



How Parents Can Learn to Speak Teen:
A Culture Translator

GARY ALAN TAYLOR

WITH BILL BLANKSCHAEN

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interview transcript

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Bill Blankschaen:

Welcome to *Thrive*, for our family expert interview. I'm Bill Blankschaen, Director of Content, and co-founder of the *Thrive* community. It's my privilege to be joined today by a special guest, Gary Alan Taylor. Gary serves in an organization called Axis, which we just had to share with you as parents, because they are doing God's work, literally.

If you are a parent of a teenager, you know you could use all of the help you can get, and so this is an organization focused on helping you be a better parent to teens. And with back to school happening for most of us, we thought this would be a terrific opportunity to invite them into the conversation.

So, Gary is the Vice President of Axis. He's the Editor-in-Chief of the *Culture Translator*, which we really have to know more about, because I know our families are going to like this. You guys serve 32,000 families, equipping parents to really understand the cultural icons that are out there, and the messaging that's out there, that's going to shape the future of our nation, of our world, and so it made total sense to bring along Gary here. Gary, welcome. Glad you could join us today.

Gary Alan Taylor:

Thank you, Bill. It's good to be here. Thanks for letting me join you.

Bill Blankschaen:

Absolutely. You have some connections to organizations in the past, like Focus on the Family, no doubt an organization that families will recognize. I love your educational background by the way. You have a Master's degree in modern European history, and a PhD in colonial American history, and at first glance...

Gary Alan Taylor:

Not something you use everyday, that's for sure...



Bill Blankschaen:

Yeah. I was going to say at first glance. That seems like okay, how did you end up here when you were there. Now as a fellow history major, I can understand hey, that's what history is made of. Families and people doing things, but how did you end up with Axis and maybe you can tell us just a little bit about it for people who aren't familiar with it. What is it you do and how did you get there?

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yeah. I was always interested in ideas, context and story and specifically the kingdom of God and how God is slowly revealing his kingdom. And so being a part of history, and starting with apologetics in world view, helping to be a part of, and starting Focus on the Family's **The Truth Project**, really helped to solidify a foundation of worldview for me, and then having kids myself, and as our kids have gotten older, really looking to say what are the major cultural icons that are shaping the next generation. And so that's what brought me to Axis because really what we are doing is we live at the intersection of faith, technology, media, and entertainment, and we're helping to translate youth culture for parents. And in a lot of ways we're missionaries to the next generation.

As an undergraduate, I first started as a missions major and I was shocked at how very little we actually studied the Bible at the beginning, and how much we actually studied the customs, the rituals, the habits and the language of the people group that we were going to go and serve. And that's really what we do at Axis is we are experts in teen culture. We know the language.

We know the slang. We know the cultural icons. We know the mediums that teens are using to really download world view, and so really helping them to navigate that space, as well as to educate parents to say here are the cultural icons that are shaping your teens' world view, their heart, their beliefs, and we want to equip you to start conversations with them about these topics.

Bill Blankschaen:

I've got to think a lot of parents right now are listening to that thinking, that's great, I'm dealing with a lot of practical issues but what I would challenge parents to do is to push pause on the practical issues for just a minute. We're going to circle back to those in our conversation, but what you're talking about is really getting at the core of what's shaping the way teenagers think, which then shapes how they act.

By the way, if viewers, you don't have to agree with me or with Gary on all points of our faith and specifics of that to that to realize the value of the conversation and put this into practice, because this is



common across all religions. It doesn't really matter, when you're engaging your family, if you apply these principles, you're going to see success in these areas.

Let's jump right in then. Your ministry focus, your organization focus isn't just parents. You make a point of including grandparents. What's going on there with that generational focus?

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yeah. One of the things that we talk about is we ask parents and grandparents, what is your 500-year plan for your family in terms of the legacy. If you're looking just practically, a lot of families even in the Church are students being raised by a single parent home, and so there's been a bit of a breakdown there. Practically speaking grandparents are now involved in the discipleship process.

