

YOUTH WORKER HANDBOOK

Building Blocks for
Today's Youth Ministry



Welcome to the Cornerstone Conference of the International Pentecostal Holiness Church. If you are reading this notebook, it probably means you are one of the most important people in the lives of young people. You are a youth worker! We want you to know that you are part of a bigger picture.

The Cornerstone Conference has a goal to help train and develop workers for God's Kingdom. We will strive to assist you in any way possible to make sure you receive the resources and support to effectively reach young people for Christ. Entering into a position as a youth worker or Youth Leader is a very serious task. Young people can be influenced—for good or evil—more than any other group. Methods to reach people for Christ change over time, but Godly principles never do. Here are youth ministry principles to help you get off to a good start.

Statistics show that 85% of all Christians today made their decision to receive Christ before the age of 21. Only 4% of our teenage population is being reached for Christ!

UNDERSTAND THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

The definition of youth leader or Youth Leader varies widely throughout the church today.

Years ago, someone handed me the following job descriptions for church leadership. It certainly is not a Biblical description of the chain of command for the church, but it is alarmingly accurate in many churches.

PASTOR: Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound. More powerful than a locomotive. Faster than a speeding bullet. Walks on water. Gives policies to God.

MUSIC MINISTER: Able to leap short buildings in a single bound. As powerful as a switch engine. Just as fast as a speeding bullet. Walks on water, if the sea is calm. Talks with God.

CHILDREN'S PASTOR: Leaps short buildings with a running start. Almost as fast as a switch engine. Faster than a speeding BB. Walks on water, if he knows where the stumps are. Is occasionally addressed by God.

YOUTH LEADER: Runs into small buildings. Recognizes locomotives two out of three times. Uses a squirt gun. Knows how to use the water fountain. Mumbles to himself.

CHURCH SECRETARY: Lifts buildings to walk under them. Kicks locomotives off the track. Catches speeding bullets in her teeth. Freezes water with a single glance. When God speaks she says, "May I ask who is calling?"


In a local church, the responsibility of providing vision and leadership for the body is given by God to the pastor.

All supporting ministries, including the youth department, must translate and reflect the pastor's vision and leadership.

Unfortunately, many youth leaders today have taken the reins of their youth programs and have gone a different direction than their pastors.

The Youth Leader is to feed, lead, and model the youth ministry within the framework of the pastor's heart and vision.

Although your ministry reflects your distinctive personality, your teaching, vision, and outreach should reflect the heart of your pastor. If your pastor has a strong focus on worship and missions, you should have the same focus. If he is zeroed-in on teaching and the helps ministry, you should target the same areas with your teenagers.



“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being the lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” 1 Peter 5:1-4

According to the Apostle Peter, the pastor of a local church has three main responsibilities:

1. Feed the flock (vs.2).

Every pastor must be equipped to teach the Word of God.

He must feed *all* his flock- the lambs as well as the mature sheep.

2. **Lead the flock** (vs.2)-literally to take oversight of the flock


The pastor should not *do* everything, but he should oversee and lead in each area.

He may have department leaders over various areas of ministry, but it is his responsibility to provide those people with vision and direction.

3. **Be a model for the flock** (vs. 3).

A pastor is called to be an example to the church.

Paul told the young pastor, Timothy, to be an example to the believers in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.
(1 Timothy 4:12)



“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.” 1 Peter 5:5

Young leaders are to be subject to the elders (pastors) God has placed over them, being clothed with humility.

Vision vs. Dream

Acts 2:17-18 *“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.”*

God wants to give visions to those who are young. The word *vision* speaks of a short glimpse into the future- like a photograph or single frame of a film. God also promises to give old men dreams.

The word *dream* refers to “the big picture”- a full-length motion picture of things to come. Here’s how it works: My pastor has a *dream* for the entire church body; I have a *vision* for youth ministry. By fulfilling my vision, I help him complete a frame or two of his motion-picture dream. God gets the glory for strategically bringing a Canadian and a Texan together to fulfill His calling and accomplish a great work.



ANSWERING THE CALL

“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” **Romans 10:14-15 (NASB)**

First, ask yourself these four questions:

Are you called into youth ministry?


Not, “Do you *feel* called to youth ministry?” There have been times when I didn’t *feel* called. When you know the Lord has called you to do something, you will press on to victory in spite of negative feelings and temporary setbacks.

How do you know if you’re really called to youth ministry? When you pray, you’ll be led to reach out to teenagers. You’ll find your natural desires being turned toward working with youth. You will be outraged at how satan is targeting teens. Other spiritual leaders will see the calling of God on your life Your talents and gifts will be compatible with your calling, even if they are not fully developed. You will be sent out to reach young people. Peter was sent to the Jews and Paul was sent to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:9). Jesus sent His disciples out.

“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.” Matthew 10:5-8

Where are you called to serve?

You may be called to youth ministry, but now you must plug into a local church to give your gift expression. Pray and seek God regarding where you should serve. He will order your steps.




“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.” **Psalm 37:23**

Most likely you are to be involved in the church where you are right now. Do you believe in the church where you are currently working and identify with its mission and purpose?

Is your vision compatible with your pastor’s dream?

