Everybody has one life —
Time to develop your
Game Plan

Scott Phelps
My wife and I have read through Game Plan, and we think it’s terrific. This is a great tool to help you think through some of the most important decisions in your life.

I would love to see this book get into the hands of every teenager and pre-teenager in the country.

Today there are messages everywhere that encourage sex outside of a marriage relationship. Teens today are craving the real truth about sex. They want people to care about them enough to challenge them. Game Plan gives teens the truth about sex, and a positive message of how to succeed in life and achieve their best.

Just as discipline and perseverance are important in sports, they are critical in all areas of life. Don’t let your game or your life suffer because you aren’t prepared. A.C. Green’s Game Plan can help you.

The true sign of greatness is one’s durability to stay the course. The record shows that A.C. Green is the most durable man in the history of sports when it comes to character. A.C. Green’s Game Plan will help you make good choices to accomplish your goals.

Pat Riley
Former Coach, Miami Heat

Mike Singletary
NFL Hall of Fame Football Player, Head Coach, San Francisco 49ers

Tara Dawn Christensen
Former Miss America, Recording Artist & Speaker

David Robinson
Former Player, San Antonio Spurs

Scott Phelps

**nav-i-gate**

v. tr.
1 To follow a planned course
To follow a planned course
To follow a planned course
To follow a planned course
To follow a planned course

FINDING YOUR WAY TO A HEALTHY AND SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

Scott Phelps

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A.C. Green's
Game Plan
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Introduction

In 1985, the year A.C. Green was drafted into the NBA, Project Reality began promoting abstinence until marriage as the safest, healthiest lifestyle for teens. As Project Reality has continued to expand its abstinence programs nationally, A.C. Green has also been an outspoken proponent of the benefits of abstinence among America's youth. In the spring of 2000, A.C. Green and Project Reality began to develop Game Plan as a means of furthering the message of the benefits of abstinence to students in schools across America. In January of 2009 Project Reality merged with the Abstinence & Marriage Education Partnership in Chicago. The purpose of A&M is to ensure that every teenager in the country has the opportunity to hear a clearly reasoned, positive presentation of the benefits of abstinence until marriage and instruction on preparing for a healthy future marriage. It is our hope resources such as Game Plan will further that end.

Game Plan is a highly effective tool for helping teens make wise, responsible decisions for their future by choosing abstinence until marriage. Students are taught that their choices today can have significant implications for their future, particularly on whether and to what extent they will accomplish their goals and dreams in life.

After decades of promoting birth control among teens, America now has the highest rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in the industrialized world. Clearly a better message for teens is needed. While abstinence is the safest, healthiest choice for teens and the only sure way to prevent physical risks such as pregnancy and STDs, Game Plan is additionally concerned for the emotional, mental, and social health of the student. As premarital sex among teens is often associated with other related risk factors such as alcohol, drug and tobacco use, violence, and truancy, helping teens choose abstinence has numerous benefits for teens and society.

Although it is often claimed that approximately half of all high school students are sexually active, the fact is that many of these teens do not want to be. Most teens surveyed regret becoming sexually active, and among sexually active teen girls ages 15-19, 1 in 3 said they were either forced or pressured into sex. Among girls under the age of thirteen who are labeled as "sexually active," 3 out of 4 were either forced or pressured. In light of these statistics, the best message that we can give to teens is that "regardless of what has already happened in your life you are still valuable and special, and you can start over again."

Through our work at A&M Partnership, we know first hand that students respond well to a clearly reasoned, positive presentation of the benefits of abstinence. Having presented the principles and concepts of Game Plan to thousands of students in middle schools and high schools in cities, suburbs and in rural communities, we know that it works. We have read letters from hundreds of students and have listened to their enthusiastic responses. Supporting our conclusions is a national study showing that nearly all students surveyed (93%) believe that teens should be given a "strong message" that they should abstain from sex. At the same time, teachers and nurses surveyed nationally say that abstinence is the "most important message" they can give to their students. Today, more and more teens who have been sexually active are choosing abstinence.

Game Plan is written in a simple question-and-answer format in order to help students discover for themselves that abstinence until marriage is the safest, healthiest lifestyle. Our goal is to assist you in helping teens make good decisions which will help them achieve academic and athletic excellence, accomplish their goals and dreams, and become beneficial and productive members of society.

It is our privilege to have had the opportunity to work with A.C. Green and Project Reality to produce this unique, sports-themed, positive approach to abstinence education. We trust that, along with a growing number of educators across the country, you will find the message of abstinence to be of immense benefit to your students.

