

InterVarsity Parent Resources

Practical Wisdom for Parents of College Students

Nearly a third of all 18–24-year-olds are struggling with anxiety or depression, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control. More than one in four considered suicide in the past 30 days. The pandemic has exacerbated trends that began when college students were in high school. What can we do? How should we engage? What might Jesus be saying to them—and to us?

If you're the parent of a college student, InterVarsity wants to serve you — whether or not your child participates in InterVarsity on campus. This monthly newsletter offers a mix of insights, tools, and tips drawn from our experience of connecting with and discipling students on campus. We hope the content encourages you, equips you, and challenges you.



You, your child, and mental health

The [American Psychiatric Association](#) says Gen Zs are more likely than any other generation to report being diagnosed with depression (23 percent), and just over 9 in 10 “have experienced at least one physical or emotional symptom due to stress

in the past month, compared to around three-quarters of adults overall who say they have experienced at least one symptom.” In addition, Covid-19 has caused increased anxiety and depression throughout society.

Recently, Cathy Norman Peterson sat down with [Elizabeth Pierre](#), who teaches counseling and pastoral care at North Park University in Chicago, to talk about how parents can support their college students in their mental health journeys.

[Read More](#)

Shattering Myths about Suicide

While we tend to view the work of suicide prevention as the task of professional therapists and doctors, the church can also play a vital role. In this excerpt from *Preventing Suicide: A Handbook for Pastors, Chaplains, and Pastoral Counselors*, by Karen Mason (IVP), the author addresses some of the misperceptions that underly suicide. (This chapter excerpt is a PDF file.)

[Download Excerpt](#)

What to Do When Life Gets Hard

Whatever our age or stage in life, life gets hard. We all experience disappointment and pain. What do we do in those times? We try to take care of things and do what we need to do in order to get through it. We talk with others and make decisions. These are good things to do.

But God has more for us. God offers us hope. Brenda Wong has found a lot of encouragement for hard times in the Psalms. Here are some practices and postures she’s learned that have helped her hope in the Lord in the midst of disappointment and pain.

[Read More](#)

Why are You Anxious? — A LifeGuide Bible study excerpt

As parents, we hope to be a non-anxious presence in our kids' lives. That's difficult to do, especially this year. Skip McDonald, an InterVarsity regional resource specialist in Georgia, wrote a LifeGuide Bible Study, *Anxiety: Finding Comfort and Reassurance from God*, based on her insights as a registered nurse, theologian, and mental health advocate. This study from Matthew 6:25–34 invites us to reflect on the question, "Why are you anxious?"

Excerpted from *Anxiety*, a LifeGuide Bible study by Skip McDonald, published by InterVarsity Press. (This excerpt is a PDF file.)

[Download Bible Study](#)

What Bible Study is Right for You?

InterVarsity loves helping students and faculty learn to study scripture—letting God's Word shape us and our world. Each issue of the Parents Newsletter invites you to study scripture too, drawing on resources from InterVarsity Press's LifeGuide Bible Study series. Use the [LifeGuide finder](#) to identify the study that might be right for you or your small group.

[LifeGuide Finder](#)

InterVarsity Press Christmas Sale!

It's not too early to think about Christmas gifts! We're biased, but we think the best gifts are practical, thoughtful, and soul-shaping. *Books, of course!* Get a head start on finding books that will linger in your heart, mind, and soul at InterVarsity Press's Christmas sale! They're offering a selection of books for children, youth,

adults, and academics at 50% off. Simply use promo code **XMAS20** to take advantage of this [offer](#).

IVP Christmas Sale

Connect with the campus ministry at your child's campus (or with your alma mater!). Even though many universities are mostly remote, InterVarsity fellowships continue to engage in evangelism and discipleship. Our staff would love to tell you more. You can find our chapters [here](#).

We hope you found this newsletter helpful. If you did, we would be grateful if you forwarded it to other parents of college students that you know. They also can subscribe to this newsletter by visiting [this page](#).

Sign up for this Parent Resources newsletter



In our next issue:

- When your children return home
- Blessing your children's choices in life
- An excerpt from the forthcoming book, *Prayer in the Night*
- And more!

Got feedback? [Email us!](#)



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