There are some pastors I could never serve because my vision does not fit properly into the frames of their dream. To discover whether you are serving in the correct church, ask yourself these questions: Does your photograph (vision) fit into your pastor’s motion picture (dream)? What is his emphasis? If his emphasis is prayer, can yours be evangelism? Do you believe in and support your pastor? Your job is to support him, not change him! Even if you do not always agree, you must believe in his integrity, his leadership, his teaching and his dream (clothing yourself with humility).

Have you counted the cost?



“And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethen, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”
Luke 14:25-27

You must bear your cross (operate in God’s will). You must discipline your mind and body to follow the will of God for your life and ministry

Interviewing for the job

Whether the position is volunteer or paid, there must be clear communication in a number of areas- before either you or the church make any commitments.

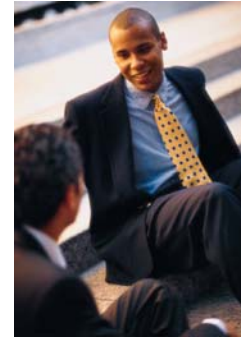


Ask the pastor:

- ⇒ For an overview of the church's history. Is it likely to go where it has been?
- ⇒ What is your dream for the church?
- ⇒ What is your idea of a successful youth ministry?
- ⇒ What do you think needs to happen in order for this to become a reality?
- ⇒ How do the finances for youth ministry get appropriated?
 - Is the youth ministry responsible to raise its own support?
 - Is it permitted to reinvest the youth offering into the youth ministry?
 - Is it given a budget from the church's general fund?
- ⇒ What is the Youth Leader's job description?
- ⇒ Have Pastor give expectations and written job description.
- ⇒ Describe your leadership style.
- ⇒ What do you consider the most important leadership characteristic?
- ⇒ Which church would you most like to resemble and how do you plan to achieve this?
- ⇒ Where do you see this church- spiritually, ministerially, and numerically- five years from now?
- ⇒ What is the authority structure in the church and to whom would I report?
- ⇒ What is the process for making ministry purchases?
- ⇒ Money and benefits questions (if it's a paid position):
 - How much is the salary?
 - How often is this evaluated and/or renegotiated?
 - What is the vacation and sick-leave (personal day) policy?
 - Is medical coverage part of the package?
 - Do you cover any relocation costs?

Be prepared with answers to the following questions during the interview:

- ⇒ Describe your ideal position (include job responsibilities, to whom you would report, etc.)
- ⇒ Describe your ideal church (size, culture and style, location, structure, and mission).
- ⇒ Where do you want to be in your career in five years?
- ⇒ What do you want your next position to do for you that your last one did not?
- ⇒ What personal and professional accomplishment are you the most proud?
- ⇒ What interview questions do you dread most?
- ⇒ What salary and benefits do you want to earn?
- ⇒ What could your current or past employer do that would prevent you from looking for another job? (Did you ask them to do it?)
- ⇒ What do you see as the Youth Leader's role in the local church?
- ⇒ Why do you want to work here?
- ⇒ What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- ⇒ Why should you be hired?



DEVELOPING A PERSERVING HEART

“Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; preserve in these things; for as you do this will insure salvation both for yourself and those who hear you.” I Timothy 4:14-16

Youth Leaders must develop a preserving heart that will not be overcome by ministry demands. The average Youth Leader lasts less than one year at a church before he/she either quits the ministry or moves to another church. You can avoid this cycle if you understand the cause.

There are many reasons why pastors fail or quit. The senior pastor's vision is not communicated or is unclear. They perceive youth ministry as a stepping-stone to greater ministry. Proper resources and training are lacking.

Frustrations can also cause failure. Teens provide one of the greatest challenges in ministry. Youth need ministry on all three levels: spirit, soul, and body. Often their social needs are more important to them than spiritual or physical needs. When proper balance is lacking, teens and their leaders will become frustrated. Excellence in youth ministry includes social time and physical activities, as well as spiritual aspects of ministry.

Comparing your ministry to that of another can be discouraging and dangerous (“the grass is always greener” syndrome). Compare your numbers to those of your total church. A healthy youth group should be at least 10% of the total church attendance. Your ministry has a unique calling and personality. God doesn’t want it to be exactly like another. You can use the same methods and principles others use, but your ministry should be seasoned with your own unique flavor.

Youth ministry is a target for attack because satan knows 85% of all Christians are converted before or during their teen years.



Good relationships with people will help you succeed! You may be a great speaker, a creative genius, or a soul winning machine, but without good, solid relationships in your church and ministry, you are headed for failure. Learn to relate well to those with whom you will have regular contact.

YOUR PASTOR

You do not have to be close friends with your pastor in order to be close spiritually. If a friendship develops between you, that's fine, but don't press him to be your buddy. Be sure you maintain a high level of respect in the way you relate to him on both personal and professional levels. He is the leader in the relationship; find out how he wants you to follow. Here are some suggestions:



Learn to flow with his leadership style and methods.

Here are 10 characteristics many pastors look for in a youth leader:

Loyalty: The Youth Leader must not criticize the pastor in adverse circumstances. Rebellion in the youth leader breeds rebellion in the teenagers.

Spirituality: Every pastor wants to see spiritual depth in his youth leader. A good leader must have a deep personal relationship with God and commitment to His word.

Stability: A good Youth Leader must not fall for every wind of doctrine, which blows through the Body of Christ. He should reflect the preaching of his pastor in all that he teaches.

Moral Integrity: The Youth Leader must avoid youthful lusts and every appearance of evil. Male leaders should be very masculine and female leaders should be very feminine.