Scott Phelps
Chicago, 2009
Coach’s Playbook

Objective: To help students think about how the choices they make will affect their future, positively and negatively, and to assist students in considering their goals for the future.

Key plays:
- Introduce A.C. Green as a role model.
- Help students brainstorm future goals and dreams.
- Introduce and define abstinence as a positive and healthy choice in achieving goals and dreams.
ACTIVITY: Where Is Your Focus?

Materials Needed: A Yardstick

Choose a student to stand in front of the class. Ask the student to balance a yardstick vertically on the palm of his or her hand, saying that to do so, he or she will need to focus on the point where it meets the palm of the hand. (This will be nearly impossible to do.)

Then ask the student to try it again, focusing instead on the top of the yard stick. (This should work.)

Say: “If we only focus on the immediate, we often fail to accomplish our goals. On the other hand, if we look at the bigger picture and focus instead on our future, we are more likely to accomplish the goals we set for ourselves. This is what this new book we’re studying is all about. It is about looking to the future and making good decisions that will help you accomplish your goals and dreams in life.”
Long before joining the NBA, A.C. Green was focused on doing something positive with his life. He wanted either to play basketball or to be a sports broadcaster. Even though he could not be sure he would make the NBA, A.C. made a game plan for his life and he stayed with it.

What are some of your goals for the future?

Give one word descriptions of some of the things that you would like to see in your life 10 years from now. Write these goals in the clouds.

- Good Job
- Nice House
- College Degree
- Children
- Marriage
- Family
- Dog
- Happy
- Healthy
- Successful
- Friends
- Nice Car
- Money

Name three possible career goals. What would you like to do?

- Computer Engineering
- Construction
- Government
- Teacher
- Business
- Entertainment
- Travel Agent
- Doctor
- Trucking

CHALKBOARD:

Say: “All of us have goals and dreams for our lives. We may not think about them often, but we have pictures in our minds of what we would like our lives to look like in the future. What are some one-word descriptions that describe your picture of what you want your life to look like?”

Write students’ goals and dreams on the board.

- Look for both abstract and concrete goals. If students respond with abstract goals (happiness, success, fulfillment) include these but ask for concrete goals as well (house, cat, good job, etc.) and vice versa.
- Once the goals are on the board, walk through the questions on the next page and complete the chalkboard with the two lists added as shown.
Getting There...

1. Now take a look at the cloud on the previous page which represents your dreams and at your list of three possible career goals.
   - Will these dreams and goals be easy for you to accomplish?  
     ❑ Yes  ❑ No
   - What will it take for you to reach these goals? List three things you will have to do to accomplish your goals.
     • I will have to study hard and do well in school.
     • I will have to make good decisions about how I spend my time and who I spend my time with.
     • I will have to resist pressure from others to do things that will derail my plans for the future.
   - When should you begin planning to achieve your future goals?  
     Today

As a teenager, there are a few decisions that will have a significant impact on your future. Good decisions now make it easier for you to accomplish your goals, and bad decisions make it more difficult for you to accomplish your goals.

2. Describe some activities that could make it difficult for you to accomplish your goals:

   Being lazy, not thinking about making good decisions, hanging out with the wrong group, worrying all the time about what other people think about me, trying to impress people, doing drugs, drinking alcohol, having sex

Tom’s Story

Tom is now 27 years old. He’s been in a wheelchair since he was 15. Tom wasn’t driving the car, but he was riding in a car with a friend who was driving while drunk. For the rest of his life, Tom will be in a wheelchair needing daily assistance.

Tom thought he was okay because he wasn’t drinking. The problem is that his friend was drinking – and driving.

He often thinks about how different his life would be if only he had resisted his friends and chosen not to ride in the car that day.
If I am always following others, I am not going to end up where I want to go.
Like Tom, I could end up in a very bad situation for which I am not prepared.
I could get in an accident or could get hurt in some other way by doing things that are not wise.

Yes, he can, but it will be much more difficult. He has been set back by his injury and will need to work hard to overcome the difficulties created by his injury. If he has help from his parents and friends, he will have a better chance of recovering from these difficulties and will still be able to accomplish some of his goals.

What should Tom have done when his friends told him to come along for the ride?
• What would you do?
• How different would Tom’s life be if he had resisted his friends and made a good decision that day?

He would not be in a wheelchair and would have a very different life. He would have more choices and opportunities and would be more likely to accomplish some of his original goals and dreams.

How different might your life be if you allow yourself to be pressured in a negative way by others?
If I am always following others, I am not going to end up where I want to go. I like Tom. I could end up in a very bad situation for which I am not prepared.
I could get in an accident or could get hurt in some other way by doing things that are not wise.

