

YOUTH AND FAMILY HISTORY COME TOGETHER

By Sally Johnson Odekirk
Church Magazines

When Westyn D., 17, of Utah, USA, attended a youth family history conference at Brigham Young University, he became excited about family history. He says, “When I was called as a ward family history consultant, I decided I needed to learn how to do it myself before I could teach others. It’s a lot more fun than I thought it would be. Even though it is hard work at times, I can really get in touch with my ancestors.”

Family history conference director Hannah Allan explains, “Family history is so personal that we wanted the youth to learn more about their own families. They have become excited about their families’ stories. They want to learn to do something worthwhile and eternal.”

Youth are following the direction of Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to “find, take, and teach”: *find* family names, *take* those names to the temple, and *teach* others to do likewise.¹

Finding Names and Stories

Emily M., 16, from Florida, USA, says, “When I go through tough times, I think of my ancestors and what they went through. They are my

heroes, and their stories inspire me. If they can do really hard things like going across the plains, then I can go through my trials.”

Taking Names to the Temple

Taking family names to the temple deepens ties to our ancestors. During a testimony meeting, one young man said, “Many of our ancestors had to work hard to provide for their families in ways that we don’t have to. Since we have the time and technology available to us, we can do the temple work for them that they couldn’t do for themselves.”

Teaching Others

Brooklyn T., 14, of Utah, a stake family history specialist, says, “It’s been fun getting to know other people through family history. The people I’ve taught have been excited to learn about their ancestors—where they came from, what their jobs were—and look at their photos so they can see family resemblances. It’s exciting to see how others connect with their ancestors.”

As the youth have learned to “find, take, and teach,” they have come to understand the promise found in Malachi 4:5–6:

Teach youth the basics and watch them grow.

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

“And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.” ■

NOTE

1. See Quentin L. Cook, “The Joy of Family History Work,” *Ensign*, Feb. 2016, 29.

Learn more about finding ancestors’ names to take to the temple and helping others do the same: [FamilySearch.org/findnames](https://www.familysearch.org/findnames)



A CHALLENGE EXTENDED TO ALL

“I promise you protection for you and your family as you take this challenge to ‘find as many names to take to the temple as ordinances you perform in the temple, and teach others to do the same.’”

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, address at RootsTech conference, Feb. 6, 2016.



IDEAS FOR YOUTH WHO SERVE AS FAMILY HISTORY CONSULTANTS

- *Have a party with a mix of activities and teaching.* For example, teach skills on how to learn about ancestors and then have a cultural activity with food and customs from the countries ancestors came from.
- *Encourage people to collect stories of what ancestors liked to do.* Invite them to learn about sports their ancestors played, foods they ate, and jobs they had.

- *Use available resources to build interest.* For example: show videos related to family history and pioneers; use the *My Family* booklet to share stories; use the *Family History Coloring Book* to help children learn about family history; use social media to create awareness (see lds.org/youth/family-history).
- *Invite people to add photos, stories, documents, and sources on FamilySearch.org.*

For more ideas, see lds.org/callings/temple-and-family-history.

