PRINCIPLE ONE

GROW SPIRITUALLY
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“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.” Mark 1:35

“Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” Psalms 119:105

“I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.” Philemon 6

ACT IT OUT INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE

THE SCENE Alex and Mo sit across a restaurant table from each other. Alex bows his head discreetly as Mo dunks her fries in ketchup. She looks up and notices Alex is still praying. (After Alex ends his prayer he looks up at Mo.)

MONIQUE Had a lot to say, did you?

ALEX Yeah, you could say that.

MONIQUE Did you manage to bless my food, as well?

ALEX Sorry, but my burrito needed a lot more prayer than your Caesar Salad. You’re not on one of those new diets, are you?

MONIQUE No, just watching what I eat. ...But about your prayer. Are things okay with you? You seem distracted.

ALEX What? Sorry, I didn’t...okay, point made. I guess I’ve been pretty stressed lately. It seems like there is so much going on and so little time. I barely have time to say grace let alone ask for it.

MONIQUE Well, you’ve been busy doing church stuff. That should count for something, right?
THINK IT THROUGH MEASURING THE LEADER

Just as coaches consistently tell their teams to work the fundamentals, youth leaders need to get back to God’s fundamentals every day. God may have given you a gift for working with youth, but unless you’re nurturing your own relationship Him, you won’t be leading them to victory. Here are a few questions to help you consider just how well you’re working the basics.

1. My prayer life consists of:
   a. a day long conversation with God.
   b. a three-second blurb as I rub my eyes before lunch at McDonalds.
   c. a string of requests that leaves Him wondering if I hear a word He says.

2. Bible study to me is:
   a. like reading an e-mail from a friend.
   b. a quick way to come up with my next youth group idea.
   c. something I do every day because that’s what I was told to do.

3. Witnessing is:
   a. a natural expression of what I’ve experienced with Jesus.
   b. something I never put into words because my actions say it all.
   c. an awkward activity I do once in a while just to relieve my guilt.
WHAT’S THE POINT?
There’s a reason why “Grow Spiritually” is the first chapter of this book. If you’re not growing spiritually as a youth leader, you’re cheating yourself and your youth. The purpose of leading young people isn’t to keep them out of trouble. It isn’t to provide them a place at church where they feel comfortable. There’s a much greater purpose to youth leadership.

It is, of course, all about Jesus. Through our lives, our words, and our actions, we lead. If we believe we’re clever enough or good enough to lead young people to Jesus without spending time with Him, we’re fooling ourselves. We’re not likely to fool the youth around us, though. They have an uncanny ability to spot hypocrisy. They can tell if we’ve been with Jesus.

So how can we make sure we’re living our Christianity to the core? How can we be certain that what we say and do has deep roots in a personal relationship with Jesus? Let’s not guess—let’s go to God’s Word.

STAYING WITH JESUS TAKES TIME
We can only impact our youth for Christ if we remain in Him ourselves. **John 15:5** says, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” It can’t be said more clearly than that. Without Jesus, we can do nothing. This is the attitude we must have as youth leaders. If we don’t spend time with Jesus, we will not be successful in God’s terms—it’s just that simple. Oh, we might appear to have things under control. We might even dream up an extremely creative youth program. But in the eternal plan, those things don’t matter much.

What does it mean to remain in Jesus? The Greek word used in this verse means to continue in a relationship. So, to remain in Jesus means to stay with Him at all times. It means consulting and yielding to Him minute-by-minute. It means making your relationship so real that, by faith, you can sense His presence with you. Are you there yet?

There’s only one way to make it happen -- time. Time with Jesus in His Word; time with Him in prayer and silence; time letting Him speak through you to others. It doesn’t happen any other way. When Jesus said to remain with Him, He meant staying by His side every second of your life. For better or worse, for richer or poorer. When you do that, you can’t help but love Him.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MAKE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD MORE REAL AND PERSONAL?

BREAK IT DOWN UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

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REAL LIFE

George and Elsie had been married for sixty-two years when cancer finally took Elsie’s life. As the pastor talked with George a few days after the funeral, he wondered how the two had stayed connected all those years.

“George,” he said, “How did you and Elsie keep it together? You must have been so compatible.”

George looked off into the distance and chuckled.

“Oh, we were compatible, but that doesn’t mean it was always smooth sailing. We had our share of disagreements and a few really hard times.”

“But you made it,” the pastor said.

“Yes, we made it. We just decided never to give up on each other. We decided that no matter how bleak things looked, we’d always stick together.”

That’s what it means to stay with Jesus. It doesn’t mean things won’t be rough at times. Trusting Him is difficult when you can’t see through the storm. But it does mean sticking to your commitment. When you do, you’ll find life is so much sweeter.

THE ONE THING MANY PEOPLE FORGET

Maybe you’ve tried. Still, your Bible study is frustrating. Your prayer life seems like it’s taking place in a vacuum. And your witness appears to be stalled. Could it be that you’ve forgotten the Holy Spirit?

Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:21, “For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is the author and inspirer of the Bible. Because the Bible originated with Him, He can also make it come alive today. Ask for His presence as you study the Word. Let Him fill and enlighten your mind. As you develop the daily habit of searching God’s Word, He will create a burning desire for more. Soon you won’t get through your day without turning to the Scriptures.

