffered even more at the pithy, empty "words of healing" such as, "God needed your mommy." As a result, they still can't reconcile their painful loneliness with God. So when Sarah showed up on my doorstep Tuesday night I was astonished.



"Could Susan and I go to camp again? I know we can't get a scholarship but I was thinking we could sell cotton candy at the high school. Here's the paperwork to get it approved."

Though skeptical, I promised to look into it. The next night she brought Susan. In total disbelief that they had any desire to go back to camp, I asked, "Why do you want to go back?"

"We want to do everything we didn't do last year," Sarah said. "We didn't try to have fun last year because we really didn't want to go to camp. But this summer, I can't stop thinking about it. I really want to go back."

"Yah," Susan added, "she cries about it all the time."

"I can't help it." Sarah shrugged, as she wiped the corners of her eyes.

"So," I said, "what are you going to do about God? You know we're going to talk about Him."

The next week the girls popped in again. We spent over two hours, laughing and sharing camp memories. In a funny way, I heard an apology for their drama and undermining attitudes. I sensed a softening of their hearts.

"I do pray now," said Sarah. "I feel I'm supposed to go back to RockRidge with you, Maudi. It's like you're my gateway to God." I quickly shared that it was the Holy Spirit's job to draw her to the Lord, not mine, but I'm glad to do whatever I can to help.

And you know what? Within 3 days Carl and Tom approached me about going again. They all know the drill. They must bring a friend who hasn't come before. Fundraising ideas are flying as are my prayers and wonderment. Camp costs \$579 per person and all of my students were poor - even before the recession. Would you help them give God a second chance? I know they want one. ♦♦♦

Every Picture Has a Story - Youth For Christ's Annual Benefit Dinner

Mason County - Alderbrook Inn
7101 Washington-106, Union, WA 98592
Thursday, February 25th 6:30pm

Kitsap County - Christian Life Center
1780 Lincoln Ave SE, Port Orchard, WA 98366
Friday, February 26th 6:30pm

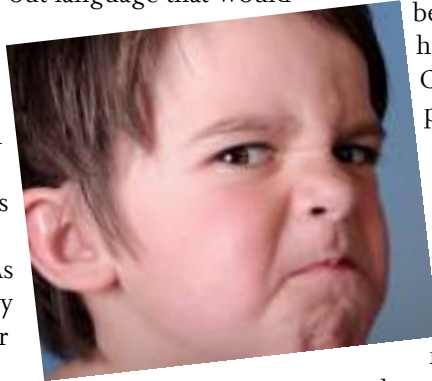
RSVP Online at www.yfcwps.org or by phone at 888.541.3112

Can't I just call them Mom and Dad?

by Nikki Lundberg, Foster Care

At the beginning of summer, 6 year-old Eddie had been in his foster home for 1-1/2 years. He was finally becoming stable when he learned he wouldn't see his birth parents again, nor would his foster parents become his "forever family." At the best of times, Eddie is difficult. But this news sent him into the worst of times. He escalated into full-blown raging tantrums, spewing out language that would shock most any adult.

Ever since Eddie came to their home the foster parents have been committed and faithful to see him through to his "forever family," but his tantrums and language became so bad they considered having him moved. As they prayed they felt compelled by God to keep Eddie until a "forever home" could be found.



Eddie functions best in a tightly-structured environment. We worked with the social worker and another agency to put support services in place to provide structure during the summer months for the foster family. When school began in September, we prayed he would stabilize - but that hope lasted only about a week.

I was honored and surprised to be invited to join the Adoption Committee and we selected a couple in the southeast. A few weeks later, on a special popcorn night, the social worker, foster mother, Eddie and I watched a DVD the "forever family" made for Eddie. He sat quietly throughout the movie.

At the end the social worker asked him, "Do you re-

member the names of your "forever parents?" In a shy voice he said, "Can't I just call them Mom and Dad?"

This wasn't the reaction anyone expected, but it was a glimpse of hope that this could work. For me, this affirmed the Lord had selected this family.