Hospitality: A good leader must provide opportunities for young people to have fellowship without worldly temptation.

Enterprise: Pastors adore leaders who operate programs without continually draining the church treasury. Learn to make your activities pay for themselves.

Confidentiality: Don't share church business, privileged information or church financial matters with anyone outside the staff.

Courage: Don't be afraid to confront trouble-makers and maintain order in youth ministry functions.

Communication: Learn how to submit requests to the pastor at the proper time. Use written reports (typed or printed) to inform the pastor of youth department activities.

Leadership: A good leader learns to delegate when responsibilities multiply. Learn how to recruit and use volunteers. Don't get so busy with details that you lose sight overall vision.

Give your pastor a written statement of commitment during your first week as a Youth Leader. If you're already serving in a church, it's better late than never. The following page is a copy of what one Youth Leader gave his pastor on his first day. After receiving a letter like this, there is no question about his intentions. He was there for the church, not himself. He also was exercising a powerful scriptural principle: Seek first the kingdom—everything else will be added (Matthew 6:33).

Dear Senior Pastor ,

Please allow me just a few moments of your time to express how grateful I am for this opportunity to assist you with the youth ministry. I believe God is going to use you and *the youth ministry* to bring a powerful revolution in America's youth and its leaders. Because of this incredible opportunity and responsibility, it is imperative that you have a like-minded and committed team around you. I am committing to do the following and more to assist you as we pursue God's plan for *the youth ministry*:

To daily support you and your family in prayer.

To maintain an open and teachable spirit.

To exhibit a positive, servant's attitude.

To always strive for excellence.

To never be content with average, but always look for innovative and creative ways to reach more teens and leaders.

To always look for ways to grow myself, to be a better leader, and to better serve you.

To finish given assignments in a professional and timely manner.

To anticipate potential problems and defuse them before a crisis can occur.

To seek to accurately convey your heart and vision by my lifestyle, conversation, and conduct.

To be a self-starter and not liability.

To maintain a high energy level, especially during pressing projects and events.

To have absence of personal baggage while at work.

To keep a sense of humor and be able to laugh at myself.
To own my mistakes or shortcomings rather than try to justify them.
To learn from my mistakes rather than be discouraged by them.
To be a leader with the highest level of integrity possible.
To always strive to see the big picture.
To always be flexible.
To live a life of self discipline which is always willing to pay the price for the success of this ministry.
To take personally any attack from the enemy against you or this ministry and to be a servant of action spiritually.
To be a team player and play for the benefit of everyone on the team.
To take what you develop in me and develop that into other leaders who will develop leaders.
To take personal responsibility for your success and the success of the ministry.
To continually evaluate my progress and make needed adjustments for further growth.
To always be grateful and not take for granted the awesome opportunity and privilege I have to serve you, *our youth ministry and out church.*

Respectfully,

Youth Leader



Adapt yourself to your pastor's schedule and adjust to his tendencies. Respect and protect your pastor's time. The pastor of a smaller church may be even busier than one of a larger church, because he may be doing the majority of the work.. Don't stop him in the hall to discuss problems, to get input or to ask for an appointment. Set an appointment with his secretary if this applies.

Be the first to get out of your chair to end a meeting with him. Don't bother him with unnecessary details.

When approaching him with a new idea, first think it through completely, researching cost, implementation and timing.

Be sensitive to his priorities. If there is a financial crunch, be wise and delay asking for major purchases.

Bring good news often; don't always come to him with problems. Try to start each conversation with a positive report from the youth ministry. Have three or four good reports for each bad one. However, don't cover-up bad things. Fix them if you can, so you will have good news to relate-it's fixed!



Think through possible resolutions. When you have a situation only he can answer, think through possible solutions to present to him. He may still say, "none of the above," but you will have done your homework.

Put it in writing. Use memos. Written communication allows your pastor to deal with the issue at his convenience. Communicate clearly and concisely—no longer than one typed page.

Learn to anticipate his needs and request. Don't wait for him to tell you to clean up your office or the youth room. Try to put yourself in his shoes and see your ministry from his perspective.

Remember: It's the little things that make a BIG difference.

YOUR DEPARTMENT CAPTAINS AND WORKERS

Great leaders know how to multiply their vision through others. As a leader, you are only able to personally influence 10-15 people at one time; consequently, many youth groups never grow beyond that number.



When Jesus began his ministry, He recruited His disciples first. If you will use your influence like Jesus did, you can train 12 leaders who can each train 12 workers. Instead of 10-15 teens, you can reach 144 and more! Here's the process:

Recruit supervisors for each area of ministry. Give each supervisor a job description, so their assignment is clear. Have regular, one-on-one meetings to train, impart vision and implement ideas with these captains.

Help recruit workers for each of your ministry departments. Before recruiting workers make sure you have the following in place:

A helps application.

This will give you important information to properly evaluate each candidate's qualifications. We differentiate between our adult and teenage volunteers by using separate applications.

Having an effective application process gives the volunteer a sense of responsibility for the task he will undertake. It also helps safeguard the youth group from those who do not belong in leadership.

A training program to help them succeed.

The Helps Manual describes in detail how to recruit, train and use helpers in ministry. Give each helper a worker's manual with guidelines and job descriptions. Regularly conduct an orientation meeting for new workers.