1. What should Tom have done when his friends told him to come along for the ride?
• What would you do?
• How different would Tom’s life be if he had resisted his friends and made a good decision that day?

He should have told them he wasn’t going to ride with them. Even if he was pressured, he should have made a decision and stuck to it regardless of what his friends might think or say.
• What would you do?
I would choose to not ride in a car with a person who was drinking or using other drugs.

He would not be in a wheelchair and would have a very different life. He would have more choices and opportunities and would be more likely to accomplish some of his original goals and dreams.

If I am always following others, I am not going to end up where I want to go.
I like Tom. I could end up in a very bad situation for which I am not prepared.
I could get in an accident or could get hurt in some other way by doing things that are not wise.

2. When Tom was 15, he had goals and dreams for his life. Do you think he can still accomplish some of those dreams and goals? What will it take?

Yes, he can, but it will be much more difficult. He has been set back by his injury and will need to work hard to overcome the difficulties created by his injury. If he has help from his parents and friends, he will have a better chance of recovering from these difficulties and will still be able to accomplish some of his goals.

It’s great to let people know their options, but the options given today are faulty. Young people are told when they’re old enough to smoke, drink, drive, vote, go to school, and fight in the military. Why don’t we at least tell them how much better off they’ll be physically, emotionally, mentally, and socially, if they wait until marriage for sex.

He should have told them he wasn’t going to ride with them. Even if he was pressured, he should have made a decision and stuck to it regardless of what his friends might think or say.

He would not be in a wheelchair and would have a very different life. He would have more choices and opportunities and would be more likely to accomplish some of his original goals and dreams.
The point here is to help students think through their impressions about abstinence at the outset of the course. Some students may have negative perceptions of abstinence. These often turn positive by the end of the curriculum as they realize that abstinence has significant advantages for their future and that it is the safest, healthiest lifestyle they can choose.

This question is to help students realize that this decision is in their hands. You are helping them think about the decisions that they will make. Students are often much more receptive to abstinence when they realize that you are giving them the tools to make good decisions in every area of their lives.

You might say something like:

“I can’t make your decision but I’m confident that if I give you good information, you will be able to make good decisions.”

Emphasize this key point.

CHALKBOARD:

Say: “We need to understand why it’s important for us to be talking about sex. Some people think that sex is just about ‘getting’, but it’s also about giving.” Write: Set = Giving myself to someone else. “We talk about giving away our virginity, don’t we? If you give away your virginity, can you get it back? Sex is about giving yourself to another person. Inside marriage, sex is a giving between two people who commit to each other for a lifetime. Outside marriage, sex may seem like giving but what you end up feeling is used and hurt.”

“That’s why we’re talking about abstinence. Abstinence isn’t about giving, but saving.” Write Abstinence = Saving myself for marriage. “Rather than giving yourself to just anybody, abstinence says, ‘I’m saving myself for someone who loves me enough to make a lifelong commitment to me in marriage’”

“Abstinence isn’t just for people who have never had sex. Even if you’ve been sexually active, you can still make a good decision to save yourself until marriage. Yesterday is gone, but what matters is today and the choices I will make for my future.”

Considerations of Abstinence As Part Of Your Game Plan

1. What do you think about abstinence? Does it seem positive or negative to you?  
   - Positive  
   - Negative

   - How might sexual abstinence make it easier for you to accomplish your future goals?

   1. No worry about pregnancy or diseases or how this will affect my relationship with my parents. I won’t have the emotional problems or mental stress that come with sexual activity. I can better focus on my school work and play sports without worrying about all the consequences of sexual activity. Making a good decision about saving sex for marriage will help me make good decisions in other areas as well.

2. Who will make the decision about whether or not you will be abstinent until marriage?

   I will.

3. Who will benefit from the good choices that you make for yourself?

   I will make the decision and I will benefit from the positive effects of that decision.

Abstinence doesn’t mean: Sex is bad.

Abstinence means: Sex is good.

Save it, protect it, and preserve it so that you can enjoy it in a marriage relationship.
**Steve and Tina**

Steve and Tina had been dating for about six months and had just graduated from high school. As their relationship developed and they were preparing to go to college, Tina began to pressure Steve for sex. He had been abstinent and was planning to save sex for marriage. One night when they were alone, she told him that if he truly loved her he would prove his love to her by having sex with her. He refused and left the house. Their relationship ended shortly afterward.

Two months later Steve learned that Tina was already pregnant on that night when she was trying to get him to have sex with her. Tina became a single mother at age 18.

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**ACTIVITY:**

**Sex is Like Fire!**

Work through this illustration with the students.

**Questions for discussion:**

**Sex in Context**

What is the purpose of fire?