The Holy Spirit’s role in prayer is just as vital. Paul said in Romans 8:26, “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.” No
wonder our prayers feel empty at times. We don’t even know what to pray for. But once again, the Holy Spirit comes to the rescue. Even when all we can do is fumble for words, He’s there, interpreting our deepest longings into expressions the Father loves to hear.

Just in case you thought that’s where the Holy Spirit leaves off, not so. You’ll be pleased to discover that He also gives us the ability to witness to others. Jesus told His disciples in **ACTS 1:8**, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

The prospect of witnessing to your neighbors, friends and family might make you nervous. You may spend hours looking for just the right words. And it’s certainly not a bad idea to prepare. But unless you rely on the Holy Spirit’s help, you greatly limit what He can do through you. Be assured that the Holy Spirit will give you all you need and more when you ask for His presence.

So let’s get practical. What are some simple methods of Bible study, prayer and witnessing you can use? Finding something that strengthens your friendship with God will give you the opportunity to recommend it to your youth.

**REMAINING WITH JESUS IN HIS WORD**

There are literally hundreds of different Bible study methods. You can find many good books to help you. The bottom line is—find what works for you and stick with it. Remaining in Jesus means remaining in His Word. When you hurt, read it. When you’re joyful, read it. When you don’t feel like reading it, read it!

Here are a few methods to try.

**Ask-Answer-Apply**

ASK as many questions of a text as you can, taking one verse at a time. Use the six basic journalistic questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. Write your questions down. Ask why things happened the way they did. Ask when—the sequence of events can be important. Ask who was involved—that may also be significant. You get the idea.

ANSWER your questions by prayerfully reflecting on the words of the text. Search for clues in the verses before and after your passage.
Consider the big picture by looking at the background and message of the entire book. Ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom. Then write down your conclusions. You’ll find that God will give you deeper answers as you mature spiritually.

**APPLY** what you’ve discovered by asking questions like, “What does this mean for my life this week?” “What is God saying to me through this story or passage?” “What should I do in response?” Then act on your answers.

**Memorize**
Memorize the passage or a key text in the passage. You might want to write it out on a small card and take it with you to class, daily exercise sessions, or place it on your mirror. Use that text throughout the week to guide you in as many situations as possible. Apply it in practical ways. Focus on making it a real part of your daily experience. You’ll be amazed how God will lead you to just the verse you need for that week.

**Paraphrase**
Read the passage carefully. Take time to consider what it means and how it applies to your life. Then rewrite the story or text in your own words so it’s meaning for today becomes clear. Don’t feel you have to make a word-for-word translation. The idea is to express the message of the Bible in a new and fresh way while maintaining its integrity. Be creative! God’s Spirit will give you amazing insights.

> “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”
> **James 1:5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>THE NIV TRANSLATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>THE MESSAGE PARAPHRASE</strong></th>
<th><strong>IN YOUR OWN WORDS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart, do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. | How can a young person live a clean life? By carefully reading the map of your Word. I’m single-minded in pursuit of you, don’t let me miss the road signs you’ve posted. I’ve banked your promises in the vault of my heart so I won’t sin myself bankrupt. | ____________________  
| **Psalm 119:9-11** | **Psalm 119:9-11** | ____________________ |
**Compare**

Compare Scripture with Scripture. Identify key words or themes in your story or passage. Use a concordance or your Bible’s marginal notes to look for other references to those verses and themes. Perhaps the story or passage is stated differently elsewhere. Find out what other Bible writers say that might help you understand the passage more fully.

**Bible Marking**

Purchase a set of thematic or doctrinal Bible studies at your local Christian bookstore. Prayerfully walk through each study, chain referencing your Bible verse-to-verse. Now you’ll be ready to lead someone else through the same study. Another method of Bible marking is to use different colored pencils or highlighters. You might choose to underline God’s promises in green, for instance, and His instruction in yellow.

**REMAINING WITH JESUS IN PRAYER**

When Jesus was teaching His disciples to pray in Matthew 6, He used a word for prayer that actually means worship. Remaining with Jesus in prayer means to worship, honor, and praise Him. It means to bask in God’s presence as you would in the warmth of the rising sun.

Whatever prayer method you use, make it personal. Prayer is simply talking with God. It’s not complicated. You don’t have to do anything inventive. But if you are looking for a fresh approach, try one of the following ideas. Just remember, the Holy Spirit will be there to interpret your deepest longings into heavenly language – all you need to do is ask!

**Journaling**

Have you ever kept a diary? Why not try this with God? Record your thoughts as you spend time with Him in prayer and Scripture reading. Tell Him what you feel, what you think, what you wish, what you’ve learned. Tell Him everything. That’s what earthly friends do. It will keep your relationship with God real, honest and open. You’ll come to relish that time together and eagerly look forward to doing it again. In fact, it may lead you to “pray without ceasing” 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

**Four-Part Prayer**

Some of us are methodical. We like follow a process. If you’re a person that wants some direction in prayer, try the Four-Part Prayer. Using the
acronym PRAY, let your conversation with God be guided by this outline:

- **Praise** - Praise and thank God for who He is and what He has done for you.
- **Repent** - Take time to confess your sins and ask for God’s forgiveness.
- **Ask** - Talk to God about your needs and the needs of others.
- **Yield** - Give your life to God today to be used according to His plan.

