

**Youth Culture Lesson**  
**Finding Teachable Moments in Culture**  
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**I Won't Grow Up!**

Some Take Not Growing Up Very Seriously

By Paul Asay

**What Happened**

When kids are little, they play “Grown Up.” They go to make-believe work, clean make-believe houses and raise make-believe children. Once they're grown, some adults like to play like...kids.

Take the Brooklyn-area adults who pay anywhere from \$333 to \$999 to attend Preschool Mastermind, a preschool program for adults. Once a week, men and women from around the area come to class, sit cross-legged on the floor and fingerpaint, sing songs, do simple craft projects (with lots of glitter), play games and take naps.

There are field trips, too, and opportunities to bring your “parents” (or other adults) to show off what you've learned. Founder Michelle Joni says she received “nearly half a degree in Early Childhood Education,” but declares on her website that she decided to use her skills and “teach preschool to those who just may, in fact, need it most.”

Some people attend this adult-oriented preschool for some pretty serious reasons. “One person's here...to learn not to be so serious,” Joni told ABC News. “Another's here to be more confident, but some are there just to have fun.” She adds that lots of folks want to “get in touch with their inner child. It's magical.”

Of course, preschool isn't the only way adults are trying to recapture the wonder of childhood. Adults play with LEGOs, catalog their comic books and buy expensive action figures (though some would argue they're just collecting these things). Whether they play with toys, most adults—including young adults and teens—would like to think they're still children at heart.

At times, this pursuit of childhood can be problematic. Teens can throw toddler-like fits or struggle to take on new responsibilities. Young adults sometimes resist getting jobs or moving out of the house. At times, parents don't help either: Moms and dads are getting more involved in their kids' college lives, and a few have been known to go with their precious snowflakes on job interviews. Sometimes there's a fine line between child-like and childish.

**Talk About It**

Do you still like to do stuff that you enjoyed when you were younger? Color? Play with LEGOs? Watch movies made for kids? What makes you feel like a kid in a good way? What do you miss most about when you were younger?

Do you see yourself as more of an adult or a child? In what ways do you feel mature? In what ways do you identify more as a kid? How do you think your parents see you? Your friends?

Do you think it's harder to grow up today than in your parents' day? If so, what makes it more challenging? What, if anything, makes it easier? What elements or attitudes of childhood do you want to hold onto for the rest of your life?

## **What the Bible Says**

The Bible values children, and Jesus told us that we should all have a childlike innocence and trust.

“Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” And calling to Him a child, He put him in the midst of them and said, ‘Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven’” (Matt. 18:1-3).

But the Bible also says that we all have to grow up, too.

“When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways” (1 Cor. 13:11).

“And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” (Eph. 4:11-14).

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