Provide additional materials for workers to study such as:

"Developing The Leader Within You"

(*John Maxwell*). Provide tapes for workers to listen to at home.

Make a Youth Ministry Introduction Tape or give workers a tape of a lesson you taught to your leadership. Clearly define goals and objectives for your ministry and your workers. Know your target before you shoot.

Have regular meetings with all of your leaders and workers. Some suggested leadership meeting topics could be:

- Your vision
- What is Youth Ministry?
- Characteristics Of The Ultimate Youth Worker
- How To Become A Strong Leader
- How To Make Winning Decisions
- Developing A Personal Game Plan For Growth
- Dealing With Different Personality Types
- Turning This Generation Around



YOUR TEENS

Let them know you care.

Remain approachable. Most teens don't want to spend a lot of time with you, but they still need to know you care about them. Most teens are thrilled when the Youth Leader remembers their names!

Here are a few key points in building great relationships with young people:

- ⇒ Find out who the influencers are in the group and cultivate them as leaders.
- ⇒ Regularly mail communications and/or send email to your students. Young people love to hear from you.
- ⇒ Use photographs to help you learn your student's names.
- ⇒ When meeting new people: Focus on listening to each person's name—if you didn't catch it, politely say, "I'm sorry. I didn't catch your name. What is it?"
- ⇒ Once you get a person's name, use it. "Mike, it sure is a pleasure to meet you." Using a name three times during your conversation will greatly increase your ability to recall it. Write it down at your first opportunity.
- ⇒ Shake hands, look people in the eye and smile.
- ⇒ Maintain eye contact during the conversation—lack of eye contact can give people the impression you are preoccupied with something else or they are unimportant to you.



- ⇒ Concentrate on each person's face. It will help you remember them next time you meet.
- ⇒ Plan an overnight trip, camp, or activity. (Time together builds relationships.)
- ⇒ Do a survey with the students to discover their interests and activities.
- ⇒ Send cards to the students on their birthdays or announce them at your youth meetings.

THE PARENTS

Build a relationship bridge with the parents of your students.

You're fighting a losing battle if you don't earn their respect and trust. Your job as a youth minister is to compliment, not replace, the spiritual training your students should be receiving in their homes.



There are many effective ways to develop a good working relationship with parents. Here are a few:

Conduct a special parents' meeting or banquet and do the following:

- Share the vision of your youth ministry.

- Recruit leadership.

- Select parents who are already involved to give testimonies.

Send out a parent survey to get input.

Communicate with parents through postcards or newsletters.

Be available to meet with parents who are having problems with their kids.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Build a cooperative and supportive relationship with other department leaders in your church. The success of a team isn't based on just one player, one department or one event. A successful team is built by all the players doing their best to make their departments effective. All the ingredients work together for the good of the whole church .

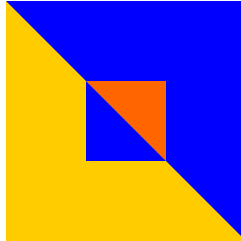
There is power in unity and teamwork: A test of two horses showed one horse can pull nine tons by itself, but two horses harnessed together can pull 30 tons.

“And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.” **Leviticus 26:8**

Be a blessing to other church departments. Help out with their projects. (There will be a time when you will need their help.)

Communicate with each other regarding everything. Don't plan conflicting events. Offer your assistance when other departments are launching big projects. Ask for permission to use another departments equipment and return it in better shape than it was! Always talk positively about other departments. Eliminate any "us-against-them" mentality in you or your workers.

Remember that other leaders also represent your pastor—treat them the way you would treat him!



VISION—THE BLUEPRINT FOR BUILDING

You cannot do everything in your first year, but you should be able to lay four major foundations that will give you strength and stability for the future. Here is an example of one ministry and their plans.



“And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.”

Habakkuk 2:2

When Walt Disney World opened in Florida, one young engineer looked over at an old Disney executive and said, “Boy, if only Walt could have seen this.” The old executive looked back at him with a smile and said, “He did. That’s why it’s here.”

Vision, when properly conceived and communicated, is so powerful that it will outlive its original recipient.
—Blaine Bartel

Three truths about people and vision are:

People want to belong to something that is bigger than they are.

People want to be part of something that is greater than what they can do alone.

People want to be part of something that will outlive them.

Develop your vision.*

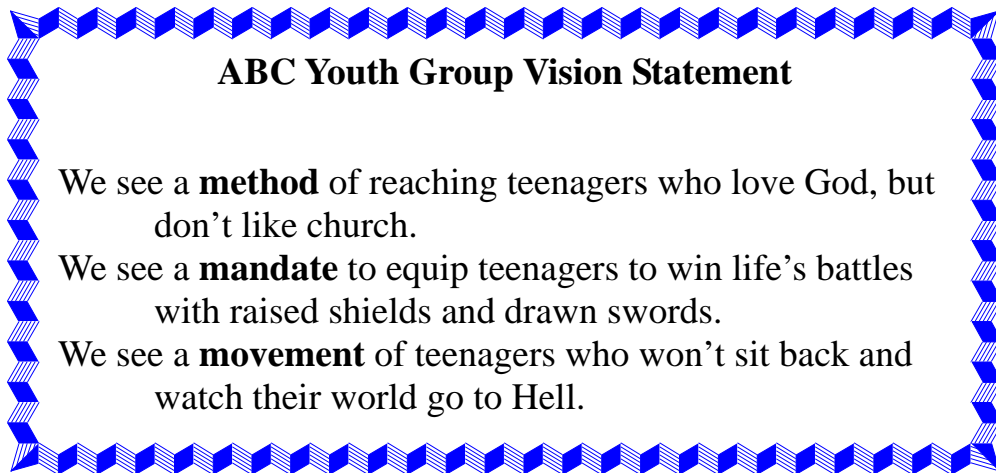
The first stage of developing your vision is to write down what you want to do in a sentence or two. This is called your mission statement.

