

UPCOMING EVENTS

University

Winter Conference 08  
4-6 January in Columbus, OH.

High School

YES Retreat 2008  
28-30 March in Oxford, MI

Staff

North American Regional  
Summer Conference  
19-22 June in Hillsdale, MI.

What can you expect to see in the up-coming months

- ✚ A teen's eye view of life and how it differs from yours
- ✚ The ten most challenging things in school 1967 vs 2007
- ✚ Who's hot, what's cool and how much do they impact Christian youth?
- ✚ What percent of youth drop their faith in the first 2 months of college and why.
- ✚ Statistics, vocabulary: tools for understanding youth culture
- ✚ Answers to questions you ask

## It's not 1987 anymore

Twenty years ago I helped create a series presentations on youth culture. It unmasked youth culture and it's impact on the lives of young people in that era. We looked at the rising star of *MTV*, the impact of youth films like *Footloose* and new media like the *walk-man*, *cable TV* and *cell phones!* There is a need for an update...

In 1987 there was no e-mail, no internet, no text-messaging and no blogging. Google, Facebook, I-pod, and YouTube didn't exist. It was a different millennium!

In February 2006 I asked church leaders, "How many of you have heard of MySpace?" Less than 10% had, yet 30% of their youth

already had a MySpace page. Within two months the popular press picked up on MySpace and suddenly everyone knew about it – a year after most youth.

How about today? Does your son have a second life avatar? Does your daughter have a zwinky? Is it important that you know? Are her friends hooking up? Was your son grinding last week? (I don't mean his teeth, skate-board or drugs!)

Expect the Kairos Youth Culture Newsletter to answer these and other questions for you. Find out what is coming next in youth culture and what, if anything, you may want to do about it.



The first cell phone: marketed in 1987

Also, expect more than just a monthly newsletter. Those who subscribe will have access to talks, videos and other materials helpful in dealing with youth culture.

It takes time and money to make this newsletter happen. A donation from you, your community or your church will be a big help. To donate please send a check to **Kairos Newsletter**, 2505 Woodruff Ave, apt.1 Lansing, Michigan 48912 or donate here:

[www.kairos-na.org/youthculturenewsletter.htm](http://www.kairos-na.org/youthculturenewsletter.htm)

LIVE AS LONG AS YOU  
MAY, THE FIRST TWENTY  
YEARS ARE THE LONGEST  
HALF OF YOUR LIFE.  
-SOUTHEY

VOCABULARY

- Second Life:** an on-line "virtual" world where you create your own 3D identity and relate to others. Very possibly, the next big thing.
- Avatar:** your identity in a virtual world with a face, body, clothes and name.
- Zwinky:** see [www.zwinky.com](http://www.zwinky.com) and create your own teen identity.
- Grinding:** in dancing – imitating sexual intercourse. In gaming – wasting time.
- Hooking up:** starting a casual sexual relationship. "Did you hook up Saturday?"

## Lies & more lies & statistics

The percentage of Americans that regularly watch television while eating dinner: 66%. **{The others aren't necessarily having a traditional sit down meal!}**

Percentage of Americans *who say* they watch too much TV: 49 **{Versus the 90 percent who probably do.}**

Hours per year the average American youth spends in school: 900 hours. Hours per year the average American youth watches television: 1500. **{Some of which is done in school!}**

Percentage of Americans who can name The Three Stooges: 59% .  
Percentage who can name at least three justices of the U.S. Supreme Court: 17%. **{no comment}**

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## TO THE POINT!

It's your constitutionally guaranteed right in America to pursue happiness.

MTV sponsored a poll in August of 2007 to determine whether American youth are happy and if so, why? Knowing what makes youth happy also improves their marketing.

Their results mirrored those of the National Survey on Youth and Religion from 2005.

Seventy-two percent of Americans aged 13-24 say they are happy or mostly happy. What makes them happy? Sex, drugs and rock-n-roll? No. Family and friends are number one and two. God (religion) comes third, but an important third.

**Sixty-five percent** of young people say their religion/faith is important in making them happy. In this group four out of five claim to be happy. What about the **thirty-five** percent who say religion/faith is not important? In this group only three out of five claim to be happy.

## You can help

Even the best youth workers find it difficult to keep up on everything of significance in the youth world. The value of this newsletter will depend on the help of many. How can you help? First, tell us what you would like to know. Second, there are many polls and statistics out there. If you see something interesting, send us the information or the html address. Similarly, send us any good articles you find on youth culture. Finally, write for us. Tell us what you have in mind though. We can tell you how many words, editorial deadlines, etc. Send your help to [kairos.editor@gmail.com](mailto:kairos.editor@gmail.com)

So, God helps on the happiness scale.

Is this a problem? No, God intends for us to be happy with him forever, but it can be guaranteed that we will not be happy if **my happiness** is my goal. Happiness is the by-product of a selfless life of loving God and neighbor.

This is where youth culture is deceptive. It trains youth to believe that the pursuit of **my personal happiness** is the goal of life. It then promotes self-centered methods of obtaining happiness, most of which cost money and draw young people away from loving others and toward themselves! Parents can unwittingly reinforce the problem by trying to provide happiness directly to their children instead of training them in the selflessness that actually leads to happiness.

**TO THE POINT:** helping youth not to be self-centered is one of the most important things we can do to ensure their happiness. Unselfish service should characterize our families and youth groups.

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