In October, Eddie began talking with his new "forever parents" by phone and via webcam. Although he enjoyed the visits and looked forward to the calls, it also made him feel insecure and fearful of the future. True to pattern, his behavior grew worse both at home and school. We had hoped to have him in his permanent home by Christmas, but that hope was dashed when unexpected paperwork issues arose.

By the end of December, Eddie was kicked out of his fourth daycare in two years and the foster parents were once again debating about holding on. The social worker and I added extra help through January 25th - the target date for placement. But by the 23rd our hopes were down. At our YFC staff meeting that morning, we fervently prayed for a resolution.

Eddie's terrible behavior was dragging down everyone around him. Assuming the paperwork wouldn't arrive, we extended extra services till the end of January. But, that afternoon, God answered our prayer. The final paperwork arrived and the plane reservations were made.

That afternoon, God answered our prayer.

Eddie's "forever parents" arrived the 26th of January. He gave them each a big hug and within the first hour they played Twister on the foster parents' living room floor. He "showed-off" his new parents at church on Sunday and the whole congregation gave them a grand farewell. ♦♦♦

Just a normal kid...

by Phil Daubenspeck, Campus Life Director

We first met Bill two years ago when he was a small 7th grader. He came to campus life for the girls and the food. He would hang out and play the games, sometimes even opening up a bit during the discussion times. We were able to get him a half scholarship to camp and he paid for the rest. At camp, Bill had the time of his life, while also seeing his need for a true relationship with Jesus Christ.

Bill comes from a great family! His parents both work and are great role models for him. He gets along well with his siblings and they are the classic middle class family. He has everything he needs and a lot of what he wants.

While at camp, Bill was shocked by the true life stories of some of his



friends. Many of these friends grew up without parents at home or simply with parents who didn't care. Bill and I had many conversations that week about these feelings. Many nights, both he and I cried together from the pain we felt for the other guys in the cabin.

That week at camp, because of the pain he saw in others, and the relief he found in giving that pain to Christ, Bill came to understand his need for Jesus and gave his life to Him. The most exciting and encouraging news is that in the past two years since his decision to follow Christ, Bill has plugged into church. It took a couple months to find the right fit but he has been in the same youth ministry now for the last eighteen months and is flourishing!

That is what Campus Life is all about - reaching EVERY KID - EVERYWHERE, sharing Christ with them and getting them planted into a local church! ♦♦♦

Ashley

By Nancy Kuhuski, Teen Parent Director

"I grew up in foster care and made some bad choices. Shortly after turning 18, I found out I was pregnant. My water broke at 28 weeks and I was rushed to the hospital for an emergency c-section. Sarah was so tiny and fragile, weighing only 2 lbs 4 oz. I wasn't even allowed to hold her at first."

Ashley was overwhelmed when I got to the hospital. "I don't know how I can leave her here, what if I cry?" she asked. I told her it was ok and I would cry if I had to leave my baby at the hospital. She shared her fears about being a good mom and how unprepared she felt. After giving her a Bible and a stuffed animal, I told her I'd be praying for her.

A few days later, Ashley called sobbing. "Someone called CPS and said I'm using drugs and am an unfit mother. I'm so angry and scared! What if Sarah is put in foster care? I've been there and want so much more for her than what I had."

Ashley had been staying with friends she thought were stable. They even put her on their cell phone plan. But then, within days of her leaving the hospital, threats, manipulations and verbal abuse caused her to leave. Having nowhere to go, she found herself homeless and phoneless, as they shut off her phone - her lifeline to the hospital.

She could barely control the sobs as she poured out her heart. "They told me yesterday my baby has a hole in her heart. I'm waiting for a call back from the doctor to explain what it means and what they're going to do, but they can't call me now. Also, CPS says I can't bring Sarah home unless I have a stable place to live. What if I don't find a place in time?" With desperation she said, "My baby can't go into foster care. She just can't."

As Ashley and I discussed housing options, she saw the Scripture hanging on my wall. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11. Tears streamed down her face as she shared that she had asked Jesus into her heart a couple weeks ago. I shared with her that Jesus was now walking with her through this entire situation and that His promises, like in Jeremiah 29:11, are true for her life as well.

"What do you think is the next step?" I asked.