**Popcorn Prayer**

Others of us are a little more spontaneous. If that describes you, popcorn prayer may be a perfect fit. Just like popcorn kernels that seem to randomly pop, this prayer presents random, bursting thoughts and requests to God. They don’t have to come in any particular order. They don’t even have to be complete sentences. And that fits some personalities just right. You can try this prayer alone or with a group.

**Five-Finger Prayer**

Do you write things on your hand so you’ll remember them? If so, the Five-Finger Prayer may be right for you. Each finger reminds you to pray for others.

- **Thumb** - Pray for one of God’s workers.
- **Index Finger** - Pray for a leader.
- **Third Finger** - Pray for an older person.
- **Ring Finger** - Pray for someone close to you.
- **Pinky** - Pray for the children and youth in your life.

**Prayer Walking**

Here’s a way to combine two very healthy things—exercise and prayer. If you’re an early morning walker, carry or memorize a short Bible verse. As you continue your walk, meditate on the verse and talk with God. Many people find they are much more open with God while walking.

Another method of prayer walking focuses on intercession. Map out a route through your neighborhood. As you pass various points (school, police station, grocery store, neighbor’s house, etc.), pray specifically for those people and places. You may choose to do this with a group, pausing to pray near each place. Or you can stop to pray with specific people along the way. You’ll be amazed at the positive responses you get when you ask to pray with and for other people.
Prayer List
One of the simplest ways to intercede for others is to keep a list of names and needs to pray for. Tuck the list in your Bible or write it in a separate notebook by your bedside. Log the date you begin praying for each item, as well as any Bible promises you are claiming. As your list grows, you may want to divide it among the days of the week. Be sure to record any visible answers to prayer, logging the date and circumstances. Looking back on these stories will remind you of God’s faithfulness.

Sanctuary Prayer
If you’re a visual learner, you may find this method helpful. Read about the Israelite sanctuary described in the Old Testament (Ex. 25-40). Imagine yourself walking through the gates of that beautiful structure and pray the following:

1. Praise God as you enter the gates of prayer (the sanctuary gate).
2. Confess your sins at the altar of His sacrifice (the altar of sacrifice).
3. Wash your soul in His forgiveness (the washbasin).
5. Nourish your mind by partaking of God’s Word (the table of shewbread).
6. Intercede for others at the altar of incense (altar of incense).

REMAINING WITH HIM WHILE WITNESSING
So, what happens as you stay with Jesus in His Word and remain with Him in prayer? The Bible puts it this way in Luke 19:39, 40. “Some of the Pharisees
in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples!’ ‘I tell you,’ he replied, ‘if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.’” And you thought Jesus didn’t have a sense of humor! In His not-so-subtle remark to the Pharisees, Jesus was simply saying, “They can’t keep quiet. If you’d spend some time with me, you’d be shouting too!”

Warning! Don’t try to witness if you haven’t been with Jesus. You’ll misrepresent Him to your youth and the world. Rather than forcing a witness, remain in Him and be prepared for it to flow out of you. When it does, you’ll find yourself casually mentioning what God has done for you lately. You’ll catch yourself giving Biblical answers to help people solve their problems. You’ll discover that witnessing is simply allowing the lid to come off and letting God’s love pour out of your life. But it can only happen if you stay with Him.

Some call it the “Philip Principle.” Go to Acts 8:26-40. You’ll find an amazing story there. Along came a chariot with an Ethiopian government official reading an Isaiah scroll. “The Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go to that chariot and stay near it.’” In other words the Spirit was saying to Philip, “I’m going to give you an opportunity. You listen for the opening and then jump in. Once you’ve jumped in, I’ll give you the words and we’ll baptize the man!”

And that’s exactly what happened. It wasn’t because Philip was especially charming. It wasn’t because Philip had a way with words. It was because he made himself available. God did all the rest. That’s witnessing: make yourself available to God and be ready for anything. It can make life exciting!

Remember, don’t worry about not knowing what to say. Listen to what Jesus promised in Luke 12:11, 12. “When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

This is amazing stuff! Not only does the Holy Spirit enliven God’s Word for us and interpret our faltering prayers, He also gives us just the right words at the right time. So don’t worry about your feebleness when it comes to witnessing. The Holy Spirit will take care of everything. Just put yourself in a position to be used. How can you do that? Here are a few ideas:

**Project Thank You**
There are dozens of people to thank in your neighborhood. Garbage
collections, librarians, mail carriers, teachers and others all give their time and talents and often get little thanks in return. You can change that trend. Make or buy thank you cards and hand deliver them to these giving people. Count on someone asking why you’re doing it. Tell them the God of Love you serve reached out to you and you’re just returning the favor.

**Bible Study Requests**

Your pastor probably receives requests for Bible studies from people within your community on a regular basis. He probably can’t and shouldn’t meet with all those people. Why shouldn’t he? Because you should study with at least one of those people. It will put your own Bible study to excellent use. And you can’t imagine the thrill of helping someone else understand the Bible until you’ve actually done it yourself.

**Role Model**

Because you’re a youth leader, you witness every day. The youth you minister to are watching closely. If your life is centered on Christ, they will see and hear it. What do you talk about most frequently? Is prayer and Bible study a habit for you? Do your actions measure up to God’s Word? It’s a tall order, and that’s why James says, “Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.” *James 3:1.* But don’t let it prevent you from being a youth leader. If God has called you, He’ll also give you all the grace you need to be a worthy example.