ABC Youth Group Mission Statement

ABC Youth Group is all about Jesus Christ and His plans for teenagers. Our mission is to compel thousands to follow Christ, to be equipped with His Word, and to proclaim His message.

**Find out the history of the previous ministry before you came on board. Be careful not to make drastic changes until you have built trust with the leadership and students.*

Next, write your vision statement. Whereas a mission statement is short and concise, a vision statement begins to allow details and goals to unfold.



Outline steps for its fulfillment.

“reaching teenagers who love God but don't like church”

Steps for fulfillment:

Auditorium and activity area which appeals to teens
Junior High Program
Follow-Up Program
Drama Team Developed
Outreach Team
Worship Team

“to equip teenagers to win life's battles with raised shields and drawn swords”

Steps for fulfillment:

Thousands of teens at summer camp programs
High school Bible study groups
Hundreds of student workers in ministry
Ongoing Discipleship graduates

“a movement of teenagers who won’t sit back and watch their world go to Hell.”

Steps to fulfillment:

Summer mission programs both overseas and in American cities

“See You At The Pole” outreach each year

Campus ministry

Wednesday night service

When creating your mission and vision statements, do not copy someone else’s. God has called your church to be unique. You can gather ideas by looking at other youth groups, but your mission and how you go about reaching it must be your own. Make it plain. Using your mission and vision statements, clearly define your specific goals for the next year. True goals should:

- ⇒ Give you a specific purpose.
- ⇒ Empower you to accomplish them.
- ⇒ Give you a time frame in which to achieve them.
- ⇒ Be measurable
- ⇒ Be identifiable. Avoid vague statements like, “Recruit more workers,” “Develop leaders,” and “Get the youth on fire for God!”
- ⇒ Be attainable. If you have 50 in your youth group, don’t set a goal to see 1,000. You can always raise your sights later.

THE WORD OF GOD

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

Acts 2:40-47

Never underestimate a teenager’s ability to learn the Word of God. If they can memorize the lyrics of 73 music CDs and 58 levels of the latest Xbox game, surely they can memorize scripture.

The Bible encourages young people to remember their Creator in the days of their youth (Ecclesiastes 12:1). With every command God gives, He also provides the ability and desire to fulfill it. When students are bored with a sermon, it is not because the Word of God is boring or irrelevant, but rather it is the result of a communicator who needs to improve his abilities.

Your teaching should be full of the Word. It is the Word of God that will set students free, equip them for successful Christian living and inspire them to be soul winners.



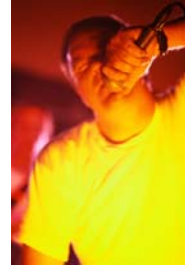
Every Youth Leader should provide a steady diet of these five basic ingredients in the teenager’s spiritual diet.

- ⇒ How to be sure of their relationship with God.
- ⇒ How to resist temptation.
- ⇒ What to do when they stumble spiritually.
- ⇒ The importance of right relationships with other people.
- ⇒ God governs the universe by spiritual and natural laws.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Here are some important keys to having effective praise and worship times with your teens:

- ⇒ Be culturally relevant. Each week at your youth service, try to sing many of the same songs the adults sing during the weekend church services; however, you can alter the style and sound of each song to have a more contemporary appeal.
- ⇒ Make sure you are singing in a key which is comfortable for everyone, not just the song leader. When teenagers—especially boys—are unable to sing comfortably, they will not sing at all.
- ⇒ Communicate to your worship leader what you want concerning length, focus, transitions, etc.
- ⇒ Do songs that keep the focus on worshipping Jesus, not the band. Do not allow your worship time to turn into a concert.
- ⇒ Have a set practice time and rehearsal other than just minutes before your service.
- ⇒ Be careful not to drag your worship time out too long. It is better to leave young people wanting more than to have them begging you to stop. Listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- ⇒ At the most critical time in Jesus' life, at the Last Supper, the Bible says they sang a hymn and went out (Matthew 26:30). They sang *one* hymn! Jesus had previously rebuked the Pharisees for trying to impress people with their long prayers. He taught His disciples that prayers are not heard because of their length (Matthew 6:5-7).



Teach your young people the importance of worship, praise, and prayer time. More than just 20 minutes every Wednesday night, worship is a necessary part of a separated Christian lifestyle which should be included in their daily schedules.

What if you have no band?

This is certainly not uncommon. Just about every youth group starts without any musical talent at their disposal.



Here are some viable alternatives until you can put together your own worship band:

- ⇒ Recruit three or four of your more outgoing, committed young people to help you lead with all the enthusiasm you can muster. When students see other students singing, it helps them break out of their shells. (Try to find kids who can carry a tune *without* a bucket.)
- ⇒ Use tracks and pre-program your worship service with a “band in the can.” There are several youth ministry resource organizations who sell worship tracks on CD.
- ⇒ Talk to your adult service leader. Perhaps they can help you with musicians and leadership.
- ⇒ Challenge your kids to evangelize their school band!