From a research perspective, what we're finding, we've really relied a lot on the research of Dr. Kara Powell out at the Fuller Youth Institute in Pasadena and she says there's several different factors for the reasons why students who are say 15, 16 years old graduate through college and then in their 20s and 30s still maintain their faith.

One of the primary reasons that students who come through church, go to college and then come out the other end still believing, is that grandparents and other mentors were part of their lives on top of parents. Their research shows that the average kid needs three additional adults actively discipling them in their life, and so of course the easy answer for that, and one of the reasons why we had been so passionate about grandparents is that they can function as at least two of those other adults and they're also on the other side of the story here.

A lot of times, the teen brain is just not equipped to really basically deal with some of the hard stuff of life and for them to see a grandparent who is still living out their faith in their 70s, or 80s, or even their 90s. It provides a sense of context for them and that this is doable. I can do this as well and again that they are, that second or third voice pouring into students. Beyond just Mom and Dad. Because they could be things same thing Mom and Dad are saying, but from a different perspective and they can listen to it a little bit better.

Bill Blankschaen:

Yeah. I love that. I certainly found that to be true with millennials even in the workplace and the church tending to connect with the generation that went before their parents much more easily than with their



parents. The irony there, but if a family doesn't have grandparents in the picture, I just want families to really hold onto what you just said is that it takes three voices other than...

Now that could be a pastor, could be an uncle, could be an aunt, could be a neighbor, could be a good friend. One way to challenge parents is who are those intentional voices. Who are the voices you're intentionally permitting. Well first of all, are you checking at all and then how are you actively engaging people to include them into your teen's life, I think that's great. That's a great point.

Gary Alan Taylor:

That's the beauty of the church. We have this intergenerational community that comes together and we're not just worshiping with one another but hopefully we're identifying men or women that we want to invite into our kids' or grandkids' lives to say look you are a model, can you help me in the discipleship process. Those are the things we encourage parents to do as well.

Bill Blankschaen:

What are some of the topics that you address, as people think about what you do and just getting to know you as an organization. What are some of the most frequent topics, popular topics you address and then how do you go about addressing them, what's unique about your approach there?

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yeah. That's a great question. We deal a lot with technology. Students are growing up. This is the first generation ever who has truly grown up in a digital age where they will ... students today will never not know social media. They will never not know that their friends are online and not necessarily face to face.

If the average high school kid spends 11 hours a day with a screen and the average middle school kid spends nine hours a day with a screen, they really have a parallel track of education and a parallel track of spiritual formation that's taking place every day. What we tried to do is jump into that space. We don't try to scare them. But we also want them to have some discernment.

If you're spending 11 hours a day with a screen, most kids are then downloading about 3,000 to 5,000 advertisements a day. We say, we inhabit this space to where there's three cultural icons that are shaping the minds and hearts of teens. There's obviously those advertisers, movies, and music. For students what we want to do is help them develop a filter or discernment to understand that every ad, every song, every movie has a message and a world view behind those three, and what is that?



Then for parents again it's just to understand these are the cultural icons that are shaping your kids and you need to know about them, and you need to understand how to start a conversation with them about those things.

Bill Blankschaen:

Talk to us about starting that conversation. Let's say we got a parent listening nodding their head, saying, I get it, yeah, I see it. Like at advertisers whose sole agenda is to sell my kids things, not their well-being.

Gary Alan Taylor:

It's also to sell them a sense of normalcy. What they're saying is am I normal and am I significant and so I become that. Well I buy the shoes, I lose some weight, I buy the hair gel. That's really, they're not selling a product. They're selling a world view and a lifestyle.

Bill Blankschaen:

Yeah, and it's all external stuff which really has nothing to do with who that teen really is. Though yes, I totally agree. Advertisers doing that. Movies, same thing. They're trying to make a profit off your kids, not help them become well-rounded, mature adults. And the news, that has its own agenda. How do parents start that conversation, can you help parents give them some practical thoughts on how do you go about initiating that conversation?

I know there are parents listening who say my relationship with my teen is kind of rough right now. Some days we're not even talking. On the other end of the spectrum, very close relationship. Thoughts on how to initiate that conversation.

