

BUC FAMILY

A Publication of the BUC Family, Children and Possibility Ministries

In this issue:

Raising Children in a Digital World

Let Them Flourish

Events & Notices

Safeguarding Our Church Policy Statement

Recommended Reading

Raising Children in a Digital World

Pr Les Ackie

We are living in a time of breathtaking technological change. Devices that did not exist a decade ago now shape how we learn, communicate, and even form identity. For parents, grandparents, and guardians, the question is no longer whether technology will influence our children, but how we will guide them through it.

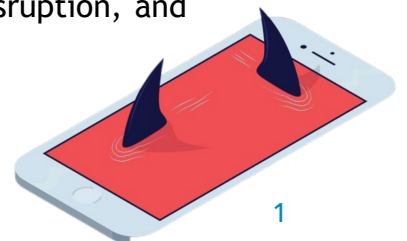
Scripture provides a timeless foundation for intentionally shaping our children's minds with a biblical worldview: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children." Deuteronomy 6:5-7

Faith formation is pictured not as a weekly event but as a lifestyle—woven into daily rhythms: sitting, walking, lying down, rising up. Similarly, Proverbs 22:6 reminds us: "Train up a child in the way he should

go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." It is the values of wisdom and discernment that we instil in our children that will help them to safely navigate the dangerous terrain of the digital landscape. These passages call us to intentionality. Children do not drift into healthy spirituality or character; they are shaped by repeated experiences, habits, and relationships. This insight is echoed by Ellen White in *Child Guidance*, where she observes that lessons learned in early childhood have a profound impact on lifelong character.

Today's children are often described as "digital natives." Many handle screens with ease that astonishes older generations. Research consistently shows that a large majority of teenagers have access to smartphones and spend significant time online. While technology offers remarkable benefits, it also presents real challenges—especially in the areas of mental health, relationships, and identity. Authors such as Jean Twenge, in *iGen*, and Jonathan Haidt, in *The Anxious Generation*, highlight concerning trends: rising anxiety, depression, loneliness, and reduced resilience among young people. These changes correlate closely with the widespread adoption of smartphones and social media. Constant connectivity can amplify comparison, fear of missing out, sleep disruption, and exposure to harmful content.

At the heart of the issue lies a fundamental human need: attachment. Children are wired for deep, secure relationships. Technology can simulate connection, but it cannot fully replace



face-to-face presence, shared experiences, and emotional attunement. A child may have hundreds of online “friends” yet still feel profoundly alone. The Bible emphasises the value of genuine relationships: “A friend loves at all times” Proverbs 17:17 True friendship involves trust, vulnerability, and mutual care—qualities difficult to sustain through curated posts and fleeting interactions.



None of this means technology is inherently bad. As Andy Crouch wisely notes in *The Tech-Wise Family*, “technology is at its best when it supports what matters most rather than replaces it.” Digital tools can foster creativity, learning, collaboration, and even ministry. The goal is not fear-driven rejection, but thoughtful stewardship.

So how can families respond?

1. Be intentional and present

Parenting in the digital age is less about rigid control and more about meaningful presence. Children thrive when adults engage with them—listening, asking questions, entering their world. As Ellen White counsels, parents should “enter into the feelings of their children” and “draw out what is on their hearts.”

2. Model healthy habits

Children notice inconsistencies. It is difficult to limit a child’s screen time while we remain glued to our own devices. Demonstrating balance, restraint, and digital courtesy speaks louder than rules alone.

3. Prioritise core developmental needs

Before allowing or increasing children's screen time, ensure they have rich opportunities for play, creativity, physical activity, and unhurried family interaction. Free play, in particular, builds problem-solving skills, confidence, and resilience.

4. Create boundaries with purpose

Digital-free zones or times—such as during meals, family worship, or Sabbath—can restore connection and attentiveness. Boundaries work best when explained, consistently applied, and paired with reasonable consequences.

5. Stay informed.

Technology evolves rapidly. Parents need not become experts, but basic awareness of apps, platforms, and risks (cyberbullying, inappropriate content, data privacy) is essential.

