

Parents,

Life in the Real World can be very difficult at times for all people but extremely difficult for our teenage students which is why our Family Matters team has decided to do a five-week teaching series on "Life in the Real World." We will be partnering with you in this series by hosting two Parent Workshops during this series and have invited experts from the Pittsburgh Area Alcohol and Drug Awareness Alliance and the Women's Choice Network to share information, encouragement and answer any questions you have in these areas.

The topics that we will be discussing truly hit home for all of us last spring when our church hosted two funerals for students who overdosed on drugs. Parents and students needed help and we responded. Typically the end of the school year draws out and accentuates yearlong stressors: bullying, academic and social pressures, life decisions, and more. Historically, this is when we see problems start to surface in our students. As we enter this next season, we will be proactively addressing these issues through our upcoming series "Life in the Real World". And parents, this is for you too! January 31, parents are invited and highly encouraged to attend our Drug and Alcohol awareness night. Then, on February 21 parents are welcome to join us for a special seminar focused on relationships and intimacy. These will not be your typical 'school assembly' experiences, but experiences where we plan to spiritually equip you to minister to and through your teenagers.

We will be following the schedule below:

January 31st – *PARENT SEMINAR** We will be partnering with the Pittsburgh Alliance for Alcohol and Drug Awareness and having a Parent Workshop in conjunction with our Student Ministry night. We will be discussing awareness and how we can come alongside family and friends in the midst of this battle to support, encourage and partner with them.

February 7th – Super Bowl Sunday - High school ministry has Super Bowl parties at different houses in our community. Call for more information. Our middle school ministry will have a Super Bowl party in our Student Lounge for the first half of the game.

February 14th – In all of our lives there will be "loss" of some type ranging from the death of a loved one or friend to a loss of a relationship. On this night will be discussing what God's word says about loss and how we should deal with it.

February 21st - *PARENT SEMINAR** We will be partnering with the Pittsburgh Women's Choice network and having a parent workshop focusing on "Sex and Dating Relationship." Our students will be meeting during the Parent Workshop and focusing our conversation on how to have healthy relationships with others and true intimacy with God.

February 28th – We will be discussing marriage and divorce and how each of these affects the lives of our students. We will look at the word of God and understand our roles in the midst of both of these situations.

March 7th – There are times in our own lives that students have a feelings of depression but they do not know how to handle these feelings. These feelings can be from dealing with a loss of some type or a bad family situation or things that are happening in school. We will be looking at ways typical high school and middle school students deal with this topic like drinking, cutting, having an eating disorder, suicide to name a few and show them ways that God wants them to respond to these feelings.

Sincerely,



Darren Bowers
Family Matters Director