

Are Our Children Spiritual Champions?

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After listening to Dr. Roo McKenzie, Principal, Loma Linda Academy, at the recent Western Canadian Teacher's Convention, I decided to purchase the recommended book by George Barna, "Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions". His book is based on 25 years of research, and suggests children should be the target audience of evangelism. You see, there is a probability of 32% of children between the ages of 5-12 embracing Jesus as his or her Savior. When children reach the age of 13-18, there is a 4% chance of embracing Jesus as his or her Savior, and adults have a 6% chance of embracing Jesus as his or her Savior.

So, George Barna in his book suggests why and how pastors, teachers, and parents need to work together to make spiritual champions out of our children. Following are a few excerpts from the book mentioned above that makes a pastor, a teacher, a parent or anyone working with children stop and think:

Young people admit to being highly influenced by their role models but nearly half of all preteens admit that they don't have any role models." p. 25

"Every choice we make is ultimately a spiritual decision." p. 30

"One kid leading another kid to the foot of the Cross for a life-changing encounter with Jesus is one of the most prolific and effective means of evangelism in the nation." p. 49

"The bottom line is that a person's moral foundation is either based upon Christian spirituality and God's Word, or it is based on worldly perspectives." p. 53

May I suggest that Adventist Education is a terrific evangelism tool? What an opportunity we have at our fingertips to introduce students to Jesus Christ their Forever Friend! We need to be inviting children and their parents to come and worship in our churches, and be a part of a great church, including education.

If you have not purchased your copy of the book from your local ABC, I would suggest you do so soon. This book is a "must read" for teachers, pastors, and parents who are concerned for their children's spiritual welfare.

My thought questions to you are: How involved are you with child evangelism? Is there a church school in your area? How important is Adventist Education to you as a parent, teacher, pastor, or member? Is it important enough for you to help build spiritual champions out of our children? What are you going to do about it from now on? With God on our side, anything is possible. I believe He wants spiritual champions out of His children. It is up to us as adults to make sure every opportunity is available for our children to become spiritual champions. It has been said by young people, "we are not the church of tomorrow, we are the church of today." Let us be sure we are doing our part.

George Barna concludes, “*The transformation of children into spiritual champions may not happen even if we devote our best resources to the task, but the possibility is worth the risk.*” p. 135

Resources

- Barna, George. *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions*. Published by Regal Gospel Light, Ventura, California, USA. Copyright 2003.