6. Teach discernment, not just restriction

Ultimately, we are preparing children for adulthood. They must learn wisdom, self-regulation, and critical thinking. Shielding them from every challenge may weaken rather than strengthen them. Like muscles and faith, resilience grows through appropriate testing.

Our children, too, can develop strength of character and faith when guided with love, consistency, and grace. In a world of endless notifications and digital noise, the Christian home has a unique calling: to be a place of warmth, stability, conversation, and spiritual grounding. We cannot hold back the tide of technology, but we can teach our children to swim.

Recommended Resources

BOOKS:

Left to Their Own Devices: Confident Parenting in a World of Screens

Katharine Hill (Care for the Family) A Christian, practical, and highly accessible guide to managing screen time, setting boundaries, and nurturing healthy family relationships in a tech saturated world.

The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place: Andy Crouch - A thoughtful Christian framework for creating a home where technology serves family flourishing rather than dominating it. Encourages intentional rhythms, Sabbath rest, and embodied connection.

Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers: Gordon Neufeld & Gabor Maté A foundational work on attachment, explaining why children increasingly orient toward peers and how parents can reclaim their vital role in shaping identity, values, and emotional security.

The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness: Jonathan Haidt - A major contemporary analysis of how smartphones and social media have reshaped childhood, contributing to anxiety, depression, and fragility. Offers practical, research based solutions for families and communities.

The Coddling of the American Mind: Greg Lukianoff & Jonathan Haidt - Explores how cultural shifts—including digital influences—have reduced resilience in young people. Helpful for understanding the broader societal context shaping children's emotional development.

iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood. Jean M. Twenge - A data-rich exploration of how digital life has reshaped adolescence, identity, and mental health.

Thrilled to Death: How the Endless Pursuit of Pleasure Is Leaving Us Numb: Dr. Archibald Hart Explains the neuroscience of overstimulation, dopamine, and anhedonia—highly relevant to understanding digital addiction and reward-seeking behaviour.

TRUSTED ORGANISATIONS FOR ONLINE SAFETY & DIGITAL WELLBEING:

Internet Matters: Practical guides on screen time, social media, gaming, and device safety for every age group.

NSPCC - Online Safety Hub: Clear advice on grooming, sexting, pornography exposure, and how to talk to children about digital risks.

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command) A police-led service for reporting online abuse and accessing educational resources.

Parent Zone: Research-based resources on digital resilience, online harms, and family digital life.

Protect Young Eyes: Christian-led organisation offering app reviews, device setup guides, and church training.

Focus on the Family - Digital Parenting Resources: Faith-based articles and tools for navigating technology with biblical wisdom.

‘Let Them Flourish’

When Every Child Belongs, the Church Flourishes

Lorraine McDonald - BUC Education Director

“I want my child to feel valued.”

“My child struggles to fit into church services.”

“How can I adapt Pathfinders or the Sabbath School lesson for children with additional needs?”

“Who will support children with special needs at VBS or Summer School?”

These are not isolated statements and questions. They are the heartfelt concerns of parents and carers in our churches today. Remember education doesn’t just happen in schools; it happens in various departments of the church.

As an Education Leader, I hear these voices often. More recently, feedback from the church officers’ training events (SEC & NEC) confirmed what many of us already sense: **the need is growing, and many of our leaders feel under-equipped**. When this happens, families don’t usually complain - they just quietly disengage or look elsewhere for support. And the church is poorer for it.

Yet this is not the church God calls us to be.

A Timely and Hope-Filled Response

In response to this urgent need, the BUC Education Department, working in partnership with Possibilities and Children & Family Ministries, is hosting the **Let Them Flourish Conference**, taking place **17-19 April 2026**.

This first-of-its-kind conference has been prayerfully designed to equip **pastors, department leaders, and church members** with practical, ministry-ready strategies to create church environments where **every child and family truly belongs**.

This is not theory. It is hands-on, real-world support for the ministries we already run and the children we already serve.

What the Conference Will Offer

- **Practical workshops** led by experienced practitioners
- **Collaborative spaces** to share ideas and best practice
- **Accredited workshop modules** with recognition beyond the church setting
- **Continuing Education Units (CEUs)** for pastors

Participants will leave better equipped, more confident, and inspired to make meaningful, lasting change in their local churches.

