



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

Our Project is designed to equip and empower parents and caregivers from diverse backgrounds to engage in Christian practices that nurture a vital and vibrant Christian faith in families with children from 0-12 years old.

PREPARED BY

Brittany Sky McRay,
Project Director

GenOn Christian Parenting Project

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Our project seeks to build a faith-forming environment for children centered in the family and supported and encouraged by the local church community—through intergenerational relationships, ministries, and faith-formation programming shaped by families' current needs.

TO REALIZE THIS PURPOSE, THE GENON MINISTRIES PROJECT HAS THREE COMPONENTS:

- **Parenting and Spiritual Formation:** A line of resources is to encourage, support, and equip parents, caregivers, and grandparents to be faith formers of their children by creating video-based parenting educational programs, mentoring, and resources that nurture and support parental faith.
- **Families in Faith:** A line of resources is to provide diverse family types with intergenerational faith-forming practices and activities. The Families in Faith resources will be developed in three parts over three years, providing households with activities and resources to live faith practices at home.
- **Church and Family Partnership:** A line of resources to engage faith formation leaders in creating a church culture that strengthens the connection and relationship between families and the church and builds a partnership with parents and caregivers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Built a digital platform for publishing the resources (<https://genonfamilies.genonministries.org/>).
- Recruited and confirmed 109 churches with diversity in sizes, ethnicities, and locations to pilot the resources.
- Designed and launched the first year of the "Church and Family Partnership" resources with the Grow Your Toolbox webinars in May 2023
- Designed and began creating the "Parenting and Spiritual Formation" line of resources, including a video series, and the "Families in Faith" resources.
- Began planning a two-day training workshop to be held in five regional sites across the US and for two online.

BY THE NUMBERS

109

Ecumenical churches participating in the project

211

Families participating in using and testing the new resources

47

Ecumenical leaders contributing support, insights, and content to the project in 2023

312

Pieces of content created for caregivers and families to be used in 2024. And a video series!

OUR TEAM

Led by Brittany, the GenOn Ministries Team has contributed 1/3 of their allotted time to the Christian Parenting Project, along with the Board of Directors and a large team of ecumenical and diverse contractors.



Liz Perraud
Executive Director



Brittany Sky McRay
Project Director



Suzie Lane
Program Director



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Training Director



Tracey Schoch
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OBSERVATIONS

Families have disclosed a desire for empowerment, support, and understanding from faith leaders. Several millennial and Gen-Z caregivers shared in one-on-one conversations that they feel like their churches are disappointed in them. But instead of letting the shame of that force them into more participation, they have backed off. They are looking for communities of support, especially after the real isolation and breakdown of community that occurred during COVID lockdowns and school and work closures. There is still hope that church communities can be safe spaces for belonging for themselves and their children.

There seems to be a disconnect between church expectations of families and the realities families face. The economic disparities, the rising costs of basic goods, the cost of childcare and healthcare, and the expectation that workers (79.9% of our caregiver respondents work full or part-time) be available at all times have led to a perceived lack of understanding by older generations towards younger generations of parents. Our job in the Church and Family Partnership set of resources will be to create bridges between each group, namely, understanding for the younger caregivers who desire intergenerational relationships that lead to empowerment and support.

We learned that families want resources that help support sacred ordinary moments and support their parenting job of raising kids to become good people. We asked all of our caregivers how often they have a worshipful experience, being careful not to limit these moments to church worship, and the vast majority of respondents said they experience worshipful moments with God weekly. While they may not attend a church service each week, they do have a connection with God. We also learned that starting from the Bible and moving to life isn't an effective teaching methodology. Caregivers reported their highest goals for their children's spiritual formation were to have a loving relationship with God/Jesus (1 in 3 respondents marked this as number one) and to become good people (1 in 4 respondents marked this as number one). One in ten respondents marked Bible knowledge as a priority. While it's still important, it is less important than the daily faithful life.

We have taken this information and created a scope and sequence for the resources rooted in values to move from these shared values toward the Bible while deepening Christian ethics. We continue to listen empathetically and weave together an ecumenical theology, current design trends, and intergenerational ministry. 2023 has set us up for a beautiful 2024.

VALUES CHOSEN BY FAMILY TESTERS

The values and topics chosen for the first installments of "Parenting and Spiritual Formation" and "Families in Faith" came directly from the invited alpha-testing families after they completed a Values Process for Families. The values chosen are:

- Love
- Fun
- Respect
- Community
- Trust
- Gratitude
- Patience
- Perseverance
- Compassion
- Growth
- Faith
- Creativity



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WHAT COMES NEXT

JANUARY

- We will hire and schedule a coaching consultant team for the regional and online gatherings in April and May.
- The website pages where the “Parenting and Spiritual Formation” resources and the “Families in Faith” resources will be housed will be set up.
- Brittany Sky will present the data collected from families in 2023 at APCE.
- All of the year one content for “Parenting and Spiritual Formation” resources and “Families in Faith” resources are due from the Creative team to the GenOn Project team on January 31.

FEBRUARY AND MARCH

- The resource team will edit and load the content submitted by the creative team.
- The regional and online gatherings will continue to be planned and put together.

APRIL

- The first four regional gatherings will occur in Nashville, TN; Dallas, TX; Chicago, IL; and Philadelphia, PA. The churches will learn about what their families shared with us, be given access to the first round of resources, and develop a rollout plan for their unique church.

MAY

- The last regional gathering (in San Jose, CA) and the two online gatherings will occur. The churches will learn about what their families shared with us, be given access to the first round of resources, and develop a rollout plan for their unique church.

SUMMER

- Families and caregivers will begin using the resources. Weekly emails will start going out to the families from GenOn with three suggested activities for the week, along with a word of encouragement.

FALL

- Church leaders will meet again with their coaching consultants to see how things are going and encourage the churches to keep going despite the newness.
- A qualitative and quantitative survey will go out to families and church leaders to determine how things are going and ask what needs to be changed before year two content comes out.
- Hold an advisory board meeting with the GenOn Board.

DECEMBER

- The Incubation Team will gather to go through the data and strategize what needs to be created for year-two of the “Parenting and Spiritual Formation” and the “Families in Faith” resources.