**Peace that Passes**

It seems no matter where you are during the day you’ll find someone complaining about something. Instead of complaining along with them, stay calm and positive. People will wonder why you’re different! It’s the perfect opportunity to tell them about what it means to have faith in God through difficult circumstances. It’s one of the easiest ways to witness.
1. **Tell them about it.**
   That’s witnessing isn’t it? If your experience is genuine, they’ll see the light in your eyes and some of them will want it for themselves.

2. **Be patient.**
   This experience didn’t happen overnight for you, did it? (It’s still happening as a matter of fact.) Don’t expect it will happen overnight for your youth, either. Give them time. Gently lead them. If you get frustrated, they’ll get the wrong picture of how patient God has been with you.

3. **Consistently use prayer and Bible study in your youth events.**
   Whether you’re enjoying a Super Bowl party, a day at the beach, or a community service project, take time to talk with God through prayer and to let Him speak through His Word. Your youth will get the idea that a relationship with God is not a one-day-a-week experience, but something that happens every moment of each day.

4. **Let your youth lead.**
   Give them a chance to facilitate group prayer and Bible study. Encourage them to talk about their answered prayers and what they’ve discovered in personal Bible study. The more they lead out and get comfortable talking about their experience, the more real it will become. Hey, now they’re witnessing!

5. **Don’t ignore the Holy Spirit.**
   We’ve already covered how important the role of the Holy Spirit is. So talk of Him, talk to Him and search the Bible for new truths about Him. Treat Him as the most important member of your group.
Godly leaders are perfect people, right? Take David, for instance. God said, “I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.” Acts 13:22.

What a guy! God said David would do everything He wanted him to do. He sounds almost sinless doesn’t he? Of course, we know better. So how could God say that? Has He lowered His standards? Does He let some people literally get away with murder? The answer is no. So what did God see in David that pleased Him?

First, David was a man of prayer. How do we know? Look at the book of Psalms. You’ll find many of David’s personal conversations with God. He talked to God no matter what the situation—be it good or bad. Bottom line? He remained with God in prayer.

David also loved God’s Word. You can sense its value to him when he said, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” Psalms 119:105. But David did more than proclaim his feelings for God’s Word. He also did what it said. God says in 1 Kings 14:8, “But you [Jeroboam] have not been like my servant David, who kept my commands and followed me with all his heart, doing only what was right in my eyes.”

So was David’s behavior perfect? No. He messed up many times. Did David really do everything God wanted him to? Yes. He responded in each instance to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He fell on his face with sorrow and repented. As he confessed his sin, God was faithful to forgive him (1 John 1:9). That’s what made David a man after God’s own heart. He made some terrible mistakes, but he always returned to the heart of God. And that, in the end, is what it means to remain with Him.
Let’s get down to the business of prayer. Find a spot to be alone and focus only on God. Next, drop all guards and give yourself totally to Him. Be outrageously honest. If you have the will, but not the words, here’s a suggested prayer. You can actually read it to God if you want.

“Dear God, I’m finally here. I’m finally at the place where I realize I can do nothing apart from You. Take away my self-dependence. Strip away my masks. Please forgive me for _______________. Thank you for throwing my sins into the depths of the sea. Now fill me with Your Holy Spirit. You’ve given me young people to lead. Help me point them to You. Help us bring others to You, as well. Renew me as I study Your Word. Refresh me in the silence of prayer. I want to be Yours. Amen.”

So what should you do now? How can you start growing spiritually today? Here’s a list of commitments to help you get started. As you make each commitment, place your initials beside it.

1. I give myself and my ministry completely over to God.

2. I will begin practicing the principles of prayer and Bible study I’ve learned.

3. I will teach those principles to my youth group.

4. I will ask God to give us opportunities to share His love with others.


Higgs, Mike. Youth Ministry on Your Knees: Mentoring and Mobilizing Young People
Grow Spiritually


**MULTIMEDIA**


Jesus' Passion: Creative Prayer Stations CD. Group Publishing. This CD will give you everything you need to set up seven prayer stations centered on Christ’s sacrifice.

Swindoll, Charles. Living Above the level of Mediocrity. CD. Insight for Living. Topics include excellence, commitment, leadership, determination, priorities, and resisting temptation. www.insight.org or 800-523-6959


WEBSITES/FREE E-NEWSLETTERS


* www.fast.st. FAST. Support for Bible memorization.

www.gospelcom.net/spiritual_walk/devotionals. Gospelcom. Links to various on-line devotionals.

PRINCIPLE TWO

EQUIP FOR LEADERSHIP
PRINCIPLE TWO

EQUIP FOR LEADERSHIP

Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours? 2 Chronicles 1:10

May the God of peace... equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ... Hebrews 13:20, 21

‘The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me: ‘When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God, he is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the earth.’ 2 Samuel 23:3,4

ACT IT OUT INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE

THE SCENE It’s time to start getting fit, and Alex and Mo have decided to do some jogging on a local trail. Mo quickly sets the pace and begins to pull farther and farther ahead of Alex. He is left gasping for breath.

ALEX Wait up! I feel like I’m having a heart attack!

MONIQUE We just started, how long has it been since you had any real exercise?