An Invitation to Every Local Church

We strongly encourage every local church across the BUC to **sponsor at least two department leaders** involved in children’s and youth ministries, such as Pathfinders, Junior Sabbath School, Teen/Youth, Children & Family, Possibilities, Education, or Community Services, to attend **alongside their pastor**.

When leaders learn together, change is more likely to be embedded, shared, and sustained.

Please prayerfully speak with your pastor and church board about attending. This conference is an opportunity not just to learn, but to shape the future culture of our churches.

Why This Matters

Our prayer is that **Let Them Flourish** becomes an annual opportunity to upskill pastors, leaders, and members so that our churches are places where every child and young person is valued, supported, and able to thrive.

Scripture reminds us:

“All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.” (Isaiah 54:13)

This promise is for all of God’s children.

Take the Next Step

- Help shape the conference by completing the **Expressions of Interest form**:

<https://forms.gle/vRDq7AHXx73Ra4JW6>

- **Bookings are now open** and places are limited:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/let-them-flourish-tickets-1983307528206?aff=oddttdtcreator>

Early-bird pricing ends **16 March**, so book early to avoid disappointment.

We truly look forward to seeing you there.

Families who have children with additional needs need you and the church needs them.

'Let Them Flourish'

A TRAINING WEEKEND FOR ALL CHILDREN'S EDUCATORS IN A CHURCH SETTING

Closing date 12th April 2026

Supporting Children with diverse needs

Salisbury Hall, Newbold College of Higher Education, Binfield RG42 4AN

17-19 April 2026

buceducation@adventist.uk

Scan here to register

Who should attend:

- Pastors
- Conference & Union Departmental Directors
- Sabbath School Leaders
- Pathfinder Leaders
- Mission Departmental Directors and Sponsors
- Children's Ministries Leaders
- Division Departmental Directors
- Community Services Leaders
- Youth and Teens Leaders
- Possibility Ministries Leaders
- Family Ministries Leaders
- Education Leaders

Early Bird £75.00 for weekend
incl: meals, resources
(Does not include accommodation)
Post 16th March £100 for weekend

Adventist Education
Educating for Eternity

Adventist Possibility Ministries

Asna ucy

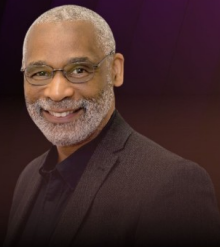


Joint

SEC AND NEC

HYBRID

CHRISTIAN HOME AND MARRIAGE

Week 2026


DR. LES ACKIE



MARK SEMPLE



DR. DENIAS CHIHWAI



DELIVON FRANCIS



KAREN HOLFORD



PR. RIO ESPULGAR



PR. JOHN FRANCIS

TOPICS

Raising Children in a Digital World
Addiction and Family: Finding Hope Together
A Delicate Balance: Navigating
Common Distractions in Modern Marriage
Redeeming the Digital Space
Delightful Day? (Celebrating the
Sabbath without the Screens)

7:30 PM-OFF THURSDAY
16-20 FEBRUARY, 2026

21 FEBRUARY, 2026
11:15 AM, SATURDAY

Willesden SDA Church
1 Glebe Road, Willesden,
NW10 2JD

LIVESTREAM VIA



SECmedia



Transformed by
Christ to Excel



SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE

Family Ministry Leadership Training 2026

10 am-1 pm on Sundays

8TH OF MARCH

FAMILIES ON MISSION: EQUIPPING TEAMS
FOR FAMILY-TO-FAMILY EVANGELISM
DR. RIO ESPULGAR

COUNSELLING: WHAT IS IT?
KOSSI SINGO

26TH OF APRIL

MARRIAGE COURSE: A MINISTRY TOOL
FOR ENRICHMENT AND OUTREACH
DR. RIO ESPULGAR

SUPPORTING FAMILIES IN CRISIS
MARK AND SHARON SEMPLE

24TH OF MAY

SINGLES' MINISTRY
ANNELL SMITH

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN CHRISTIAN FAMILIES
PR. JOHN FRANCIS

