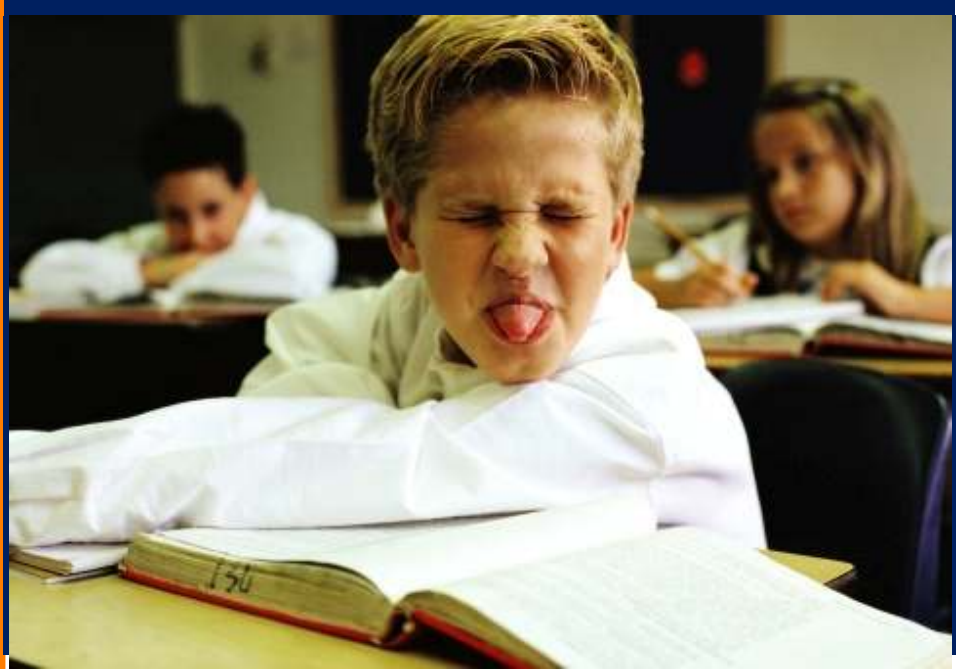




# the Parent LINK

Children's Ministry Edition



January 2012

Sunshine Alley Children's Ministry  
St. Mark's United Methodist Church



## POWERSOURCE

### ASK GOD:

1. For guidance as you set appropriate rules and boundaries.
2. To help you deal with rebellion in a calm, positive, and loving manner.
3. To forgive you when you rebel against God and his commands.

## Deal With Rebellion Constructively

Because of sin, all of us rebel against authorities and God. As parents quickly discover, children are no exception. These little "angels" assert independence by rebelling against rules from a young age. But the Bible instructs parents to discipline children out of love, molding them into Christians who strive to obey God and respect other people. Use these strategies for dealing with rebellion as children grow:

- Birth to 2 years: Accept that God gives even newborns the ability to display unique temperaments. Provide lots of comfort and warmth.
- 3 to 4 years: Listen carefully and respond to children's physical and emotional needs. Explore what upsets them. Model Christ's love by giving kids affection.
- 5 to 7 years: Offer choices and clear consequences for disobedience. Balance your demands with warmth and reason.
- 8 to 12 years: Consistently enforce rules. Let children know you trust them, and praise them for a job well done. Evaluate tough situations and ask what kids can do differently next time.

### INSIGHTS

- survey of 2,000 parents with children ages 2 to 11, 38% said they use the same discipline method as their own parents did.
- Parents report using the following discipline methods frequently: time-outs (42%), removal of privileges (41%), sending to bedroom (27%), yelling (13%), and spanking (9%).
- One-third of parents believe their discipline approach is ineffective.

*(cpj.sagepub.com)*



“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”—and I am the worst of them all. But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners.  
(1 Timothy 1:15)

God used Paul, who once persecuted Christians, to spread the news of God’s grace and forgiveness.

## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

**1. When You Were My Age—**Share with children some of the rules you had to follow while growing up, whether they’re different from or similar to your current household rules. Then discuss some ways rules are good for us, even when we don’t like to follow them.

**2. God’s Grace—**While discussing people in the Bible who made bad choices and faced consequences, be sure to emphasize God’s grace, as well. For example, King David suffered greatly after sinning, but he sought—and received—God’s forgiveness.



**3. Commandments 2.0—**Work together to reword each of God’s Ten Commandments as a loving guideline from a loving God. For example, you may write, “Because I want you to be protected from religions that would mislead you, don’t have any other gods except me.”

## Discuss rebellion and obedience by asking children these conversation-starting questions:

1. What makes people rebel, or break the rules? Why is it sometimes difficult to do what we’re supposed to do?
2. How is rule-setting an act of love? What should we do when a rule doesn’t seem loving or when we disagree with it?
3. How does God respond to our sins and mistakes? How do you respond when other people break rules, and why?

## FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Use these activities to share the message that God wants us to follow and obey him.

