



GF Victoria Newsletter

Dear Parents and Friends,

Welcome to the October 2008 edition of the Growing Families Victoria newsletter.

Inside this issue you will find a review of our recent GF Victoria Family Camp and the Information Evening with the Scotfords.

Enjoy the reading and may God bless you and your family!

Charles & Georgina Papp

GF Vic State Representatives

on behalf of the Victorian State Leadership Team



October 2008

A farewell message from Ron & Flo Hopkins

“ The first camp that GFV held was on the weekend 12th-14th Sep. This marked our retirement from the position of State Reps for Growing Families. It is almost 10 years since we took this position when the GF ministry was in it's infancy as far as Victoria was concerned. We have seen the work grow and many families have come into blessing through being part of one of our courses. There are those who have come to know Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Our final word to you is--keep on with your parenting so that your children will grow up to be a testimony to the fact that living for Jesus makes a difference. Also remember that you can have obedient, respectful, thoughtful, kids that are a pleasure to be with, but if they do not know Christ as Saviour then it is all pointless. I have written a small study on Beginning the Christian Life, and if you would like to have a copy contact me on 9749 6858 or rdhopkins@optusnet.com.au and I would be pleased to send you one.

All the very best

Ron & Flo Hopkins



Ron & Flo Hopkins have made a significant contribution to the Growing Families ministry in Victoria over the past decade. During that time they introduced the parenting courses to many churches, as well as organised a National Leaders Conference in 2000, and several Leadership Training Days since then with the help of the state committee.

We pray that God will reward them richly for their labour, and bless them in their retirement. We wish them all the best as they continue to serve God in other areas of life and ministry.

We value your prayers for the current State Leadership Team consisting of Charles & Georgina Papp as the new State Reps for Victoria, supported by Trevor & Heather Field and Jeff & Kellie Servaas. We seek to lead, encourage, and inspire many more Victorian parents to follow God's plan for their families.

We look forward to continue to serve you in the future by training and coaching new parenting class facilitators, organising events where like minded families can meet and encourage each other, as well as offering support to parents through Contact Mums and GEMs meetings.

Please feel free to contact us with your ideas and suggestions on how we can serve the GF Vic community better, or how we can support you in your family ministry. You can send an email to vic_reps@gfi.org.au or call us on (03) 9769 5060.

Review of our first Family Camp (12-14 Sep 2008)

WOW! What a weekend! We couldn't have asked for more...

Our first ever Family Camp was held at the Phillip Island Adventure Resort, which proved to be a great venue for growing families. We filled up one of the wings on the camp site and although there were a couple of other groups on the grounds, we had our own 'territory' with good ensuite accommodation, a great meeting and dining room with views overlooking the onsite lake, and a separate room for the children's program.



and finances, to enable them to focus on their calling.

We kept Saturday afternoon free to give families the choice to spend some quality time together, to reflect on the information and teaching from the morning sessions, to network and fellowship with other families, to participate in the adventure activities on site, or to get some rest. The activities were very popular with both kids and adults. Some went on the giant swing, the flying foxes (the giant one and the smaller one), canoeing on the lake, and even a dip in the swimming pool. The weather was warm and sunny on Saturday afternoon, which was just perfect for the outdoor activities.



We were blessed to have David and Charissa Scotford as our main speakers over the weekend, kicking off the sessions on Saturday morning with an update on GFI and an insight into the things to come. They shared their experiences while living with the Ezzos in the US (yes, with their kids!). They were filming snippets of a new 3 part series which will replace the current Preparation for the Toddler Years. The first part, called "Babyhood Transitions", is already released in Australia. They were also filming another new series called "The Gift" - a modern and shorter alternative to Growing Kids God's Way. GKGW will remain as the classic series. Dave and Charissa are also working on a set of short video clips featuring a parenting principle each. We watched the first two on "Obedience" and "Family Devotions" over the weekend. They're now working on the next one on "Self Control", filming parts of it on their way from Perth and back.

During the next session, Dave and Charissa challenged us on getting our priorities right in this world that bombards us with things and commitments that compete for our time and energy, trying to tear us away from the real purposes of God for our lives, and the people that matter most to us - our family. They shared their inspiring journey and testimony of God's providence as they responded to His leading to restructure their lives

We finished off the day on Saturday with a more relaxed "Ask the Panel" session, where we had David and Charissa, as well as current and former members of the State Leadership Team answer questions submitted by the audience during the course of the day. The questions and answers generated some very good discussions with great participation from the audience as well. We discussed some real life issues affecting parents, and were able to help each other with fresh

ideas. It was most encouraging for younger parents to hear stories from parents with older children (teenagers and grown up children) who have experienced the whole range of parenting and were able to share the positive outcomes they enjoyed from applying the GFI principles. It's great to be able to look forward to the teenage years with hope and anticipation, having seen the proof from those who've gone before us.