28TH OF JUNE

LOVING WITHOUT AFFIRMING: IS IT POSSIBLE?
MINISTERING TO LGBTQ-IDENTIFIED
DR. HEZRON ADINGO

LEADING WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
DR. LES ACKIE



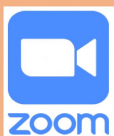
ZOOM ID
880 8135 7517
PASSWORD
SECFMLT



BUC Children's Ministries Leadership Training

Seminar Dates

Sunday 18 January	Module 1—The Alive in Jesus Curriculum Pt 1
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 2—The Alive in Jesus Curriculum Pt 2
Sunday 22 February	Module 3—Raising A Mission-Driven Generation
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 4—Nurturing Children's Spirituality
Sunday 22 March	Module 5—Story Telling
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 6—Building Resiliency in Children
Sunday 26 April	Module 7—Ministering to Children with Diverse Needs
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 8—Teaching Children About Sex and Sexuality



Meeting ID: 989 618 9409

Passcode: BUCCM



Connecting Lives for Eternal Living





FRIDAY - SUNDAY
17-19 APRIL 2026
SEC MEN'S MINISTRIES
CONFERENCE

Restoring Manhood

Unforgettable Experiences
THOUGHTFULLY CRAFTED

The poster features a collage of images: a man's hands clasped in prayer, a modern interior with large windows, and a large hall with blue lighting. The SEC Men's Ministries logo is in the top left corner.



Combined Men and Health Ministries Departments presents

Men Rising Together

HEALTH • STRENGTH • PURPOSE

15-20 JUNE 2026

MONDAY - FRIDAY : ONLINE SEMINARS
IN-PERSON GRAND FINALE ON SABBATH 20TH VENUE TBA

ZOOM MEETING ID: 705 554 0588
PASSCODE: SEC MEN 2025

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Dr. Serge ENGEMBA	Elder Devon BOYD	Elder Clarence JACKSON	Pastor Ray PATRICK	Pastor Raichard JAMES
----------------------	---------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------

The poster features a central image of hands clasped in prayer, glowing with a bright light. Below the text, there are five portraits of the keynote speakers.

Creating Places of Belonging

21.02.26

Stoke-On-Trent SDA District
Possibility Ministry Sabbath



Morning speaker
Nigel Nicholls



Afternoon Speaker
Sophia Nicholls

9.30am - 5pm
Stoke -On-Trent
SDA District, Sprinkbank Road
Chell Heath, ST6 6HZ




Super Wellness Weekend

BUILDING FLOURISHING HEALTHY FAMILIES FOR *Mission*



20-22 March 2026

WEEKEND SCHEDULE
 FRI ONLINE
 SAT IN PERSON - (Haverhill Church)
 SUN COMMUNITY COOKING SCHOOL



CO-HOST
SANDRA STURLONG
Health Director



CO-HOST
EDITH SAMAMBWA
SEC Health Ministries,
Director



GUEST SPEAKER
MAY SOLOMON
Former KZN Conference
Health Ministries, Director

PARABOLE PRODUCTIONS & PARKSIDE COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP PRESENT

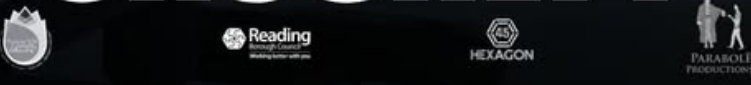
THE HEXAGON
Queens Walk, Berkshire RG1 7QF

21ST FEB 2026 | 7.00PM

Tickets
£20, £18 concessions + Groups 10+
Box Office 0118 960 6060
**incl. booking fees



THE CASUALTY
A GOSPEL MUSICAL WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY DEREK LINDO
FEATURING READING COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHOIR




YOU ARE NOT ALONE
CCS is here for you

CONTACT
0330 133 2495
Dedicated listening line
0207 723 8050
Office Number / Appointments
connect@ccscounselling.org.uk
www.ccscounselling.org.uk

"I am not living, I am just surviving."
Together we can make it happen.
Often, it is not the initial experience that creates the overwhelming pain, but the lack of support.