"Church?" she replied. "That's a great next step and just the beginning of growing a relationship with Christ."

For the first time in many weeks, I saw Ashley smile as she found some preemie clothes and diapers in our baby boutique. "Where did all this come from?" she asked. I shared how people with big hearts, who really care about teen moms like her, had donated

them. "It's hard to believe people would do this for people who 'messed up' in their lives," she stated. "I never thought I'd be one of *those* girls."

"Ashley, the beautiful thing is you know Jesus now and He will use even these hard times in your life for good if you allow Him."

After we prayed together, Ashley left with a smile on her face, hope in her heart, and peace in her spirit. ♦♦♦

Only in Jesus... By Deanne Montgomery, ILS Director

"Can I still get a ride to church?" Darla quietly asked as the training session ended. "I've been invited to youth group and I don't want to be late."

I was pleased to be asked and on the ride Darla began to tell about things she had heard in her "church experiences." After a few minutes she asked, "Why do Christians hurt kids and then just go to church like nothing happened?"

I swallowed my shock and tried to explain how some people may "profess or claim" to be Christian, but they really aren't. Others, who are Christians, don't always live the way God tells us to.

"Can God understand what I'm going through?"

"And another thing," Darla went on, "I'm worried about my friend Suzie. She went back to live with her step father after foster care, even though he was the reason she was put in foster care originally. Now after sexual abuse and porn and stuff... Suzie has changed. She's got a live-in 'girlfriend.' How can she do that?"

I talked about how ugly sin is and how it devours everything in its path. Darla asked, "Can God understand what I'm going through?" I prayed as I shared with her about God's word and how nothing under the sun is new. "God loves all of us and doesn't want any of us to suffer," I said, "but God allows us to make choices."

We talked about how even the ugliest, nastiest things on this earth are no shock to God and that He provides shelter from the sin of the world.

"Is being a Christian easy?" asked Darla.

"No, definitely not. It's probably harder than not being a Christian, but the blessing and comfort of knowing I am never alone and that God is my protector makes it worth every minute!" In that 30 minute drive we discussed many things found in the pages of God's Word and how He transforms lives. We talked about God's gift of life through the sacrifice of His Son and how salvation is only found through Jesus.

In her driveway she turned to me and said, "Thank you for driving me home and thank you for telling me about all the stuff in the Bible; you've given me a lot to think about."

I prayed over and over that night about Darla, knowing she is hungry for knowledge and that God is at work. The next morning, I found a voice message from Darla, "Thank you, Deanne, I know you were busy last night but you took time for me." ♦♦♦



An Executive Editorial...

“We’ve become preoccupied with good to great, when God’s plan is for us to move from good, to great, to Godly.”

I love this quote. I see the challenge. This quote from YFC/USA President Dan Wolgemuth has stuck with me since I heard it at our recent YFC Mid-Winter Conference.

Dan said, “unless we are focused on our Savior, great ministry will not happen. Great ministry will take place if, and only **if**, our ministry is focused on Christ.”

I am proud to be a part of a National, no, a global team of ministry workers seeking to do Godly ministry sharing the Good News with every kid - everywhere.

As I grow in my role as Executive Director, I continue to recognize the extremely important task for YFCWPS to be excellent in every way...in the normal “business” functions of our office and the ministry that happens on a daily basis.

For years, YFCWPS has been known at DSHS for our great service to them. We are consistently told our work is excellent, our people are great and our love for kids truly shines through. May God continue to bless us in this man-

ner. But, it is not only the State of WA that has this opinion. Since 1982, YFCWPS has focused on serving the church and being a leader in youth ministry throughout Kitsap and Mason Counties.

As you will see in this newsletter, we are reaching kids who don’t even know what it means to be good, let alone godly. But that is our mission, *reaching every young person in Kitsap and Mason Counties with the Gospel of Jesus Christ*. We want to show these kids, not what it means to be good...but what it means to be Godly.

Philippians 1:10 “...walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

Thank you for partnering with us in our goal to move Kitsap and Mason Counties “from good, to great, to Godly.” ♦♦♦

Joshua Hinman
Executive Director



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