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yeah. I would say first is to educate yourself on their world to know the things that they are seeing on a daily basis. Sometimes that's tough. One of the impetuses toward us starting the culture translator which we can talk about is a mom that we were serving in Ohio, and she said I spend 20 hours a week searching Google for just the things that my daughter is downloading.

I said what if we did that for you, and so she's like, please do! And so really what we've also found with parents is there's just a couple of times during the day that you really have a captive audience with your son or daughter. One of those is in the car and you're driving them to soccer practice or you're picking



them up from ballet, and if they're not on their phone in the back seat that's really that time where if you have a catalyst to start a conversation about a specific topic of interest for them, what would that look like?

What we've tried to do is to equip parents with a reason to start the conversation during those chiros moments if you will, the specific times. That's really why we started the Culture Translator is to educate parents. Here are the things that are happening in your teen's world and here's how to start a conversation with them when you actually have them captive.

Bill Blankschaen:

Sure, sure. I love that in the car moment as you know Zig Ziglar was a big fan of what he called Automobile University. Using that downtime constructively. And what you're saying is it really is a family, can be a family university. You can learn a lot about your teens and engage in relationship during that time. Tell me about this Culture Translator because I agree if anybody is listening right now, they should sign up for this. Tell us what's unique about it, what does it do?

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yeah. It comes out every Friday, and it's basically an email that our team curates and researches the top three things that happened literally this week in the life of your teen or in your grandson or granddaughter's life that they know about, that they've already consumed, that you and I probably don't know about. And then what it also does is it provides a biblical framework for that conversation or for that topic, and then a conversation starter.

Last week we did a couple movie reviews. We talked about Valerian, we talked about Dunkirk, and then we just did a top 10 list of here are 10 cultural iconic items that took place this week that again that your son or daughter already knows about, and it's a great way first to even be educated about the topic and then a smart conversation starter for you to engage them.

Because what we're also finding is that parents need a sense of equity with their kids. I think a lot of us think aw, Mom and Dad, they're just so out of touch. They don't know anything about my world. Well, all of a sudden when dad says hey what do you think about Kyrie Irving wanting to be traded from the Cleveland Cavaliers. Well, wait, Dad knows about this?



Bill Blankschaen:

Right.

Gary Alan Taylor:

We made a connection and now we just started, we sparked a conversation, so that's what it really does, it's a free resource. You can sign up for it at axis, A-X-I-S dot O-R-G. Again our team is out there curating the best content every week and then providing an opportunity for us, for parents to just know what's going on and then here's a great way to start a conversation about that.

You got to know your kid to know, okay, they don't care about Kyrie Irving but wow they really love. I heard them already talking about the movie Dunkirk. Here's a great way to start that conversation.

Bill Blankschaen:

I love the idea of done for you conversation starters because the truth is parents are busy, and many times they often say I know I should take a couple hours, sit down right now, go fishing with my teen. What you're saying is you can take a shortcut to build real relationship capital with them and build up that equity, and I love that. Axis.org is where parents should go. And it's very easy to sign up. Went there myself. You can look at some of the archive topics and sign up easily, and it's free.

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yes, totally free. It's one of the ways to say, hey, we love what you do and one of the main ways that we do what we do is again simply bringing families together in a world where most of us are into our screens. Sit down, bring families together. Because most parents that we talk to say look I really do feel equipped to go deep but I don't have the reason to go there. I need almost an excuse to start a conversation with my kid that can lead to all different types of things.

Bill Blankschaen:

Sure. In my former life, I was a school principal, and so I dealt with teens and middle school teens all the time. I always joke that the sixth graders pretty much lived in my office during the year, so I very much know what you're talking about and parents wanting to have that conversation but needing the opening because otherwise I would go down and sit at the lunchroom table and they'd all look at me, like, oh, the principal's here, so everybody be quiet.