After a good night's sleep, we were back in session again on Sunday morning, starting with David and Charissa drawing our attention to an often neglected, but crucial ingredient to our parenting and our Christian witness, namely Family Devotions. David encouraged the Dads to take the leadership role in organising regular devotions and involve the children in discussions and prayer. He gave many practical ideas from his own experience that we can try in our families.

In our last session, Ron Hopkins presented some thought provoking topics affecting families today, such as the dangers our children face in this sinful world we live in, the attacks on the husband and wife relationship, and

Each session presented at the camp is available on DVD at a cost of \$8 each or \$30 for all.

See next page for information on how to order.

the parents' role in leading their children to Christ, and guiding them in other important life decisions as well (including marriage).

The children enjoyed their own fun program during the parents' sessions, learning about "First time obedience", "The appeal process", "Respect for Authority and Age", and "Respect for peers, property, and nature". During the Saturday evening session, the kids had a fun filled pyjama and popcorn movie night watching "Journey to the Sky Kingdom".

After Ron's session, the children joined us in the main hall, and we finished our time together by watching the "Indescribable" DVD by Louie Giglio.

The feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive, with everyone looking forward to the next family camp.



Information Evening with the Scotfords

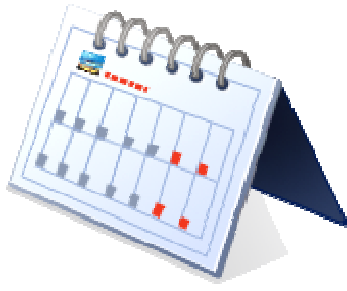
On the Friday, 19 September, the week following the Family Camp, we had a casual information evening with the Scotfords, where they presented a repeat of the session they did at the camp about the Future of GFI in Australia, as well as some other video snippets that the Ezzos are working on.

We also had the opportunity to



watch the two short DVDs on "Obedience" and "Family Devotions" that the Scotfords have put together. These are available for purchase by emailing David and Charissa: info@babywisebliss.com.au

The evening was well attended, there was a yummy supper provided, and many stayed back at the end for some more informal chatting.



Key Dates for your 2009 Calendar...

- 28 February** - Family Picnic (Cardinia Reservoir Park)
- 16-19 April** - National Conference (Stanwell Tops, NSW)
- 2 May** - Leadership Training (Berwick)
- 23-25 October** - VIC Family Camp (Phillip Island)

GEMs and Contact Mums Update

Godly Encouragement for Mums (GEMs): On Saturday, 2nd of August, there was a GEMs Leaders' Retreat held at Donna Lewis' home. It was a great opportunity to learn about how to run a GEMs group effectively, and to share our resources and ideas with each other.

If you want to find out where your nearest GEMs group meets, or if you are considering starting one, please contact Donna Lewis (VIC GEMs Coordinator) by emailing dlewis@dcsi.net.au.

Contact Mums: Are you already helping mums implement the principles of order and routine in their baby's life? Are you a support to the mums who attend your courses?

If your answer is yes, then you are already an active CM! Please consider going through the certification process so that you can receive ongoing support material and become an official member of the CM community. You can continue to serve only the mums you know, or you may want to be available to others as well. If so, you can choose to help by phone, or email, or both, and you can nominate what hours you're available.

For further details, please email Georgina Papp (VIC Contact Mums Coordinator) on georgina@papp.id.au.

It is such a privilege and blessing to know that you have made a difference and helped a struggling mum.

GF Australia National Conference — 16 to 19 April 2009

The National Conference is a fantastic opportunity to meet other GFI families from around the country as well as hear and meet Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo in person!

We would love to see a large group of Victorians there, so we urge you to go to familiesoffire.gfi.org.au to find out more, and to register. **Early Bird discount is available if you register by the 30th of November 2008.**

If you have teenagers, make sure you check out the information about the first ever GFA National Teens Camp (14 - 16 April) on the website. This is an event that your teenage kids will remember for a long time!



2008 VIC Family Camp Sessions — DVD Order Form

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Each</i>	<i>Total</i>
Session 1: The Future of GFI	x	\$8 =	
Session 2: Right Priorities	x	\$8 =	
Session 3: Ask the Panel	x	\$8 =	
Session 4: Family Devotions	x	\$8 =	
Session 5: Final Exhortations	x	\$8 =	
All 5 Sessions	x	\$30 =	
Total Payable:			_____

How to Order?

Credit Card By Phone: Call Kellie on (03) 9870 8163 with your order and credit card details.

Cheque By Post: Write cheque payable to Growing Families Victoria, and post with your completed order form to PO Box 143, Ringwood East 3135

Direct Deposit By Email: Pay by Direct Deposit to BSB: 633 000 and Account No: 134071224 (please use your family name as the transaction reference) and email your direct deposit receipt number with your order details to kel@servaas.com.au