ALEX A couple weeks.

MONIQUE Channel surfing doesn’t cut it, you know. From the sounds of your heavy breathing I’d guess a couple years!

ALEX Ok, maybe I haven’t been real regular with the exercise. But hey, at least I’m out here now...right?

MONIQUE Maybe we should take a breather at this next bench. I don’t want to
have to carry you the rest of the way.

ALEX  A breather...sounds good. [Alex sprawls on the bench next to Monique]

MONIQUE  Now doesn't it feel good to be out here getting some fresh air?

ALEX  Yeah, I just don't know if I'll ever be able to leave this bench. My heart feels like it's going to jump out of my chest!

MONIQUE  So how have things been going lately? Aside from your lack of exercise, that is.

ALEX  Not too bad. I've sort of been questioning this youth ministry thing, though. I just don't know if I'm cut out for it.

MONIQUE  What do you mean? I thought you liked working with youth.

ALEX  Yeah. I guess I've just been a little...you know...scared. What if I completely blow it?

MONIQUE  Something tells me you've been missing more than your morning jogs, lately. Have you spent much time praying about this?

ALEX  Yeah, well...kinda.

MONIQUE  Hmm... kinda sounds like you're KINDA not! This isn't about you, Alex. It's about what God wants to do through you.

ALEX  I guess you're right. Maybe I need to start asking God to help me with this.

MONIQUE  Sounds like a good idea. He can use all kinds of people, you know. Even out-of-shape ones! What does the Bible says about running and not growing weary?

ALEX  Okay, that's enough. Besides, after sitting here, God's renewed my strength!
MONIQUE: Well, that’s good, ‘cause you’re gonna need it! [Monique takes off]

ALEX: Hey wait up!! I still gotta take this at my own pace, you know...
[Starts talking to himself] Okay, you can do this... Just like in high school... Breathe in, breathe out...

THINK IT THROUGH: MEASURING THE LEADER

What makes a youth leader successful? Do you know what success looks like? Or are you uncertain of why you’re here, what you’re aiming for, and how to achieve it? Take a few minutes and get your brain warmed up to the topic of leadership by completing these statements:

1. I AM A YOUTH LEADER BECAUSE ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

2. THE BEST THING I CAN DO TO PREPARE MYSELF FOR YOUTH LEADERSHIP IS
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

3. A GOOD YOUTH LEADER ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
YOU’LL HAVE THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE!
You’ve done it! You’ve signed up for long weekend hours, embarrassment at the hands of mischievous teenagers, and moments of real frustration. All with greater rewards than you can possibly imagine. Welcome to youth ministry!

GOD RECRUITS IN DIFFERENT WAYS
Maybe you’re not convinced that God really wants you to lead youth. Maybe you’re reading this book in the hope that He will make it clear. How do you know if He wants you to be a youth leader? Let’s turn to the Bible and see what others experienced when God called them to a ministry.

1. PASSION. Jeremiah was set ablaze. God lit a flame in his heart. He had absolutely no question what he must do. He had to obey God and proclaim His word. Is God compelling you to share His love and grace with the young people in your church? Is it something you just can’t ignore? A burning passion is just one of the ways God puts his call on youth leaders.

2. RECOGNITION. God also uses the recognition of others. While you certainly shouldn’t let someone’s praise go to your head, neither should you immediately dismiss other people’s affirmation of your God-given gifts. God often uses others to help us realize His call to serve.

3. LIFE EXPERIENCE. Sometimes God calls leaders by preparing them. He providentially readies their lives to reach a particular group. It was no accident that Paul was called to work with the people he did. His Jewish heritage, Roman citizenship, academic prowess, and common tent-making skills were a powerful combination God used to win thousands to Him. God uniquely fitted Paul to the task. And through your life experiences, God has also been doing a work of preparation. He may have been equipping you all along to work with young people.

4. A NEED. But maybe you’re a youth leader simply because you took action. No one else would do it and it needed to be done, so you said yes. If so, you are in good company. David did the very same thing. When he saw that none of Israel’s soldiers would fight Goliath, he took the responsibility upon himself and set out in God’s strength alone. If that sounds like you, take courage. God will go before you, just as He did with David, and prepare the way.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN GOD IS SPEAKING TO YOU?

“But if I say, ‘I will not mention him or speak any more in his name,’ his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.”

JEREMIAH 20:9
So you see it really doesn’t matter how you are called to youth ministry. One way is no better than another. What’s important is that God brought you to this point, and He will continue to lead you from here.

**HE’S CALLED. I’M SCARED!**

Perhaps you’re still a bit nervous. Scared out of your wits might be more like it! Don’t let that stop you. God’s calling often overwhelms us. In fact, Isaiah’s knees went weak when he received his call to ministry. He considered the magnitude of God’s glory and all he could say was, “Woe to me!...I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips...”  **ISAIAH 6:5.** Isaiah knew what God wanted him to do; he just didn’t know how he could carry out such a holy task.

So, do you feel a little unworthy? Have you come to the realization that the task of bringing young people to Christ is greater than you can accomplish? Good – now God can really use you. Recognizing your need for Him is the first step. Jesus said, **“The Son can do nothing by himself...” JOHN 5:19.** If the Son of God needed to depend on His heavenly Father, how much more do we?