If I ask them about something and the look of shock on their face. What, how do you know about that



going on in culture, whatever. They couldn't stop talking so I totally get it. Help parents here headed into the back to school season. Talk to us about some of the language they're going to hear, the slang terms, the hot terms, the phrases that are being used by their teens. Help them translate those if you would. What are some of the things they're going to be hearing about as they head back into this school year season?

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yeah. One of the things we do is we tell parents we want to make you bilingual. We want to make you know the language that your kids are speaking. And so several terms that are out there right now, that really some of them are innocent, and some of them can be very alarming that you just want to pay attention to. One is a funny one it's called extra. You might hear your son or daughter say Johnny is just, he's extra.

It just really what it means is he's just over the top. Another one would be thirsty, that Laura is just thirsty. Well, what does thirsty mean? Well, for the most part what they're saying is she's desperate for attention. There's another slang, it's just the letter nine and it's primarily used for texting and so again depending on your access to your teen's phone.

If you see the number nine, it is translating again that a parent is watching and so again code for, hey guys we have to stop the conversation because mom is looking over my shoulder. Another weird one is Hundop, it's H-U-N-D-O-P. It just means 100% so I'm all in. I'm 100%. I'm a Hund-o-p. Again most of them are pretty innocuous, but again when you start drilling down on some of these, you again just see some other patterns that can be a little bit scary, especially when they're masking conversations about suicide or eating disorders or sexting.

Those are some things that again we want to be really careful of when you see a word on your son or daughter's text that you don't know about, I think the first thing is to go figure out what in the world that means, and then again you can, in a very non-coercive way ask them about that.

Bill Blankschaen:

Sure. Sure, now a lot of what you're saying implies that parents have access to their teen's technology. I couldn't agree more, but what advice would you give parents who maybe they haven't, maybe they're listening to this thinking, all right I haven't done a good job. I've got a little bit out of control process here. I've got teens with phones, they've got access to all kinds...



I don't even know what they have access to. How do I get my hands around this, what are some of the big rocks in that picture, how do I start taking back control and provide that protection, that shepherding, if you will, that I should be doing as a parent and I want to do, I just need to know how.

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yeah. Once you've opened that Pandora's box, it's a little hard to close it again. I think first and foremost, it starts again with a very honest conversation. And again students have grown up with the thought that they have a right to privacy and I would say that I have a right to be a good parent and so my right is to steward you and disciple you.

Our daughter, she's 12, she's almost 13, heading back to school and something she asked us this summer is am I getting a smartphone, and we said absolutely not. Well but I need one. Well, what do you need it for? Well I need to call and send texts. Okay, well you can do that with a flip phone. Well no, I don't want to do that. And so we have just made an intentional decision, my wife and I that we're not being fear based, but we also don't want to open up a world to her that she really doesn't know exist and nor would she know how to handle.

If you've already gone that direction. If your 16 year old has a smartphone with access to the Internet, I think the big question that we want to ask is are they equipped to deal with the temptations that are coming to them and one of those is of course is pornography. They have literally 24/7 access to hardcore pornography that for you and I, a generation ago, you actually had to willfully go and make a decision to seek those things out.

Now it's being delivered to their pockets. And so I would come up with some healthy boundaries around those. What does it look for screen, for instance there's no screens in a room, with the door closed or after 10 o'clock or hey we don't allow you to sleep with your phone and so really walking through that with them, not from a fear perspective but really from a sense to say look, there are things out there that are unhealthy for you.

I want to help you manage those, and we want to create some really healthy boundaries around the things that we are bringing into our home and bringing into our rooms because there are things just at 15 and 16 that you don't have the discernment to be able to handle and live with that.

Bill Blankschaen:

Yeah. In our Families that Win Course, we have an entire lessons, several sessions devoted to protecting



your kids when it comes to technology, protecting your family. One of the basic things that we advise families or encourage families is it's okay to say no. That they'll get a lot of pressure. Their kids will from all their peers who will try to make them feel inferior because they don't have a phone or the latest phone or this or that.

I've had that conversation as well many times with teens who said well I need a phone to talk to somebody. Well, there's a phone right over there on the counter. What do you need that for?