EVANGELISM

As you offer your students opportunities to become involved in the youth ministry, they will develop a sense of ownership which will cause your ministry to blossom.

Growth comes by inviting friends. Here’s how to motivate your teens to bring their friends:

- ⇒ Provide a sharp program, so your students won’t be ashamed to bring their friends. If your services are dull and boring, you’ll attract some visitors, but it’s unlikely they’ll ever come back.

It’s important to remember that shepherds don’t make sheep. Sheep make sheep.

- ⇒ Give your students a cool-looking, compact invitation, card or brochure they can pass out to classmates at school. Create a small, colorful, non-threatening invitation which describes what your group is all about.
- ⇒ Teach your students that it is *their* responsibility to reach out to their generation. Your job is to teach them how to do it. There are many Christian students who really love God, but don't feel strong enough to go "evangelism crazy" in their schools. Rather than condemning them as being uncommitted or lukewarm, we encourage them to start by inviting one friend to youth group.
- ⇒ When visitors come, be sure you give them a warm welcome. Have a consistent follow-up program that lets each know you are glad they came and you want them to return soon.
- ⇒ Have special nights at your youth group meetings where you provide free hamburgers or pizza, and challenge your youth to bring their friends.
- ⇒ Teach your students to share their faith on their school campuses.



Train outgoing, young Christians to share their faith outside the church walls.

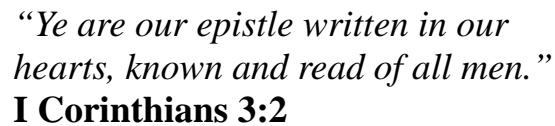
There are many opportunities for kids to become involved. They can serve on a helps ministry team at various levels according to their personality and temperament. For those with a heart for evangelism, try a monthly outreach to a juvenile detention facility in you city; however, the most significant ministry outreach we have is *ABC Youth Program*

The purpose of *ABC Youth Program* is two-fold. We want to be able to reach kids in the community who otherwise might never set foot in a church. We want to train teenagers to evangelize their world, so ministry training is an important part of the *ABC Youth Program*

Following are six ways evangelism can be use to train your youth to be able to reach out in their schools.

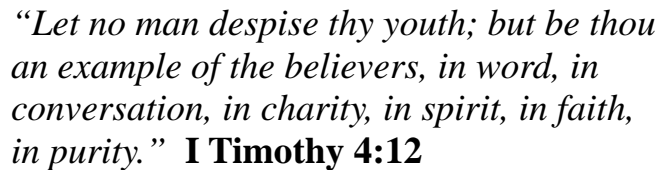
Live the life you talk about.

Christian means “little Christ.” Your friends and enemies are watching you to see if you really live as Christ lived.



“Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.”
I Corinthians 3:2

Paul encouraged young Timothy not to let any man despise his youth, but to be an example. The quickest way to prove the truth of your message is not to provide a good argument, but to exhibit an exemplary lifestyle.



“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” **I Timothy 4:12**

Let your entire school know where you stand.

Some Christians won’t wear a Christian shirt because they are afraid to be identified as a “radical,” however, the quicker you show everyone what you believe, the easier it will be to maintain your strong Christian witness. It’s hard to light up a cigarette or use a cuss word with “Jesus Saves” plastered all over your clothing. Simply inviting a friend to church will quickly let people know where you stand.

Start by asking questions, and then follow up with the only answer- Jesus.

Questions have the ability to disarm people, causing them to lower their defenses. Questions stoke a person's intelligence and give them the impression that you consider them knowledgeable. Jesus asked questions many times when sharing the Good News.

"What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world, yet loses his own soul?" **Mark 8:36**

Here are a few sample questions which can be used to initiate conversations about Christ:

- ⇒ If you were to die right now, do you know for sure you would go to Heaven?
- ⇒ If you were to stand at Heaven's entrance and Jesus asked you why He should let you in, what would you tell Him?
- ⇒ Do you believe in the Bible? (If so, they must also believe in what Jesus did to purchase their salvation.)

Give your friends a gospel witness.

Make it hard for teenagers in your school to go to Hell by causing each one to think about his or her relationship with God. Here's how to encourage this:

Remember, there is power in numbers. What could one hundred of you do?

- ⇒ Wear jewelry which carries the message of Christ. Early Christians used the symbol of a fish to identify each other.
- ⇒ Gain permission to announce your youth events over the public address system.
- ⇒ Put the scriptures you want to memorize on the inside of your locker door.
- ⇒ Carry your bible with your books to every class and read it in your spare time.
- ⇒ Pass out *ABC Youth Group* invitations before and after classes—every chance you get.

Challenge every other Christian you know in your school to do all of the above.

"And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword." **Leviticus 26:8**

Know how to share the message of Jesus Christ.

There are three truths which must be communicated to every lost soul:

We all have a sin problem.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” **Romans 3:23**

No matter how kind, nice and giving a person claims to have been, everyone (except Jesus) has sinned at some point in his life. The simple rejection of Jesus Christ as the Messiah is sin enough to condemn them to Hell. We all have a mega-problem—sin!

