



**About  
Rev. Titus Lee  
and OLU**

**Operation Link-Up** was founded by Rev. Titus Lee in 1996. This empowerment organization mentors, motivates and mobilizes teenagers to excel. OLU empowers Chicago youth through character development, the arts, academic assistance and service learning. OLU also impacts educators, youth workers and ministers around the United States through Make the Connection Training Summits. Titus is the author and developer of the Teen Life Solutions Curriculum and the Connection Club youth programs.

## Striving for the "A" of Acceptance

By Rev. Titus Lee

Acceptance is a major priority in the minds of most teens. Many of them take risks to gain it from their peers. To them the pain of peer rejection is more riveting than it is to adults. That is why so many of them are "striving for the A" of acceptance. Some teens are so hungry for peer acceptance that they ignore all inhibitions and restrictions as they pursue it. As a result they will do practically "anything" for the nod of peer approval regardless of the consequences or the pain that it may cause. Below are a few key points about teen acceptance issues.

### The Cost of Comparison

Many teens grapple with the question of, "do I measure up?" In a culture where so many things are evaluated based on views, votes and likes they are constantly pushing themselves to measure up to the "like standards" of others. Adults should remind them of their own uniqueness and that it's not fair (to themselves) to compare themselves to others. Remind them that they are like diamonds...and no two diamonds are exactly alike.

### Click Cliques

Many teens monitor their public images as aggressively as PR Professionals monitor the images of celebrities and corporations. They

post so much on social media from hairdos to clothing choices...it's posted. The pressure to "have the look or to do it just right" for clicks can be addicting to them. Therefore, it's good to encourage them to post self-approved "character statements" that show them contributing to others in meaningful ways (such as serving or helping others). Those types of moments/posts will matter regardless of how many clicks they get.

### Crazy = Street Cred

Teens are emotionally wired to seek peer approval more than other age group. That's why they sometimes press through dangerous risk factors to attain the reward of peer acceptance. Sometimes these daring and/or deviant actions grant access to "social circles (ie., gang initiation)". This is why adults should seek out opportunities to affirm the positive qualities in youth at all times. Sometimes the encouragement and affirmation of a caring adult is all that's needed a teenager from "doing crazy" just to get a little street credit.

Psalm 139:14 (NIV) says, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made." This truth should be communicated to teens so that they will approve and appreciate themselves.

## Q&A – My Son Gets No Playing Time

Dear T4TT,

It breaks my heart to see my son show dedication to his team only to be constantly overlooked by his 8th grade basketball coach. They are eight games into the season. He has only played a total of nine minutes in one game. It's ridiculous. After each game he comes to the car disappointed because he didn't play. My husband and I want this to be a pleasant experience for him. We aren't sure if we should talk to the coach about it or just keep our distance and go along. Any advice?

Jacque K.

Dear Jacque,

Try to remain objective when discussing the fairness of the coach. First, encourage your son to be a supportive teammate to those who get more playing time. Secondly, challenge him to be attentive and hustle in practices as if he's playing in a real game. Thirdly, tell him that he'll never know when the coach may call him into a game, so always be ready. Lastly, if you choose to approach the coach don't snap and be sure that you respect his position of leadership. Also ask him for specific ways that he would like to see your son's skills improve.

Sincerely,  
TFTT

## Recommended Viewing...

### Hidden Rage – The Movie 1H 30 Min – Drama

This riveting movie highlights how Joshua, a high school freshman, got picked on every day. His strained relationships with his parents lead him down a dark road of anger and despair. He became the object of ridicule from the opposite sex. His bottled up feelings caused him to indulge in violent games and movies. He eventually became the main character in his own violent drama toward his peers. This movie is a must see for students and families.

[www.hiddenragemovie.com](http://www.hiddenragemovie.com)

## DID YOU KNOW?

Teen Screen Language

Language changes with time just like fashion. Below are terms and words that are frequently used among our teens.

Beef – a disagreement  
Drippin – flashy  
Juice – credibility  
Shade – trash talk  
Savage – wild  
Woke – enlightened  
Smash – hook up, have sex  
Shook – upset, bothered  
Bruh – a friend  
Bae – term of endearment

Source: USA Today

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### Polished Pebbles

Polished Pebbles is a mentoring initiative founded by Kelly Fair. This organization creates communication competencies in 7-17 year old girls. Since 2009, this organization has helped over 2,000 girls become effective communicators. Polished Pebbles builds esteem, vision and possibilities in urban girls every week.

[www.polishedpebbles.com](http://www.polishedpebbles.com)

### It's Worth Repeating

Go For It! "If you really want to do something, you will find a way. If you don't, you'll find an excuse." –Jim Rohn

### Make The Connection Training Summits 2019

- **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**  
August 17, 2019
- **Chicago, Illinois**  
September 28, 2019
- **Indianapolis, Indiana**  
October 19, 2019

Register today at [www.oluteens.com](http://www.oluteens.com)  
For information call us at  
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