



# CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

March 25, 1998

Dear [name],

The work of Gary and Marie Ezzo has had a great impact on my thinking in the last year-and-a-half. I enrolled in the 18-week *Growing Kids God's Way* course against my own common sense judgment, having only arrived from New York 8 weeks prior. The time commitment concerned me, as you can imagine, with a young school to build, and a family to relocate.

However, Linda and I credit the course with helping us to navigate through out first year here, especially by giving us parameters by which to balance personal and professional growth and commitments. Perhaps at the forefront of the course for me, is the rather constant admonition to live in a way which honors the "preciousness of others." The tenor of the course is such that simple scriptural admonitions like this one are presented with enthusiastic theoretical argument, then nailed home with (at times) stinging application. Without this course, would I have invested study, new habits and relational goals into my family during my first year as headmaster at [name] Christian Academy? Probably not.

I share often with friends who have not yet taken the course, that this is not just another Christian self-help class. Gary Ezzo has a sound intellectual grasp of the effects of spiritual darkness upon contemporary culture. He has a fascinating way of describing the effects of this process upon everyday behavior. I find myself looking at student behavior in new ways, at adult behavior at large in new ways, and at my own, often unregenerate behavior, in new ways after taking *Growing Kids*. The course is unusually effective at connecting theory to practical application while keeping its mooring in issues of the mind and heart.

I am impressed with the man as well. I have had the wonderful opportunity to spend a brief bit of time with Gary himself during two visits to [our town], one in which this supremely busy individual was willing to fly out to counsel with faculty and then turn around a few hours later and take a return flight home. I find him to be very genuine, warm, and self-effacing in person, strong personality notwithstanding. Gary is able to wow a crowd, but does not have to put on a mask to do it.

I have found the work of Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo helpful enough that I have begun encouraging families at [name] Christian Academy to investigate the worth of *Growing Kids* for themselves. In fact, at least one of our faculty is teaching a basic class at our church while several families are participating in the 8-week teen class. These courses will have a different impact family by family of course, but I feel confident that life-changing, godly principles are so effectively communicated by the Ezzos that no family or individual would fail to find some application. I also have experienced no conflict in applying what the Ezzos teach with growth I enjoy under the leadership of my own senior pastor, [name] (who is also currently enrolled in the class.)

Please contact me if you would like to speak further about any specific concerns you have in regard to the work of Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Stratford