

# THE ORANGE CONFERENCE

## Navigating the Fifth/Sixth Transition

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## The Kids

### What is Generation Z?

- Born between 1994 and 2010.
- Over 16 Million 9-12 year olds in the US alone.
- This Year's 5/6 graders were born between 1999-2001

They are growing up in a post-9/11 world.

They are more over-protected and over parented than any previous generation.

## Tween-Agers

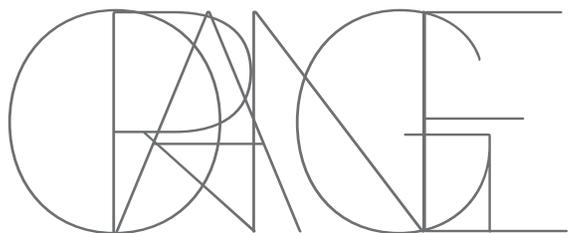
### Do they even exist?

Origins of the word: Tween-ager is a marketing term that entered the vernacular in the late 90s. Companies wanted to create brand awareness in the up-and-coming consumers.

Buying Power: And it's no doubt why... 9-12 year olds spend \$30 BILLION per year on entertainment, clothes, media.

Youngest mother in 2011 was 11 years old. In a recent conversation I had with a church leader, she told me a story of a 9 year old who came in to a pregnancy resource center for a pregnancy test.

But there is hope, because when you ask fifth graders point blank, most of them just want to be KIDS. The Problem is that culture is redefining that for them.



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## Tween-Agers

### What do they face?

#### **Home: Untraditional**

The “perfect” picture of the family with 2 parents, 2.5 kids, and a dog is no longer the reality for most kids.

6 living generations.

1. Seniors (1900 – 1928)
2. Builders (1929 – 1945)
3. Boomers (1946 – 1965)
4. Busters (1966 – 1983)
5. Millennials (1984 – 1993)
6. Generation Z (1994 – 2010)

The significance of this: In the past Seniors had Builders, Builders had Boomers. Today, we have boomers having Generations Z kids. The generation gap is now a generation CHASM.

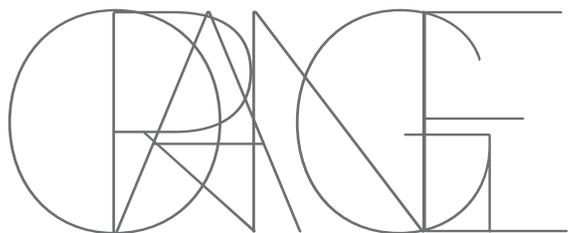
#### **School: Unconventional**

While most kids still attend conventional schools—public, private or Christian. There is a growing trend of home schooling among all families not just traditional conservative families.

A new fringe idea of school is called Unschooling or EvolvedU which emphasizes learning in any situation or location.

#### **Culture: Unprecedented**

Never before in history has culture so targeted this demographic. From TV shows to magazines to the mall, culture is focused on raising your kids a certain way.



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## The Church

What culture can't do: bring in leaders who authentically care for the FULL—emotional, spiritual, physical—development of kids and students.

## Church: Leadership

You need a common end in mind; if you don't, each department will have their own end in mind, which will ultimately confuse your kids.

What does the “same page” look like?

Alignment doesn't mean that you agree about everything. It means you agree about the MOST IMPORTANT THINGS.

What's happening in YOUR department is as important to MY department as what's happening in MY department.

## 2 Ideas:

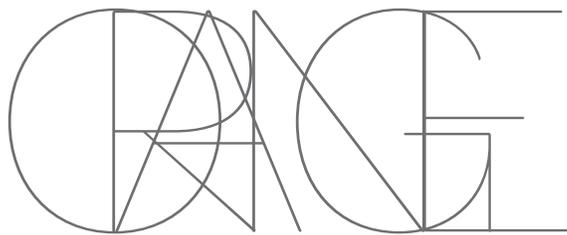
1. **Weekly Prayer** – Create an environment that builds and cultivates relationships. If you're invested in each other relationally, you're more likely to help each other in the work place.

## 2. Quarterly Team Meetings

Celebrate Wins

Present Status Updates

Set and Review Goals



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## Where do we need alignment?

1. How you will talk about salvation in a way that builds on vocabulary from preschool through college.
2. Basic Truths – know the big rocks you’re going to cover at each stage of development.
3. Unified Scope and Cycle – What you say and how often you will say it.

## Church: Programming

Transitions are not a one-time event, but years of preparation in the life of your ministry.

The question is not...”How do I get my fifth graders to stay?”

The question is... “How do I get my fifth graders to **ENGAGE?**”

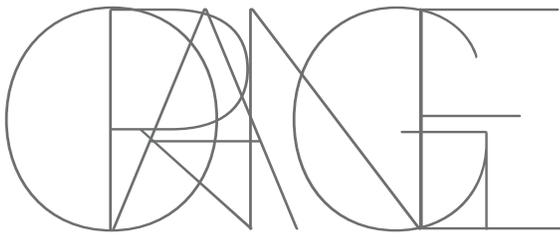
Fifth Graders:

What is relevant? Relevant doesn’t mean “cool”. Relevant means you present content in a way that it makes sense to their personal story and connect with their life.

## 2 > 1+1: Elevate Community

Fifth graders are connected...

Never have we had a generation so relationally connected to a greater community yet so unable to communicate what really matters.



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## Power of Story: Refine the Message

### Kids Learn When...

1. There is a gap in their knowledge
2. When there is a conflict between what they knew to be true and what they're being taught.

### Bloom's Taxonomy

1. Dictionary: Virtues
2. Encyclopedia: Bottom Lines
3. How-To Manual: Applications
4. Sorting Tray: Analysis
5. Debate: Seeing Both Sides
6. Einstein: Self

## The Transition to Sixth Grade

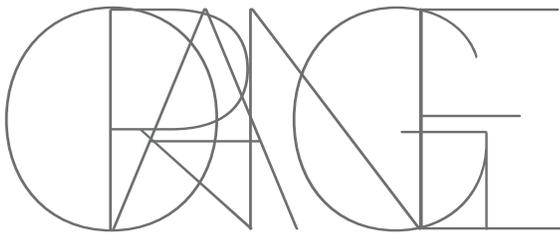
Goal: Build bridges with transitional events.

### NOTE:

**These events should be INFORMED by the children's department, but HOSTED by student's department.**

Ideas:

5/6<sup>th</sup> party – with kids AND leaders that makes a fun handoff from one ministry to the next. The student ministry welcomes kids into the ministry and lets them know that they're WANTED.



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## Sixth Graders: Power of Experience

Embracing the story of the gospel is not the same as experiencing the mission of the gospel.

We can't expect kids to come to church and love Jesus just because we tell them to. They need to experience the love of Jesus for themselves and demonstrate the love of Jesus to their world.

## Home:

How do we help parents win?

Parents...

Parents do not partner with the church.

The Church partners with parents.

CUE

C. Connect our kids with something about God – WONDER.

U. Uncover something that matters about life – DISCOVERY.

E. Experience something together – PASSION.