VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS™
Quest for Excellence

"Do it heartily as to the Lord." Col. 3:23

Warriors for Wellness: Summer 2026

Valley Christian extends warm wishes to our students and families for a restful, joyful, and renewing summer as we look ahead to the upcoming school year. As you move into this new season, we hope your schedules begin to slow, offering a well-deserved break from the pace of the school year. With the busyness of daily routines easing, summer can be a meaningful time to reconnect, rest, and engage in activities that bring your family joy.

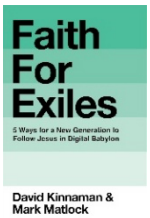
Our wellness team remains committed to growing in our understanding of what helps students truly thrive. By caring for our minds, emotions, physical health, and passions, while also deepening our relationship with Christ, we believe students are better equipped to experience lasting wellness. As we look to the 2026–2027 school year, we are excited to continue expanding our wellness efforts, providing thoughtful support and meaningful resources to help our students flourish.

To support your child's well-being over the summer, we have included a suggested reading list. We recognize that each family's journey is unique, with different needs and rhythms. Our hope is that you may find resources within this list that encourage, support, and meet you where you are.

Wishing you a summer filled with rest, connection, and renewal.

Suggested Reading List:

Faith for Exiles by David Kinnaman

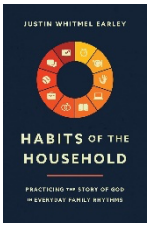


In a culture that can often feel confusing and disconnected from faith, it's easy to focus on what's not working for today's generation. *Faith for Exiles* offers a hopeful and encouraging perspective, highlighting what *is* working and how young people are developing resilient, lasting faith.

Based on extensive research, this book explores how today's students are growing up in a "digital Babylon," where technology and culture shape their daily lives. Rather than discouragement, the authors point to five key practices that help young Christians stay grounded in their faith and continue following Jesus in meaningful ways.

This is a thoughtful and practical read for parents who want to better understand the challenges their children face, while also gaining insight and encouragement on how to support them in building a strong, lasting faith.

Habits of the Household by Justin Whitmel Earley

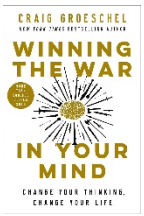


In the midst of busy family life, it can be difficult to slow down and be intentional in the moments that matter most. *Habits of the Household* offers a hopeful and practical guide for creating simple, meaningful rhythms that help families grow in connection, purpose, and faith.

Justin Whitmel Earley shares how everyday routines like mealtimes, bedtimes, and discipline can become opportunities for spiritual formation and deeper relationships. With realistic insight and encouragement, he helps parents bridge the gap between the family life they hope for and the one they are living day to day.

Filled with practical ideas, prayers, and simple habits, this book equips parents to create a home environment where both children and adults can learn to love God and one another more intentionally. It's a thoughtful and encouraging resource for families seeking more peace, connection, and purpose in their daily lives.

Winning the War in Your Mind by Craig Groeschel



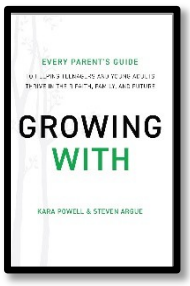
Our thoughts have a powerful impact on how we feel, respond, and live day to day. In *Winning the War in Your Mind*, Craig Groeschel offers a practical and faith-centered approach to breaking free from negative thought patterns and building a healthier, more grounded mindset.

Blending biblical truth with insights from brain science, this book helps readers better understand how their thoughts are formed and how they can be reshaped. Groeschel provides simple, actionable strategies to identify unhelpful thinking, replace it with truth, and develop habits that lead to greater peace, clarity, and confidence.

This is an encouraging resource for parents who want to grow in their own mental and spiritual well-being, while also modeling healthy thinking patterns for their children.

Take Care,

VCHS Wellness Team



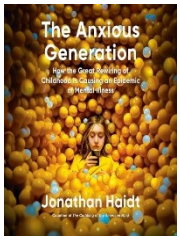
Growing With: Every Parent's Guide to Helping Teenagers and Young Adults Thrive in Their Faith, Family, and Future
by Kara Powell & Steven Argue

Parenting that changes your kids and changes you. Many parents of a teenager or young adult feel as though they're guessing about what to do next--with mixed results. We want to stay connected with our maturing child, but we're not sure how. And deep down, we fear our child doesn't want or need us. But growing up doesn't have to mean growing apart.

Based on brand-new research and interviews with remarkable families, Growing With equips parents to take steps toward their teenagers and young adults in a mutual journey of intentional growth that trusts God to transform them all. By highlighting three groundbreaking family strategies, authors Kara Powell and Steven Argue show parents that it's never too early or too late to:

- accept the child you have, not the child you wish you had
- work toward solutions rather than only identifying problems
- develop empathy that nudges rather than judges
- fight for your child, not against them
- connect your children with a faith and church big enough to handle their doubts and struggles
- dive into tough discussions about dating, career, and finances
- and unleash your child's passions and talents to change our world

For any parent who longs for their kids to keep their roots even as they spread their wings, Growing With offers practical help and hope for the days--and years--ahead.



The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewriting of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness
by Jonathan Haidt

After more than a decade of stability or improvement, the mental health of adolescents plunged in the early 2010s. Rates of depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicide rose sharply, more than doubling on many measures. Why?

In The Anxious Generation, social psychologist Jonathan Haidt lays out the facts about the epidemic of teen mental illness that hit many countries at the same time. He then investigates the nature of childhood, including why children need play and independent exploration to mature into competent, thriving adults. Haidt shows how the "play-based childhood" began to decline in the 1980s, and how it was finally wiped out by the arrival of the "phone-based childhood" in the early 2010s. He presents more than a dozen mechanisms by which this "great rewiring of childhood" has interfered with children's social and neurological development, covering everything from sleep deprivation to attention fragmentation, addiction, loneliness, social contagion, social comparison, and perfectionism. He explains why social media damages girls more than boys and why boys have been withdrawing from the real world into the virtual world, with disastrous consequences for themselves, their families, and their societies.

Most important, Haidt issues a clear call to action. He diagnoses the “collective action problems” that trap us, and then proposes four simple rules that might set us free. He describes steps that parents, teachers, schools, tech companies, and governments can take to end the epidemic of mental illness and restore a more humane childhood.

Haidt has spent his career speaking truth backed by data in the most difficult landscapes—communities polarized by politics and religion, campuses battling culture wars, and now the public health emergency faced by Gen Z. We cannot afford to ignore his findings about protecting our children—and ourselves—from the psychological damage of a phone-based life.

We hope these readings provide valuable insights and inspiration as you enjoy your summer. Have a wonderful break, and we look forward to welcoming you back for another amazing school year at Valley Christian.

Take care—

VCHS Wellness Team