- In a fireplace, fire is beautiful and gives warmth to a home.
- Outside the fireplace, it can cause serious harm.

What about sex?

- In a marriage relationship, sex can be beautiful.
- Outside marriage, it could cause serious harm.

Abstinence is protecting yourself from the pain that often accompanies sex outside marriage. Abstinence is about preserving sex so that it can be enjoyed in an intimate marriage relationship.

1. Why do you think Tina was trying to get Steve to have sex with her? What was her real concern?
   - Her real concern was her pregnancy. She only wanted to have sex with Steve because she wanted to make Steve think that he was the father.
   - Do you think Tina's former boyfriend may have pressured her for sex?
   - She probably very concerned about what might happen to her and her baby. She might have been wondering what people would think and whether the true father would help her in any way. She was in a difficult situation.

2. What would you do if a boyfriend or girlfriend were pressuring you to have sex?
   - I would say, "No thanks. I'm not interested in all of the problems that come with it."
ACTIVITY: Balloon Goal Bounce

Materials Needed: 3 Balloons (various colors, two yellow), Black permanent marker

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate the importance of focusing on positive future goals and avoiding negative decisions, distractions, and high-risk behaviors like sexual activity and the use of alcohol and other drugs.

Prior to the start of this activity, ensure that you have a total of 3 fully-inflated balloons of various colors, including two yellow balloons.

First, ask for two volunteers to come to the front of the classroom. Ask the first volunteer to share one future goal (e.g., to be a doctor, go to college, to have a family). Write the goal on one yellow balloon in a black permanent marker. Hand the first volunteer this balloon and ask him or her to keep this goal off the ground by bouncing the balloon in the air with his or her hands for the remainder of the activity.

Say: “In order to keep the balloon—the goal—from falling, the first volunteer must focus on the goal, expend energy, and avoid distractions and decisions that can take focus away from the goal.”

Then, ask the second volunteer to share one future goal and write this goal on a different balloon. Hand the second volunteer the remaining yellow balloon. Hand the second volunteer the balloon and ask him or her to keep this goal off the ground by bouncing it in the air with his or her hands.

Say: “Both volunteers, like each of you, have the ability to achieve their goals through the choices they make. In this activity, the first volunteer will represent someone who is committed to abstinence. The second volunteer will represent someone who is influenced by media messages and peer pressure. For example, sometimes young people may find it difficult to have a dating relationship.”

Write “boyfriend” or “girlfriend” on another balloon and toss it to the second volunteer. Ask him or her to keep all of the balloons that he or she is given in the air for the remainder of the activity.

Say: “The second volunteer is trying to juggle reaching his or her future goal as well as maintaining a dating relationship. While balancing the two may be more difficult, by practicing abstinence and setting boundaries in the relationship, the student may be able to effectively manage both.”

1. For Steve and Karen, what were the benefits of saving sex for marriage?
   They didn’t have to worry about STDs, unwanted pregnancy, or emotional issues. They were able to experience sex in a good and positive way.
   • Do you think that Steve and Karen regret being abstinent until marriage? ❏ Yes ❏ No
   There was nothing to regret. They were happy that they waited for each other.

2. How did abstinence help Steve and Karen accomplish their goals?
   They were able to stay focused, finish high school, finish college, and begin their careers without having lots of other problems and complications.

It can help me make good decisions and stay on track. It can help me avoid the pitfalls that will make it difficult for me later on. It can help me resist negative pressures that could make it difficult to accomplish my goals.

Summary: Sometimes pressure also exists for students to engage in alcohol or other drug use. Write “Drugs” on a different balloon and toss this to the second volunteer.

Say: “Drug use also impairs judgement, and in a dating relationship it can influence a person’s choice to engage in sexual activity.” Write “Sex” on another balloon, write the word “sex” and toss it to the second volunteer as well. Encourage the student to try to keep all balloons in the air. When the yellow goal balloon falls to the ground, ask both volunteers to stop bouncing the balloons.

Ask the student, “Where is the first volunteer’s goal? Where is the second volunteer’s goal?” The first volunteer should have the goal in his or her hand. The second volunteer’s goal should be on the ground. Pick the second volunteer’s goal balloon off the ground.

Say: “Just like in this activity, if young people begin to focus on distractions like sex and the use of alcohol and other drugs, their future goals can fall by the wayside.” Pop the balloon. Hold the first volunteer’s goal balloon in one hand and the popped balloon in the other.

Explain to the student: “If left on the ground long enough, a goal can end up exactly like a popped balloon. The choices that you make today can dramatically impact your abilities to reach your future goals. You have the choice to decide which type of future you want to have.”

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