Do not suffer alone
Do not suffer in silence
CCS is here to support you
Together we can win your struggle.



Facing Difficult times or issues, Need to talk?



The first step is the hardest. Call the NEC Counselling Service Today!

07539 211 442

We can arrange for you to access support.

FORWARD We Go!

North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
office +44 (0) 115 960 6312 mobile +44 (0) 7918618606
22 Zulia Road, Nottingham, Notts - NG3 5DB
jfrancis@necadventist.org.uk • necadventist.org.uk

Seventh-day Adventist Church

STRONG
MARRIAGES • FAMILIES • CHURCHES
MISSION



Adventist
Family Ministries

2026 RESOURCE BOOK

FAMILY, FAITH, AND FOCUS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

WILLIE AND ELAINE OLIVER



The Seventh-day Adventist Church values every human being as part of God's creation. We are committed to safeguarding all children and adults at risk who take part in our services and activities.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Seventh-day Adventist Church commits to:

- Promote a safe environment for children and adults at risk of harm
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Provide compassionate care and support for survivors of abuse
- Ensure that those working with children and adults at risk are trained and supported
- Raise awareness of safeguarding responsibilities throughout all church programming and provisions
- Work collaboratively with safeguarding agencies
- Follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised best practice in order to protect the vulnerable
- Implement, maintain and regularly review the procedures outlined in our safeguarding policy



Safeguarding is Everybody's Responsibility

[Click here to download safeguarding posters for your local church](#)



[Newbold College 25th Anniversary](#)



Useful Links

[AdventSource](#)

[Adventist Possibility Ministries](#)

[Adventist Single Adult Ministries \(ASAM\)](#)

[Adventist Special Needs Association \(ASNA\)](#)

[BUC Family Ministries](#)

[BUC Safeguarding](#)

[Care for the Family](#)

[GC Children's Ministries](#)

[GC Family Ministries](#)

[In Discipleship](#)

[Prepare Enrich](#)

[TED Children's Ministries](#)

[TED Family Ministries](#)

[TED Possiblity Ministries](#)

[Through the Roof \(Disability outreach\)](#)

[Women's Aid](#)

Recommended Reading

Dejected

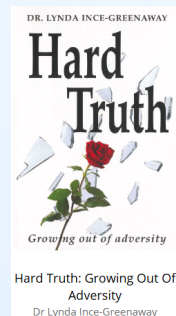
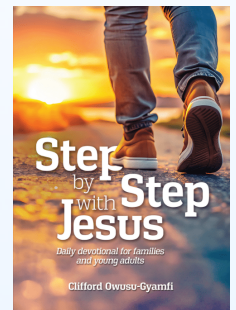


or Redirected?

By Alison Awuku

In *Dejected or Redirected*, Alison Awuku closely examines the work of psychological researchers on the topic of rejection, along with the trustworthy counsel of Holy Scripture, the testimonies of others, and her own lived experience. She empowers us and equips us to handle rejection with this practical guide, which is especially useful for young people.

Step by Step With Jesus. Clifford Owusu Gyamfi's devotional offers a fresh perspective each day, infusing your daily routine with spiritual vitality. The engaging topics, scriptural insights, and practical applications will draw you into a deeper relationship with Jesus. Step by Step with Jesus is a personal invitation to walk hand in hand with the Saviour, step by step, day by day, growing and maturing in your faith.



Hard Truth: Growing out of Adversity, tells the remarkable story of the Lynda Ince-Greenaway's journey towards healing and resilience. The book is a dynamic and compelling story that will inspire readers. It is a story that is personalised, educational and inspirational no matter where people are on their journey. Hard Truth intensifies the importance of self-reflection and personal empowerment. It is written for audiences everywhere and for people of all ages.

BUC Family, Children, Possibility Ministries & Safeguarding



Pr Les Ackie
Director:
 01923 665547
lackie@adventist.uk

Kathleen Hanson
Admin Assistant:
 01923 665546
khanson@adventist.uk

Postal Address: Seventh-day Adventist Church
 Headquarters Stanborough Park, Watford WD25 1PZ

BUC Website: adventist.uk