• **The Master’s Voice—**Set up an obstacle course and have family members take turns trying to navigate it while blindfolded. Designate one person to give correct directions while everyone else shouts out wrong directions. Afterward, discuss what it was like trying to decide which voice to trust. Read John 10:1-5. Ask: “What makes it difficult to hear God’s voice and follow his instructions? What are some ways God speaks to us and helps us learn to hear him?” Close in prayer, asking God to make you good listeners and followers of him.

• **Family Footprints—**Make imprints of your feet as reminders to walk with God. You’ll need a large sheet of black plastic, sand, plaster of Paris, water, and a mixing bucket. Pour 3 inches of sand onto the black plastic. Mix enough water into the sand so it’ll hold a mold. Mix the plaster of Paris and water in the bucket according to the directions. Help each family member press a foot 2 inches into the sand. Carefully pour plaster into each footprint. The plaster takes 30 minutes to harden.



While prints are drying, read aloud Joshua 22:5 and discuss what it means to walk with God. Ask: “What ways do we rely on each other? What ways do you rely on God? How are these ways similar or different?” When the footprints have hardened, gently dig them out. Then display them in your yard or garden as reminders to obey and walk with God.



# MEDIA MADNESS



## MOVIES

**Movie:** *We Bought a Zoo*

**Genre:** Comedy, Drama

**Rating:** PG (for language and some thematic elements)

**Cast:** Matt Damon, Elle Fanning

**Synopsis:** After his wife dies, a father moves his family to a new home that comes with a struggling private zoo. The ensuing adventures help the family pull together and heal.

**Our Take:** Use this film, based on a real story, as a launching point to discuss challenges you've faced and overcome as a family.



## MUSIC

**Artist:** Rachel Chan

**Album:** *Go*

**Artist Info:** Rachel is the 15-year-old daughter of preacher and author Francis Chan.

**Summary:** Rachel's debut album addresses common struggles, such as disobeying parents. The song "Prove It" puts a "funny twist on what a godly relationship between father and daughter should look like," she says.

**Our Take:** Rachel's talent and boldness about her faith make her a positive influence on preteen music fans.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

- Studies show that religious identity and the friends you make at church lead to happiness. The close interactions, researchers say, are what contribute to feelings of well-being. (*American Sociological Review*)
- Music stations such as Radio Disney acknowledge that parents are now a core part of their audience. They're reaching out to people who grew up listening to those tunes. Marketers say a mixture of genres has led to Radio Disney's longevity. (*reuters.com*)

## QUICK STATS

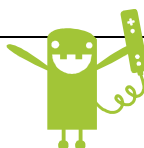
- As many as 10% of kids have an anxiety disorder. Experts recommend parents acknowledge feelings, provide plenty of down time, and encourage physical exercise and journaling. (*Dept. of Health & Human Services*)
- 71% of moms say they can't go more than a day without using the Internet. Meanwhile, 42% of children think their parents need to disconnect from technology more at home. (*parenting.com*)



## GAMES, SITES & APPS

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Fortune Street</i>	Players move along a board, similar to Monopoly. They can choose to be a variety of characters and play on 15 different game boards.	E; Wii
<i>Aqua Mania</i>	This compilation of "sims" for water lovers includes My Sim Aquarium, My Ocean Sim, and three other games.	E; PC (\$4.99 at amazon.com)
<i>Star Walk</i>		\$3 at itunes.com

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.





**Are your records current?**

- Go to St. Mark's website, [www.stmarksmtjoy.com](http://www.stmarksmtjoy.com)
- Log in to CCB (if you don't have a log-in, call the church office at 653-5493)
- Edit & save your child's profile.
- Please include allergies & go to the "Custom Fields" section to add any special needs.
- Complete the "Photo Release Form," available at the Children's Welcome Table.

**Sunshine Alley Vision & Mission:**

**Mission:** Partnering with families to help children shine for the Son.

**Vision:** At Sunshine Alley Children's Ministries, our vision is:

\*Children will become leaders for God in all that they do, in all that they say, and wherever they go, by sharing testimony about His power in their lives, and

\*Children will experience God's presence and develop a strong relationship with Him that will carry them into adulthood.

**We Value. . .**

1. Helping children to connect with God through prayer.
2. Fostering positive relationships with other children, adults, and God.
3. Reading and applying God's word.
4. Sharing our passion for God through our interactions with children.
5. Developing partnerships with families that will foster their spiritual growth and help create family friendships.
6. Providing intentional opportunities to serve God in meaningful contexts.
7. Involving children in both age-appropriate and intergenerational worship.
8. Equipping children to share their faith with others.
9. Engaging children in safe, high-energy and inviting environments that promote fellowship, fun, and spiritual growth, using practical but child-friendly designs.

*Dear Families,*

*Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness as I leave my position as Children's Pastor. It has been a blessing to serve with you! In Romans 8:28 we read, "In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Please keep in touch and share the ways God is working in the lives of your children!*

*Blessings, Andrea Lown*