We all have been given a sin solution.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” **Romans 6:23**

We all deserve to die and go to Hell for our selfishness, but Jesus solved our problem by shedding His innocent blood on the cross for our sins. He was (and still is) the blameless Son of God who took the penalty for our sins so we wouldn't have to.

For example, if your dad told you that he was going to whip you with a belt for breaking your curfew, but your big brother intervened and took the whipping for you, that's basically what Jesus did, except on a much larger scale—life and death.

Each person must receive Christ into his heart so his dead spirit can be born again.

It is not enough to know that we have a sin problem, or even believe that there is a sin solution. Satan knows all of that and he's definitely not saved. We must take the next life-changing step. We must accept the forgiveness and cleansing that Jesus has provided.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord (Master/Ruler) Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” **Romans 10:9**

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons (or daughters) of God even to them that believe on His name.” **John 1:12**

For example, if I bought a new Rolex watch and held it out to you, it wouldn't do you any good until you took it from me. Until someone receives Christ personally, he cannot enjoy the benefits of forgiveness, joy, peace, and eternal life.

Begin a Christian club in your school or plug in to one of the Christian club ministries that already exist.

A Christian club will give you new avenues of outreach in your school which are not available to one individual. You may bring in special speakers, advertise special events and outreaches, put up posters, use the P.A. system for announcements, and most importantly, meet together to pray and plan for evangelism on your school campus. Go for it!



Grow by planning a mission trip for your group.

If you need to light a fire under your youth group, this will do it. Summer mission trips are one of the best ways for young people to realize their value, abilities and power to minister the Gospel by touching literally thousands of people in a short time.



There are many good organizations with whom you can go on trips such as the Cornerstone Conference Mission trips, or you can organize your own.

By organizing your own trips, you can control the cost, time and destination. You can customize these variables to conform to your group's needs and funds.

STEP 1—Decide where to go.

It's best to go to a country in which you already have contacts—perhaps one where your church supports missionaries. Contact's duties include:

- ⇒ Help find lodging, such as hotels, churches, camps, or schools.
- ⇒ Help find and set up facilities for meals, baths, and laundry.
- ⇒ Set up ministry sites for the entire trip.
- ⇒ Suggest points of interest for your group to visit.
- ⇒ Secure local churches to disciple and nurture new converts. This is very important!
- ⇒ Help control costs for all the above. They know the people of the country and know better how to deal with them.

STEP 2—Set your budget.

Decide how much you want the trip to cost. Remember, the lower the cost, the more students will be able to afford to go. Non-variables will include:



- ⇒ *Airfare*- Some airlines will negotiate airfare for groups. Shop around or let a travel agent do this for you.
- ⇒ *Lodging*- Get a firm price from where you will be staying.
- ⇒ *Food*- A reasonable estimate would be \$3.00 to \$4.00 per meal, per person, with the exception of a special banquet which is optional, but worthwhile.
- ⇒ *Transportation*- Public transportation, if available, is the least expensive and in some countries is even free. Your contacts may have vans you can use. If so, make sure they have drivers to go with you. Renting your own van will be the most costly.
- ⇒ *Insurance*- Contact your church insurance company and request a temporary rider on your policy for each person going on the mission trip. They can give you a quote on the cost per person which should be added to your budget.
- ⇒ *Points of Interest*- Plan side trips before you go. They may have costs associated with them which need to be included in the total cost of your trip.
- ⇒ *Guides/interpreters*- You will need to take someone with you from the country. You should include their expenses in your projections.

STEP 3—Recruit your team.

Traveling to other countries is fun, but make it clear that this is not a vacation.

- ⇒ Stress the opportunities to minister and to see the Lord move greatly through your teens, because *they* will be the ministers, not you or the chaperones. This is their ministry time.
- ⇒ Talk it up! Use every opportunity to get the word out! Use short skits or allow youth who have previously gone on mission trips to share their testimonies.
- ⇒ Prepare your team. Have mandatory classes in evangelism and show the teens who they are in Christ and what the Word says about what they will do during the trip (Luke 4:18-19). Daily quiet time in prayer and reading the Word is mandatory before and during the trip.
- ⇒ Explain that shyness is not a problem. The shyest person can and will lead people to the Lord. Using drama as a tool breaks the ice and helps even the shyest to operate in the power of the Holy Spirit. Do “role play” in evangelism. Give specific instruction regarding leading people to the Lord.
- ⇒ Establish leadership. You will need other adults and older teens to help you. Leadership order:
 - ⇒ Project Directors- you and other adults
 - ⇒ Team Leaders- age 21+, a male and a female
 - ⇒ Team Assistants- age 19+, a male and a female
- ⇒ Determine the size of each team. The size of each team depends on the ministry tool (drama, puppets, etc.) and how many teens participate in the mission’s trip.
- ⇒ Participate in a Challenge Ropes Course. This is a great way to build unity in your teams and to give them an idea of their strengths and weaknesses—physically, emotionally and spiritually. The greatest benefit of this type of training is the confidence students will develop in themselves and fellow team members.
- ⇒ Teach students the tools they will be using to minister. Whether drama, puppetry, or street witnessing, they need to be fully prepared and able to perform with excellence. Practice as much as you need to at home, so you will not have to perfect your tools while in the field.

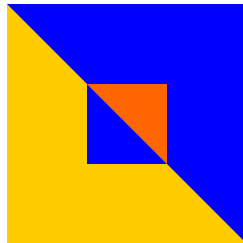


STEP 4—Implement fund raising. Start early and use your imagination!

