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Contact: Pamela McClure, MMPR
pamela@mmpublicrelations.com
615-595-8321

SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF CHILDREN: WHOSE JOB IS IT? DR. MICHELLE ANTHONY CALLS PARENTS TO SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP, PENS *SPIRITUAL PARENTING* TO INSPIRE & EQUIP

Have parents abdicated their role as spiritual leaders? Have they handed over the job of spiritually forming their children to “the professionals” at church? Dr. Michelle Anthony has watched and, at times, has participated in this phenomenon, but she is now calling parents to take back the vital position as primary spiritual guides for their children. Dr. Anthony’s new book, *Spiritual Parenting: An Awakening for Today’s Families* (David C. Cook, \$14.99, June 2010) invites parents to learn more about the vital role God has designed for them in the shaping of their children’s hearts and souls. Anthony’s book provides inspiration and guidance in this important endeavor, including ideas for creating a variety of environments to foster spiritual growth within the family.

“Spiritual parenting is not perfect parenting,” explains Dr. Michelle Anthony. “Rather it is imperfect parenting from a spiritual perspective, with eternity in mind. We are erasing the lines between secular and sacred as we help our children develop truly spiritual lives.” Michelle Anthony, who has parented two children alongside her husband Michael, shares stories from almost two decades of their family’s journey of spiritual formation. By sharing their stories, the good and bad, Anthony assures readers that the process she calls “spiritual parenting” is immensely rewarding for both parents and children. Dr. Anthony promises parents that the process of spiritual parenting is not a burden; it is organic, doable and enjoyable.

Michelle Anthony’s more than 20 years of experience in ministry and leadership, along with her extensive study of educational models and theology, have convinced her that parents are uniquely designed to guide their children’s spiritual growth. She is eager to inspire a generation of parents who understand and value their role in forming their children’s hearts and souls. *Spiritual Parenting* encourages parents to create environments for spiritual growth throughout the arenas of everyday life, including:

- **Knowing:** creating a love for God and the truth of His Word
- **Modeling:** putting “flesh” on faith and putting it into action
- **Love/Respect:** treating one another as if each is made in God’s image
- **Storytelling:** developing a vision of how he/she fits into God’s Big Story
- **Service:** developing sensitivity to God’s Spirit calling each to ask the question, “What needs to be done?”
- **Identity:** helping children rest in their identity in Christ and resist counter-identities
- **Responsibility:** encouraging Kingdom-minded ownership of one’s life, gifts, resources
- **Faith Community:** creating an environment of refuge, celebration and support
- **Course Correction:** disciplining with a heart for healing and spiritual formation
- **Out of the Comfort Zone:** challenging children to rely on God’s Spirit to empower them beyond their natural abilities

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As parents step into their role as spiritual leaders, churches will be called to the task of inspiring, equipping and supporting parents in their endeavor. To that end, David C. Cook is publishing the Tru curriculum for churches that recognize parents as the primary spiritual guides for their children. Tru is designed to come alongside parents who are directing their children's hearts toward God, equipping and supporting parents on the journey. "We're honored to have Michelle Anthony serve as our Family Ministry Architect," Dan Rich, Senior Vice President and Publisher at David C. Cook, comments. "Her leadership, wisdom and innovation are inspiring new resources for spiritual formation, including the Tru curriculum for churches and ***Spiritual Parenting*** for moms and dads."

Michelle Anthony earned a B.A. from Biola University in Christian Education, an M.A. in Christian Education with an emphasis in Theology from Talbot School of Theology, and an Ed. D. in Educational Leadership from Southern Seminary. She has more than 20 years of practical church ministry/leadership experience and currently serves as Pastor of Family Ministries at ROCKHARBOR Church and as the Family Ministry Architect for David C. Cook. Drs. Michelle and Michael Anthony are the parents of Chantel (19) and Brendon (17). Ministry leaders are invited to follow Michelle on Twitter ("truinspiration") and Facebook ("follow-Michelle").

Founded in 1875, **David C. Cook** is a leading nonprofit discipleship resource provider based in Colorado Springs, Colorado. For more than 130 years, David C. Cook has served the Global Church with life transforming materials from best-selling books and curriculum, to toys and games and small group resources. With additional offices in Elgin, Illinois, as well as Paris, Ontario, Canada and Eastbourne, UK, David C. Cook is a global organization whose resources are published in more than 150 languages, distributed in more than 80 countries, and sold worldwide through retail stores, catalogs, and online. Through David C. Cook's music division, Kingsway, over 30% of the top 500 praise and worship songs written by Kingsway artists are sung in churches around the world. For more information visit David C. Cook on the Internet at www.davidccook.com.

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Spiritual Parenting: An Awakening for Today's Families

By Dr. Michelle Anthony
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Contact Pamela McClure, McClure Muntsinger Public Relations,
615-595-8321 or pamela@mmpublicrelations.com