Gary Alan Taylor:

We see that too a lot, and I think one of the things that we grieve as an organization is that sometimes we as parents are as insecure as our kids are. We want to look cool, we want to look normal and we are just as addicted to our devices as they are to theirs, and that should really cause us some concern. In fact I was speaking in Silicon Valley to a large Christian school this past spring.

One of the dads raised his hand and he said hey, I just want to let you know that I was a part of the team that helped create that device, that iPhone, and I don't even let my kid own it, and I made it. And so you have these a-ha moments where like what have we invited into our lives and what is now discipling us, and what does it look like to rein it in a little bit. They're incredibly devices.

Bill Blankschaen:

I'm sorry, do you think that that provides an opening? The parents' difficulties with technology, does that provide an opening to be candid with their own teens and start that conversation from a place of vulnerability?

Gary Alan Taylor:

I think so. I really do, and we've even had those conversation with our kids where they will come to me and say Daddy, can you put your phone down? You're home now. Can you look at me? I'm talking to you. What my wife and I have talked about is healthy modeling. How are we modeling healthy uses of technology because most of what our kids are going to be disciplined on is not just what we say is how we act, and so, in the sense of are we truly practicing healthy behaviors around our own devices so they will see and know the difference when they get their own.

Bill Blankschaen:

Sure. That's good. Hey, any practical tips on if parents are, and I know that you're not expert or in this



business per se, but practical tips on parents wanting to put Internet filters on their devices and so forth. Your recommendations on services that they can look into?

Gary Alan Taylor:

We have relationship with Covenant Eyes, and so they've probably heard of Covenant Eyes. That's a great one. There's a little bit of difficulty in how it translate to iPhones but check that one out. There's also a device called Circle, which is a platform that you can install on your own Internet at home, and it will literally cut the Internet off when you want it to and it will monitor time and applications that your students are accessing.

There's also some - if for instance your son or daughter may have already dipped a toe into areas that are inappropriate like Internet pornography - we have a relationship with an organization called Rtribe, it's just the letter R, tribe, and it's an online accountability group that really helps young men specifically really deal with some of the triggers of online pornography. And so there's tons of things out there to help safeguard those devices, but again we have to practice them ourselves as well.

Bill Blankschaen:

I suspect that at Axis.org everyone would find links to those or more information about those kind of services as well.

Gary Alan Taylor:

They come out every week. About a month ago, we did an article on a new application that just came out of Great Britain and like right now there's the sexting craze has really taken over to where 40% of teens actually believe that sexting is a normal part of a relationship. That's staggering, the fact. Well, what do we do when we date? Well, we send nude pictures to one another.

40% of kids across denominational, across religious backgrounds thinks that's normal, and so a new application out of Great Britain came out to where you can actually link your phone with your son or daughter's phone and it will tell you if they receive an inappropriate text or not, which again fascinating technology. One of the things we say is technology is not bad. It's how we use it really depends on the theology around it. Here's a great example of technology being used to help redeem a space that has been broken.



Bill Blankschaen:

Right, I think I saw in one of your recent Culture Translators, the idea of taking some time off from technology over the summer. There's still some time to do that. I just wrote something at my blog Faithwalkers.com on the idea of a digital sabbath of one day a week for 24 hours, you shut down the technology. What have you seen in terms of that that idea of taking time off, everybody unplugging at a set time, or for a period of time to detox in that way?

Gary Alan Taylor:

Yeah. I think it helps rewire us and recenter us if you will. I think one of the greatest gifts we can give our kids or grandkids is simply our presence. My daughter's best friend was over the other night and she was heading back home, and I said Eli, Eliana is her name, and I said Eli what are you going to do when you get home? She said I'm probably going to watch my parent stare at their iPhones all night. That's terrible.

I think for us to really practice that notion of Saturdays where we're off phone technology, or what my wife does for me because she knows I really do have, I'm addicted to my phone, and in a lot of ways simply because there's so much work taking place 24/7. I give her my phone when I come home because I don't trust myself that I'm not going to look at it. She will take my phone from me and then if I say hey, actually I have to make a phone call. It's funny, but it's a great way for us to be accountable to one another, and then just practice those safe zones where we really aren't being pulled away into another world.