Remember the promise in **PHILIPPIANS 4:19? “My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”** God won’t give you a job He can’t equip you to do. Just fall on your knees, ask for His blessing and thank Him for giving you this important challenge.

**CONSULT YOUR RESOURCES**

But does a calling from God give you magical youth ministry powers? You might think, “Why worry? Just show up to youth group and the good stuff will flow. No need to study effective leadership. If God has called me, I’m set.”

Recall **ACTS 17:11.** “Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”

Everyday the Bereans studied. They wanted to be the best representatives of Jesus they could possibly be. They wanted to make sure they had it right. Shouldn’t youth leaders do the same? Even seasoned youth pastors know they have to continually update if they want to remain effective. Fortunately, there are lots of ways to gain and improve youth leadership skills.
TOOL TIME.
There’s a tool for every job. As any contractor will tell you, having the right tool for the job makes it easier. So what are some of the most common tasks in youth ministry? Here they are, listed with tools that no youth worker should be without! Don’t forget to check out more great resources listed at the end of each chapter.

Strengthening Your Spiritual Life

Helping Youth in Crisis

Facilitating Small Groups

Creating Programs
Ideas Library CD-Rom, v.3.0. Youth Specialties.

Identifying Spiritual Gifts

Understanding Youth and Youth Culture

1. ATTEND TRAINING SEMINARS. These may be local events organized by your denominational leaders. Or they may be large interdenominational conventions like those run by Group or Youth Specialties. You will usually receive lots of practical advice, the chance to talk with experts in the field, and an opportunity to review and purchase the latest tools for youth ministry.

2. READ BOOKS, SUBSCRIBE TO JOURNALS, LISTEN TO TAPES, OR WATCH VIDEOS ON YOUTH LEADERSHIP. Check with your church’s youth
ministry headquarters to see if they have a lending library of resources. If not, try to allocate some money in your youth budget and begin building one for your local congregation. That way your leadership team can also access them. The resources listed at the end of each chapter in this book would be a good place to start.

3. **Network with Other Youth Leaders.** Don’t go it alone! Stay in touch with other leaders in your area. Share ideas, resources, prayer requests, failures, and successes. You may even want to plan some events together. Working together is a great way to learn. If possible, reach out to a seasoned youth leader who would be willing to coach you through difficult issues. A good mentor is priceless.

4. **Visit Youth Ministry Websites.** There’s a lot of help out there on the Internet. Using a few key words and a search engine, you can find numerous sites designed to support youth leaders. Some even offer free subscriptions to e-mail updates and newsletters. Sign up! You may also want to surf the sites of other local youth ministries. Find out what they’re doing and how they’re organized. If something catches your interest, contact the leader for more details.

5. **Create a List of Local Resources.** Whether it’s a church member whose ski boat is just a phone call away, or a good Christian counselor to whom you can refer your youth and families, there are lots of people in your area that can be of assistance. Use the “My Resources Contact Sheet” in this chapter to develop a list of names and contact information for every occasion.

**Plan for a Team Approach**

Every youth leader needs a team around them. Not only will that team be a source of moral support, each member will strengthen your ministry with their unique gifts. The challenge is to build a team that can reach and attract all types of young people. As you select your team, consider the need for cultural, gender, and age diversity. For instance, do you have a high percentage of young ladies, but no female leaders? Are there large numbers of students from a particular ethnic group, but no one on staff they can relate to? A thoughtful leader will work to fill these gaps. Think, as well,
about your leadership style. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a leader? Can you find adult and teen leaders who complement your gifts for leadership?

WHAT LEADERSHIP STRENGTHS HAS GOD GIVEN THOSE AROUND ME?

Study the types of leaders below. Which ones best describe you? Try to assemble a team with as many of the other characteristics as possible.

1. **Visionaries** are gifted with incredible faith. They are creative and never use the word impossible. Eager to “boldly go where no man has gone before,” the visionary sees possibilities and leads others toward them.

2. **Mentors** lead through relationships. They are giving, patient people that attract others with their caring attitude. They don’t force their agenda, and because of that others seek out their Spirit-led advice.

3. **Organizers** lead through planning and communication. Their decisive, analytical leadership inspires others to accomplish tasks. People follow because they see there’s a God-given plan of action before them.

4. **Role Models** lead by example. They would never ask others to do something they wouldn’t do themselves. They walk the walk and talk the talk. Others admire that and want to follow.

MY DREAM TEAM

If you could have anyone in your church on your team, whom would you place in each category?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
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<td>Charismatic</td>
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Equip for Leadership · 27
5. **Advocates lead by standing in the gap for others.** Their loyalty causes them to speak on behalf of those in need. Through their own passionate desire to stand up for youth, they inspire them to follow.

6. **Servants lead by giving.** They have no thought for their own rights or comfort. Through practical, selfless acts they provide for those in need. Others follow with the same giving spirit.

7. **Charismatics use their influence and enthusiasm to persuade others to follow.** These leaders are likeable and friendly. Others gather around knowing they have something special.

You see, God uses all kinds of people to lead. One type of leader rarely reaches all types of youth. That’s why God puts so many different people in the church. You may be the only “elected” youth leader, but by getting others involved you’ll greatly increase the chances of reaching all of your youth.

**RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS**

You may be wondering, “How can I get others involved? No one wants to volunteer for the youth department.” Don’t worry. Many youth leaders have faced a similar situation. Keep in mind the three primary reasons people don’t volunteer: 1) they don’t think they have enough time, 2) they feel uneasy around young people, or 3) they aren’t aware of your needs on a personal level. You can increase the likelihood of recruiting volunteers by addressing each of these areas. Here are a few suggestions.

1. **Invite adults to volunteer for short amounts of time.** This brings them into contact with your ministry and its needs. Would they be willing to help drive youth to an event? Could the youth use their lakeside dock for an afternoon? Maybe they’d bring a dessert to the youth potluck in the park. Not only are short-term commitments easier to fill, they can be a great asset to your program and may lead some adults to a long-term commitment.

2. **Introduce your youth to the congregation.** Work with the pastor to get the youth involved in worship. Interview them during services. Publicly affirm what’s going on in their lives. Start a “secret mentor” program, inviting adults to pray for and encourage a young person. Do anything you can to break down the barriers that sometimes
exist between adults and adolescents. This increases the likelihood that they will feel more comfortable when asked to volunteer.

3. **DON’T EXCLUDE POTENTIAL LEADERS BASED ON A STEREOTYPE.** A good youth leader is not defined by how youthful or “cool” they may be, or by how many sports they play well. Youth are yearning for a surprising number of influences in their lives. They need peers, older sibling types, and parent figures, as well as adoptive grandparents. They respond to consistent, caring types just as much as they do to upfront, enthusiastic ones.

4. **RECRUIT ON A PERSONAL LEVEL.** Begging for volunteers week after week from the pulpit only gives the impression that yours is a sinking ship. It demoralizes your youth. Any volunteers who respond may do so more out of sympathy than because of positive expectations. Give public notice of your needs, and then personally invite potential volunteers to visit your program, meet the youth, and see the needs first-hand.

5. **EMPOWER YOUR YOUTH TO LEAD.** Don’t overlook your most important resource! You’ll find leaders of all types among your teens. (More about this in Principle Five.)

**CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE YOUTH LEADER**

Whatever your leadership style, all leaders can benefit by modeling certain behaviors. Charles Shelton, in his book Adolescent Spirituality, says that youth gravitate to a leader who is:

1. **AVAILABLE.** Are you emotionally and physically present for your youth? This lets them know how much you value them. When you’ve got time for them, they feel loved and secure.

2. **ACCEPTING.** Do you love and accept your youth, even the difficult ones? What does receiving that kind of unconditional love do for you? Imagine what it does for them!

3. **AUTHENTIC.** Are you open and honest with your youth? Do you live the life God desires? When you make mistakes, do you readily admit them and ask for forgiveness? If your kids know who they’re getting every time you walk through the door, then you’re living the authentic life.
LEADERSHIP APPROACHES

There’s one more aspect to leadership we need to discuss. No matter what type of leader you are, different situations require different leadership approaches.

1. **The Hands-On Approach.** There are times when you’ll need to be more in control. If you’re teaching an important skill, running out of time on a project, or if safety is an issue, you may need to give explicit instructions and expect them to be followed.

2. **The Hands-Off Approach.** In other situations you may choose to step back more and let things run without you. You may have a highly motivated team that needs little instruction, or you may wish to test your group’s abilities by letting them go it alone. In either case, remember that hands-off leadership may still require your intervention at some point.

3. **The Shared Approach.** Most of the time, though, you’ll want to exercise shared leadership. With this approach the youth leader:
   a. Consults group members when planning and making decisions
   b. Delegates responsibility to the group and sets timelines, while maintaining a lead role
   c. Promotes a sense of teamwork

GOD WILL PROVIDE

No doubt about it, leadership requires effort. It requires humility and a teachable spirit. It requires flexibility and the wisdom to know when and how to utilize the skills of others. The good news is that God will bless your efforts to become a better leader. He will reward you with successes. He will teach you through disappointments. He will “equip you with everything good for doing his will” *Hebrews 13:20, 21.*
DEVELOPING YOUNG LEADERS

1. **Keeps us relevant.** Adults can offer wisdom as they lead youth toward maturity. Young leaders, on the other hand, can offer insight into the current needs and culture of their peers. They can attract and speak to other youth in ways that adults cannot. Young people are also having an increasing influence in how the world thinks and communicates. The church would do well to listen to their insights.

2. **Invests in the future of the church.** Not only do young leaders add vitality to the church of today, they are an investment in tomorrow, as well. As Christ’s Second Coming nears, the future seems to approach more swiftly and with less certainty than ever before. Young leaders trained and equipped in a Godly fashion will help us meet these challenging times with confidence.

3. **Gives them a reason to stick around.** The world is clamoring for the attention of our youth. Multi-billion dollar industries have targeted them with massive amounts of research and marketing. The church can’t compete directly with these efforts, and yet must persevere in the effort to gain the hearts of our youth. Our best opportunity to do that is to offer them a place and a purpose. Chances are if they’re really needed and valued – and know it – they won’t leave.

PASS IT ON  SHARING THE PRINCIPLE

You’ve probably noticed leadership qualities in your youth. Some of them lead with their strong convictions, while others set a quiet example. Some will use their influence in positive ways, while others hold a negative sway over the group. We’ll talk more about how to empower youth for leadership in Principle Five. In the meantime, here are a few reasons why you should equip your youth.