- ⇒ Each young person needs to earn his own funds. Funding is the first step of faith for them in the trip.
- ⇒ Each youth missionary should write and mail support letters to friends, relatives, businesses, and any other contacts they may have. The letter should explain their trip, why they are going, and what God has put on their heart about the trip. They need to be specific regarding the cost and what they need—emphasizing prayer as their greatest need. Give them examples to help them write their letters.
- ⇒ Organize car washes, bake sales, youth/staff basketball games, etc. Several car washes can be held if you start several months before the trip.
- ⇒ Extra personal expenses (beyond the trip cost) will include money for passports, immunizations, personal needs for the trip, shopping on the “free day,” soda and snacks.

STEP 5—Relax!

Remember, kids are young and have a lot of energy. Therefore, you will have to have a lot of patience. Direct their energy. Don't stifle it.



important vs. most important

by: doug fields

Despite the fact that most youth workers take part in a variety of important activities, effective youth workers learn to focus on what is even more important.

1. Activities vs. Attention

Lock-ins, all-nighters and crazy games can be great activities to help students build community and connect with adult leaders, but I believe that students crave attention more than having a good time.

There have been times over my ministry career when I have focuses so heavily on the activities themselves that I didn't spend enough time with students. The event might have come together seamlessly, but the more important element had been discarded.

I am convinced that you don't have to have a flashy youth ministry. Instead you need loving adults paying attention to students. When you do that, them your ministry will grow; students will want to share their faith and bring their friends to your ministry.

2. Program vs. Passion

It's more important to be passionate about the programs you have, than to have numerous programs for which no one has a passion. Because of this I suggest you re-evaluate the programs you have and get rid of those you are not passionate about. This could be your first step toward a healthy ministry.

3. Numbers vs. Health

It is true, numbers are important. Numbers represent people hearing the Gospel. In fact, I even suggest that your youth group keep track o f your numbers. But remember this...bigger is not better, healthier is better.

4. Quality vs. Longevity

Youth ministers should take their work seriously and have pride in what they do. But longevity is more important than quality.

I believe that ministry gets better and easier the longer you last. I don't have the same difficulties I once had when I was new to youth ministry and new to my church. An example of this is now I find it easier to enlist volunteers into serving in youth ministry because people trust me. I have been in youth ministry and

5. Adult Chaperones vs. Godly Leaders

You can't have kids driving the church van, you ministries need adults. But more important than having adults is having godly leaders. I'd rather have one godly leader than 20 chaperones.

I encourage you to train the chaperones in your ministry to be 'shepherds.' Students don't need chaperons; they need shepherds, godly men and women who will lead them.

If you find godly leaders "who are in love with Jesus" there will be no battles over a vision for the youth ministry. Everyone will want to see students in a more passionate relationship with Jesus.

6. Relevance vs. Relationships

I think youth ministers should make themselves students of youth culture, but I believe that relevance can be highly overrated. Most youth ministers are not as cool as they think they are. It isn't a youth minister's "coolness" that will make him effective in ministry.

I don't need to have tattoos. I don't need to have my nipples pierced. I don't need to wear boxers up high or baggy pants to have a relationship with a teenager

When you have a relationship, you have relevance in a teenager's life.

7. Attraction vs. Retention

Attracting teenagers to a youth group isn't difficult with a little money. Students will always come to see a good show. Bet the fact is that life change happens in quality relationships and students cannot get that from the world.

8. Models of Youth Ministry vs. Mystery of God

It's great to learn from other youth ministers. Purpose Driven Youth Ministry is a great model of ministry, but there are many other good models out there as well.

More important than models of youth ministry is the mystery of God. There are some things about youth ministry that I can't explain and don't want to explain.

Don't be disillusioned by the supposed "steps" to increase the size of your youth group. Instead realize that a growth is a "theological phenomenon."

I can remember spending months planning a “back to school party.” Then when the guitarist broke three strings and could no longer play, the young girl giving her testimony got sick and one of the students had horrendous gas problems, I figured the night was a loss. But after the program, when a young lady in attendance told me that she felt presence of God that night, I realized God had used the event despite the problems.

If you came to my church and you poked around and asked questions about what makes certain things work here, I’ll have to tell you, “I don’t know.” When you elevate the purposes, God does something, but I can’t explain everything.

9. Students vs. Caring Adults

Obviously we as youth workers care about students and want to reach students. But youth workers should focus on recruiting more caring adults to the ministry. Your ministry must outlive you. In order to do this you must find people who will still be involved in the ministry when you leave.

When a lot of churches look for people to help out in the youth ministry, they look for people who are young and flashy. That’s fine as long as those people are going to find other caring adults who are going to love those kids.

10. Talking about God vs. Talking with God

Most importantly remember that talking with God is more important than talking about God. I learned just how important this was when, in my seventh year of ministry at my previous church, I began to crash because I was depending on my own time and energy for ministry. I can remember pulling over to the side of the street after returning from a big youth retreat and tearing up. In those moments God encouraged me to stop trying to do everything on my own. While I had been doing a good job connecting students to the church, I had done a poor job connecting myself to God.

Let me encourage you not to rely on your own talents or skills to minister to teens, but instead to rely on God.

The great thing about youth ministry is when I show up to speak, I don’t show up alone—I show up with God.