Bill Blankschaen:

Yeah. I love it. What I do is on Saturday, about 6 o'clock, I'll shut down. I won't access email, especially email, social media, anything like that but my kids know it, and my wife knows it, so it's happened at times when I've been on my phone, it's for some reason, they'll challenge me wait a minute what are you doing on your phone? Are you allowed to be doing that? Yeah it's a very healthy environment, I think.

Let's bring this in for a landing by really getting practical if we can. I want to ask a two part question. I want to focus on the first part. First I want to tell you the second part, so the first part make sense. I want to talk about what's your best piece of really practical down to earth, rubber meets the road advice that you can give for parents as they head into back to school?

Parents of teens heading into this back to school season. What's the biggest, most important, most effective thing you can possibly do in this season? And then the second question I want to ask is just based on all of your experiences, you look at culture and as you process that, where parents are right



now, what's the biggest piece of advice you can give to parents, in a broader sense. Especially parents of teens. So one very time- specific back to school. What can you do right now to get some action to this and then secondly, bigger picture, what's the single most important piece of advice you would pass along based on your experience?

Gary Alan Taylor:

We are tempted to be busy all the time, and so we're working more than 40 hours a week, we're dropping our kids off to school. They're doing soccer and band and 14 club sports. There's never even any time for us as a family to simply come together and to say no to things. And so my practical advice would be to carve out margin in your life, and in your family's life.

When's the last time that you actually had a meal together, and when was the last time that you had a meal together that people were not on their phone? And so what would it look like to truly create margin and dead time to where Wednesday nights, nothing is planned, nothing can be planned. This is an opportunity for us to come together as a family.

You mentioned the notion of sabbath. Can you institute some type of sabbath if you will during your week to come together as a family? Maybe that's a Friday night to where you just do family time, or it's Saturday morning? Those are really critical times that I think that we can say no to the world, and say no to being pulled in a thousand different directions to actually come together, build community and equity with one another. Again, what is it communicating to our kids is that they matter to us.

I really think that is probably the second thing there from a long-term perspective. Every kid wants to know that they are safe, that they are loved, that they are significant and that they matter. If they are not getting that, if they are not resting with us first, they're going to go find it elsewhere, and a lot of times that's going to manifest itself in some really pathological behavior.

I think really to ask yourself the question, do my kids know that I think that they are amazing and that no matter what they ever do that I am a safe place to come to. I'm safe to come to if they struggled with an issue or do I really, have I really cultivated in their heart and mind the notion that no matter what, they are accepted with me.

Bottling that Christ-like presence and grace and mercy with them that then builds the ability to do, to be able to have the hard conversation sometimes when you need to, and that doesn't mean we don't



discipline them. It doesn't mean that there are rules but that they know no matter what I can go to Mom, I can go to Dad and there's not going to be the condemnation. There's going to be acceptance and then there's going to be a conversation around it.

Bill Blankschaen:

Yeah. I love that margin conversation. I couldn't agree more. Practical thing for parents, and would be as they look at their calendar for heading into the fall, carve out some time - designated downtime. That may mean saying no to something. That may mean saying not to a soccer team of kid being into play. Maybe in saying no to a parent dad getting a night out with the guys or a mom, whatever the case it might be.

I love that you talked about letting your kids know they matter. Would you agree, have you seen those to be true that look at a family's calendar and you'll find out what really matters most.

Gary Alan Taylor:

Absolutely, absolutely. I think too, I'm a huge sports guy. I really love sports but sports had become an idolatry, and especially high school sports. I ran track, I play basketball, but now when sporting events or practices are taking place on Sunday mornings and five days a week becoming, what have we sold out to? And again heading back to school, even creating maybe a week prior to that, to just refocus.

