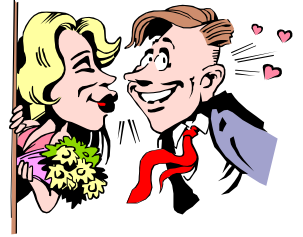




Funtastic Family Home Evenings
Easy to Prepare! Fun to Share!



DATING – DELIGHTFUL OR DANGEROUS

PURPOSE

To help family members understand that the Lord's dating guidelines provide spiritual safety.

SONG SUGGESTION

1. "[Keep the Commandments](#)" page 146 in *Children's Songbook*

LESSON IDEAS

1. Share the poem, "A Fence or an Ambulance?" (below)
2. Ask your family what the poem has to do with dating.
3. Share the following quote from President Ezra Taft Benson: "There is an old saying that states: It is better to prepare and prevent than it is to repair and repent. How true that is of the law of chastity. The first line of defense in keeping ourselves morally clean is to prepare ourselves to resist temptation and prevent ourselves from falling into sin" (*New Era*, Jan 1988, 4).
4. Have your family list some of the dating guidelines teens have been given to provide a 'fence' over a beautiful, but sometimes dangerous cliff. You may want to discuss the dating guidelines that are found in the [For the Strength of Youth](#) pamphlet.
5. Consider sharing the following quotes:
 - a. President Gordon B. Hinckley: "My dear young friends, in matters of sex you know what is right. You know when you are walking on dangerous ground, when it is so easy to stumble and slide into the pit of transgression. I plead with you to be careful, to stand safely back from the cliff of sin over which it is so easy to fall. Keep yourselves clean from the dark and disappointing evil of sexual transgression. Walk in the sunlight of that peace which comes from obedience to the commandments of the Lord" (*Ensign*, January 2001).
 - b. President Gordon B. Hinckley: "The Lord has made us attractive one to another for a great purpose. But this very attraction becomes as a powder keg unless it is kept under control. ... It is for this reason that the Church counsels against early dating" (*Ensign*, January 2001).
6. You may want to read or watch one or more of the following:
 - a. Story, [I Can't Trust You, or Can I?](#)
 - b. Article, [To the Young Men on Dating](#)
 - c. Article, [Advice to Young Women on Dating](#)

- d. Video, [Chastity: What Are the Limits?](#)
- 7. Testify that dating can be spiritually safe and much more enjoyable when the guidelines of the Lord are followed.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- 1. Visit the websites below for more great resources on dating:
 - a. [Idea List: Make a Great Date](#)
 - b. [Cheap and Fun Dates](#)

A Fence or an Ambulance?

By Joseph Malins

‘Twas a dangerous cliff, as they freely confessed
Though to walk near its crest was so pleasant.
But over its terrible edge there had slipped,
A duke and full many a peasant.
So the people said something would have to be done
But their projects did not at all tally.
Some said, “Put a fence around the edge of the cliff.”
Some, “An ambulance down in the valley.”

But the cry for the ambulance carried the day
For it spread through the neighboring city.
A fence may useful or not, it is true,
But each heart became brimful of pity,
For those who slipped over that dangerous cliff;
And the dwellers in highway and alley
Gave pounds or gave pence, not to put up a fence
But an ambulance down in the valley.

“For the cliff is all right if you’re careful,” they said,
“And if folks even slip or are dropping,
It isn’t the slipping that hurts them so much,
As the shock down below when they’re stopping.”
So day after day as these mishaps occurred,
Quick forth would their rescuers sally,
To pick up the victims who fell over the cliff
With the ambulance down in the valley.

Then an old man remarked, "It's a marvel to me
That people give far more attention
To repairing results than in stopping the cause
When they'd much better aim at prevention.
Let us stop at its source all the mischief," he cried.
"Come neighbors and friends let us rally.
If the cliff we will fence, we might almost dispense
With the ambulance down in the valley."

"Oh, he's a fanatic," the others replied,
"Dispense with the ambulance? Never.
He'd dispense with all charities, too, if he could.
No, no, we'll support them forever.
Aren't we picking up folks just as fast as they fall
And shall this man dictate to us? Shall he?
Why should people of sense stop to put up a fence
While the ambulance works in the valley?"

But a sensible few who are practical, too
Will not bear with such nonsense much longer.
They believe that prevention is better than cure,
And their party will still be the stronger.
Encourage them then with your purse, voice and pen,
And while other philanthropists dally
They will scorn all pretense and put up a fence
On the cliff that hangs over the valley.

Better guide well the young than reclaim them when old,
For the voice of true wisdom is calling.
To rescue the fallen is good but 'tis best
To prevent other people from falling.
Better close up the source of temptation and crime,
Than deliver from dungeon and galley.
Better put a strong fence round the top of the cliff
Than an ambulance down in the valley.

