

# More PEPSI Needed

*By Barrington H. Brennen, March 20, 2009*

Have you every heard about the PEPSI Foundation? No, this is not a drink nor a game. This is an acronym about the building blocks in the foundation of a healthy, vibrant, Christian family life-- P.E.P.S.I. I created this acronym about five years ago to better explain what is needed to help make families get well and keep well. Read carefully and apply to your life.

**P - PRAYER. The family that prays together stays together.** This is a very popular phrase but often used as the only one needed to build a health family life. Prayer is the first and most important building block in a healthy family but it is not the only one. However, if families can learn to pray together, things can truly be different. Isaiah 56:7 is a most appropriate text for families: "My house shall be called a house of prayer . . ." Here's what parents should do to make their home a "house of prayer." Set a regular time for devotion each day. Preferably the first thing in the morning. Keep the worship times short and sweet. Involve the children. Avoid these roadblock to a healthy prayer life: Too much television viewing, satanic music, destructive friends, overwork, and selfishness. Prayer represents the spiritual foundation of the home.

**E - EAT. The family that eats together grows and stays together.** It is evident that if you keep on praying and do not stop to eat you will die. Therefore it is logical to say that although prayer is the first and most important building block for a healthy family life, it is not the only one. You have to work the prayer. Eating together is one of the most intimate activities families and couples can do together. It does not matter if you eat around the table, under a tree, or in front of the television. All that matters is that you are eating together and thus providing time for exchange of ideas, open dialogue and honest family conversation. Here are a few principles to remember. Set a time to eat together as a family at least three times each week. If a family and do it every day, more power to them Eat in the same area together. Adults should make their conversation child-friendly. Do not ask them to "shut up" when they chime in to your conversation, especially when you asked them to eat with you. The family that never or seldom eats together would find it difficult to become intimate intellectually or emotionally during other times.

**P - PLAY The family that plays together heals, grows, and stays together.** Parents are to take the time not only to pray but to play with their children. Parents, if you cannot play with your children then you are most likely too rigid, cold, or distant and would find it difficult to reach your children when it is emotionally tense or during difficult times. Take the time to laugh together. Take the time to have fun together. "Chill out" together. Go places together. Remember, parents, you were once a child.

**S - SLEEPS The family that sleeps together understands, heals, grows, and stays together.** Sleep is an extremely important building block in healthy families. It is not families sleeping in the same bad. It is sleeping in the same home always. Not night outs and sleep overs. It means everyone sleeping in the same house and not in grandma's house. It means husband and wife sleeping in the same bed. It means parents are not going to sleep while their dependant children watch television. It means having a healthy time to go to bed. It means getting enough sleep each night. When families always go to bed too late, thus not getting enough rest, the chance of being cranky, irritable, and physically ill increases. Families that sleep in the same house and get lots of sleep are happier.

**I - INTENDS** The family that intends together matures, understands, heals, grows, and stays together. I had to find an appropriate word for "I" and came up with "Intends." It means that there must be a deliberate, intentional effort to pray, eat, sleep, and play together and to keep Christ as the center of the home. Applying the PEPSI Foundation calls for energy. A healthy family is not a gift but an achievement. Joshua 24:15 expounds ". . . but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord"

Go ahead and cut out this article and place it on a favorite wall in the house to remind you of these principles each day. It is certainly true to say that we need more P.E.P.S.I. in our homes. It is not Pepsi we need. That's only superficial. We need something more intense, deeper, and meaningful to make our families vibrant and healthy. We need the P.E.P.S.I. Foundation.

If you answer "Yes" to the following questions then you are on the road to having a happy family life: "Does each family member look forward to coming home at the end of school or at the end of the work day?" "Do you have a set time to commune with God as a family?"

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