To say all right summer's gotten away from us. We're going to do one full week of just being intentional, every night this week we're going to be together, and maybe that will change some patterns. Because most of life honestly is habitual. 40% of what we do, Duke University study said that 40% of what we do every day is pure habit, and so habits that are we laying down with our kids are the things that they're going to do, and so the things I did yesterday are going to be the things I do today and tomorrow.

How do you change habits in your family when it comes to time, when it comes to technology? I think a really critical to cultivating discipleship with them especially getting back to school because again, you're starting new habits, you have a new calendar. You have a new life, what does it look like to at least even think about, what is does an average day look like in our family, how is it going to change when we get into school, and then what do we do to take back some of that time in bringing us together.

Bill Blankschaen:

Yeah. Zig Ziglar, Stephen Covey, many others, all big fans of getting the big rocks in first. Choosing what's



going to be most important and then scheduling it. I love Zig Ziglar's famous expression was to run your day by the clock and that really does require that I think many of us as parents and families, we just hope somehow it'll all fit in. And it never does, the important stuff drops out.

Well, first of all, I love all that you shared with us today Gary, tell us once again. Parents wanting to engage you because you guys don't just send emails that are really neat. You do other things like events and all kinds of other stuff. Tell us a little bit about that and how people can get plugged in.

Gary Alan Taylor:

We have some parent conversation guides and again one of our, the ways we measure success as an organization is how many conversations are we starting between parents and their kids and between grandparents and their grandkids, and so we have digital conversion kits that are really around some, I would say some at-risk behaviors. We just created one on eating disorders. There's a brand new show on Netflix that is trending in huge ways with teens called *To the Bone*.

It's about, it really glorifies eating disorders in a way. It's really pretty sad, and so what we've provided is an opportunity for just parents to be educated on that topic. We have conversation topics on social media, on Snapchat. What in the world is Snapchat and why is my daughter spending six hours a day on it. Well, here's what it is, and here's a conversation about that.

We have just family conversation kits that include some incredible filmed presentations by our team and those are topical, we believe that right now there's about 8 to 12 vital faith conversations that every mom and dad should be having with their kid. Is the Bible reliable? Where do we all come from? What is the meaning of sexuality and Christian marriage?

Those are huge things that again students are being disciplined by the messages from pop culture and how do we create a theology of our own and so those conversation pieces are there on our website. We have like a Netflix library if you will. A lot of conversations but really the first thing to do is jump in, get access to the Culture Translator, it's free. It'll give you a sense of who we are, what we do and how we do it.

Our tone is really great. We have parents say hey we love that you do not, you're not fear based, you're not condemning the culture. You're simply letting us know what's out there and you're inviting us into the conversation with you, so those are some great resources that are available at axis.org.



Bill Blankschaen:

I love it. Parents and *Thrive* members, as you're watching this, well first of all, thank you so much, Gary for being our Family Focus expert this month. We're looking forward to continuing to partner with Axis to be a pipeline for families to equip them in this way. I would challenge you as parents who are watching to really choose one or two things out of this conversation, action items, maybe it's taking that scheduling idea and carving that out, heading into back to school or maybe it's some of the technology things we talked about.

Ways you can step in, start conversations. Definitely sign up for the Culture Translator. That's a no-brainer if you're a parent, and tell other parents about it too as you experience it. Don't just keep it to yourself, because the reality is the more parents you tell, the more it's going to help you as a parent as their teen interacts with them so it's all good.

I would challenge parents to really find something to act on and get moving on it, because you can do that. Don't forget make a note on Thrive Facebook group about what you love most about this, and leave a comment there and so much exciting stuff coming with Ziglar Family in the weeks and months to come, so Gary, again thank you so much. I suspect you could talk all day on this subject.

Gary Alan Taylor:

We're just very humbled to be a part of the conversation with you so thanks for all that you do, and again we're humbled that you even invited us to be a part of the show, so thank you so much for letting me be a part of it.

Bill Blankschaen:

Absolutely. Thank you and to our parents, greatly appreciate you for coming along for the ride, pass it along, the grandparents too because they are critical part of this conversation too. Thank you so much.