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Strengthening character through dialogue

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"what's the deal?"



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Dear Reader

Welcome to the premiere issue of Connections, an ethiKids' forum designed to explore and address the pressures kids face today. It's a tough world out there, but by working together we can make a difference!



ethiKids in Toy Frenzy

Only the fun survive!

"what's the deal?" won a competition to be featured in TD Monthly's Toy Frenzy! Only the Fun Survive, a documentary following the 3 most promising new products of the year. The filming takes place at the International Toy Fair at the Jacob Javits Center, February 17 - 20. The theme of this year's Toy Fair is "Inspiring Growth" and that is exactly what "what's the deal?" is designed to do. We couldn't be prouder. To read all about it: <http://www.toydirectory.com/monthly/article.asp?id=2952>

Where are my girls at?

A theatrical approach to character development

In a theatrical performance in New York City, 10-year-old Winnifred described the lack of healthy role models for girls. "Maybe if we spent more time focusing on the women who matter, we could stop comparing ourselves to the women who don't." You can't walk by a newsstand without being bombarded by a sea of look-alike women of the moment - all with groundbreaking tips on weight and make-up. This screams to our young girls that the primary measure of success in this society is being blonde, thin and sexy. Girls can be savvy to this phenomenon but without healthy heroes - we're losing them to the prevailing cultural icons. Read more about Winifred and her fellow actors' performance ([read more](#))

Grow Up!

The Cost of Negative Role Models

You know it when you see it. Young boys slumping their way to toughness and irreverence - giving every signal that they don't care what you think. Bravado. Prepubescent girls in provocative clothing, the Paris Hilton poses and the often ruthless disregard for girls who just don't "get it." Sure, it might be a passing phase. But what are the long term costs to healthy character development? We invite your comments and advice at ([link](#))

Today's potential role models often include derailed debutantes, bad boy rappers and prison-bound athletes. Tweens (Between 10 and 13) are especially vulnerable as they struggle with self identity and self-esteem issues. "They're working through who they are," says Shepherd Smith, President of the Institute for Youth Development based in Washington, D.C., an organization that promotes positive choices and behaviors for children.

We know this is an important topic. If you know someone who would be interested in receiving this newsletter, please feel free to forward. We'd be delighted to broaden this circle of caring adults. Thank you.