



Why should it matter that young Christians have an adequate understanding of citizenship?

It matters because the future of American democracy depends on our youth.

Every notable political and social reform in America since World War II—civil rights, anti-Vietnam War, women's rights and environmental movements—has relied on the vibrancy, idealism and action of youth. One need not agree with these movements to recognize that American civic life has been consistently sparked by the passion of its young people.

Such passion, however, has faded in recent years.

Studies show that, whether compared with older citizens of present times or youth from earlier eras, young Americans today are less interested in political matters than ever before. They're also less knowledgeable about government, and less likely to have a sense of duty or pride with American citizenship. In sum, they're less likely to care. And today's apathetic young Americans will become tomorrow's apathetic older Americans.

It matters because citizenship is more than just a civil status.

At TeenPact, we believe that citizenship is a Christian duty. That's why we work to turn students into statesmen, to instill within them a passion for the biblical principles of freedom and justice. TeenPact's mission is to train young people to be leaders who will impact the nation and the world. And for over a decade now, we have been advancing this mission.

TeenPact was launched in 1994, when founder Tim Echols conducted a week-long program for a small group of high-school students at the Georgia State Capitol. From a biblical worldview, these Christian young people were given a practical, working knowledge of state government operations. In addition to learning civic fundamentals, students were provided with the opportunity to interview legislators and lobbyists. They also studied parliamentary debate and learned how to identify and read bills. Most importantly, they were inspired.

Some twelve years later, TeenPact has served to inspire thousands of Christian students from a variety of denominational backgrounds. Specialized TeenPact programs are now offered to young people 8 to 18-years-old in states across the country. In fact, TeenPact classes have been expanded to capitols in thirty-five states.



Tim Echols (center) with Former Secretary of the Interior, Don Hodel, and Chairman of Focus on the Family, Dr. James Dobson

It matters because Christ has called us to engage the world, not run from it.

TeenPact inspires a current generation that appears to be uninterested in government and politics by moving beyond traditional lessons. Not only are students introduced to pressing political trends in their states, they are taught how to critically analyze ongoing legislation. Not only do they learn essential government vocabulary and terms, they actually engage in written correspondence with present government leaders. Not only are they taught a Christian worldview of citizenship presented in Scripture, but they put their faith into practice by praying for their leaders and participating in devotions at the capitol.

TeenPact inspires students by merging formal education with experiential education, relating knowledge with action, and revealing the Christian faith's inherent connection with civic engagement, evident in Christ's command to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's.

It matters because if our youth aren't equipped to shape the world, the world will shape our youth.

Clearly, many organizations are competing for the attention of our young people and vying for their loyalty. Opponents in America's culture wars have taken aim at our youth, pushing agendas rooted in secular humanism and moral relativism. That's why TeenPact serves Christian American families by equipping young people to face these challenges.

So instead of condemning government, TeenPact students are educated how to change it. Instead of fearing culture, TeenPact students discover how to contribute to it. Instead of avoiding the intellect, TeenPact students assimilate how to develop it. Instead of hiding from darkness, TeenPact students are taught to illuminate the light of Christ in a deeply troubled world.

TeenPact. Because citizenship matters.

To gauge just how well TeenPact meets students' needs, consider this: enrollment has grown to nearly four thousand students in 2004, and even more are expected to participate in 2005. And many of these students are quick to give TeenPact credit for inspiring them to become civically active.

TeenPact participant Chris Stanton from Virginia writes, "Because of TeenPact I am no longer an apathetic youth searching for a cause; I am now energized to learn about my government and become involved. I thank TeenPact and I pray that God will continue to use it to affect this nation's lethargic youth for the better." (Now at Air Force Academy.)

The organization has received national recognition by Focus on the Family, Family Research Council, American Family Association, For Faith and Family, and many others. And praises of TeenPact's efforts ring from American legislative halls as well.

South Carolina Speaker of the House David Wilkins acclaims TeenPact for "shaping young minds to embrace to challenges of our future" with "values, character, and commitment to justice."

TeenPact's commitment to wise stewardship.

With a mere \$650,000 in annual revenue and only two paid staff, much of TeenPact's growth and success can be attributed to prudent stewardship of financial and human resources. The organization is fiscally frugal, utilizing complimentary

state facilities and seasonal sub-contracting directors. And TeenPact stretches its assets by forming alliances with like-minded organizations such as Worldview Academy, Patrick Henry College, King's College and Chick-fil-A.

Additionally, TeenPact uses student volunteers in virtually all facets of ministry operations. This not only saves administrative staffing costs, but also inculcates within student volunteers leadership qualities and management skills, further supporting the core of TeenPact's mission.

TeenPact's recent creation of a strategic plan demonstrates the ministry's commitment to remaining a self-sustaining organization prepared for the future. Resourceful stewardship has enabled remarkable growth, and will certainly be necessary to advance TeenPact's mission in years to come.

Will you support the efforts of TeenPact?

But with the rapid expansion of TeenPact classes comes escalating needs. TeenPact's ministry desires to train as many young Christian leaders as possible, regardless of a student's economic status. This means students need low tuition costs, while others are in need of scholarships.

In order to sustain TeenPact's level of high quality education, participants need a class environment conducive for hands-on learning. This accentuates students' need for personal interaction in small classes, a need that increases the burden of administrative costs.

And as class enrollment rises, student volunteers need continuous mentoring and training. TeenPact hopes to meet this emerging need by securing funding for a \$3 million training center and national headquarters.

A capital campaign is in the works, and we invite you to become a partner in this effort by investing in TeenPact's efforts today.

In addition to supporting TeenPact financially, you can help the ministry by donating your time. You can give a presentation for the TeenPact Speakers Bureau or chaperone a TeenPact event. You can serve on the State Coordinator Team or volunteer at the national office. You can become a TeenPact ambassador or a member of an advisory board.

TeenPact's vision for the future—including expansion of our services to youth in all fifty states—are entirely dependent on supporters like you. Thank you for investing.