Use them or lose them.
Alright—Bible quiz time. What great leader of God’s people murdered someone, earned a degree in sheep herding, and defaced God’s personal property? It was Moses, of course. And what was that you were saying about your lack of leadership qualifications?

Consider the way God trained Moses to lead approximately two million people. Raised by Pharaoh’s daughter in the courts of Egypt, he learned history, language, science, and the art of war. But this isn’t what prepared him to lead. God placed Moses in the desert so he could be still and know who He was.

Could this be a lesson for youth leaders? Education is very important. But all the training in the world won’t fit us for youth leadership unless our hearts are given to God. What God really wants is a surrendered leader willing to lead His way.

And look at how God called Moses—by speaking to him from a burning bush! How many people do you think Moses told that to? Minus his sandals, he was called with exactly what he had at that moment—the staff in his hand and a tongue that didn’t work quite right. God used the staff, and made up for the clumsy speech. Remember Aaron? God always provides.

God will equip you, too. He wants to use what you have right now. Don’t worry about what you lack. God will continue to develop you as a leader and fill in the gaps along the way. He’ll bring people to your side who have gifts that complement yours.

Moses probably never imagined he’d be leading two million people through the desert for forty years. He had a total lack of confidence in himself. Yet as it turned out, He was willing to give up his own life for the people he was leading. God can do amazing things when we’re willing!
Certainly, God equipped Moses. Do you believe He can equip you to lead youth? Here’s a prayer of preparation you can pray:

“Lord, You know how inadequate I sometimes feel. You’ve challenged me to do a work that’s way beyond me — leading young people into a relationship with You. I need Your help. That’s why I’m turning my talents, my energy, and my whole life over to You. Do whatever is necessary to accomplish Your work through me. I’ll study, I’ll prepare and I’ll be available. Most of all, I’ll look to You constantly. Bless the efforts I make to serve You and Your young people. Amen.”

Being equipped for youth ministry is all about staying connected with God and the opportunities He’s given us to grow as leaders. With that in mind, consider making the following commitments.

In the next 60 days I will:

A. Use the gifts and talents God’s given me to lead youth.
B. Purchase or subscribe to at least one leadership resource.
C. Seek out another successful youth program and consult with its leader.
D. Draw other leaders around me who can complement my leadership.
**RESOURCES**

**BOOKS**


**MULTIMEDIA**


WEBSITES/E-NEWSLETTERS


www.onepassion.com. One Passion. Free online community of youth leaders, with free e-mail updates and resources. Fee-based coaching and consulting for youth leaders.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Giraffe University. Center for Youth Evangelism. 800-YOUTH-2U


The CORE. Youth Specialties. www.youthspecialties.com. A one-day youth ministry training event held in 100+ U.S. cities.


CONTACT SHEET
Create a list of names, phone numbers and e-mails for the following resources in your area. Laminate it and place it in a convenient location.

Emergency Numbers
- Hospital
- Emergency room
- Christian counselors
- Crisis pregnancy center
- Drug rehabilitation center
- Youth staff emergency numbers

Schools
- Church schools
- Public schools
- Principals
- Key teachers and coaches
- Head of Home & School or PTA
- School board chairpersons
- Christian colleges/admissions offices

Church Leaders/Ministries
- Pastor(s), Head elder
- Youth Director
- Youth ministry mentors
- Risk Management Director
- Pathfinder Director
- Youth camps
- Mission agencies
- Volunteer agencies
- Other area churches
- Youth speakers
- Musical groups

Supplies and Rental
- Bus and van rental companies
- Rental centers
- Office supply stores
- Party supply stores
- Christian book stores
- Printing companies
- T-shirt companies
- Sound and light companies
- Bulk food/warehouse stores

Activity Centers
- Bowling alley
- Skating rink
- YMCA/community youth center
- Swimming pool or water park
- Rock climbing gym
- Pizza place
- Ice cream parlor
- State or national park
- Outfitters (rentals, guides, etc.)

Volunteers With …
- A properly insured vehicle
- A lakeside home/boat
- A bonfire pit
- A large living room
- A barn
- A pool

Volunteers Who…
- Cook for large groups
- Have construction skills
- Have computer skills
- Will chaperone when needed
- Have lifeguard certification
- Have artistic skills
PRINCIPLE THREE

NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS
PRINCIPLE THREE

NURTUE RELATIONSHIPS

Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours? 2 Chronicles 1:10

May the God of peace... equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ... Hebrews 13:20, 21

The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me: ‘When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God, he is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the earth.’ 2 Samuel 23:3,4

ACT IT OUT INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE

THE SCENE Alex and Mo sit on Alex’s comfy couch in front his large television screen. Alex is eating popcorn and intensely watching his favorite reality television program as Mo sits uncomfortably trying to talk between commercials.

MONIQUE So I went on a date last night.
ALEX You did what? [still gazing into the TV]
MONIQUE I went on a date last night.
ALEX Now, this could be interesting! [Alex pushes the mute button and looks over at Monique.]
MONIQUE As interesting as reality television?
ALEX Maybe even better. So, tell me...what happened?
MONIQUE: Well, he picked me up and we went out to eat at Rembrandt's.

ALEX: Good food?

MONIQUE: Honest, Alex, is food all you think about? Yeah, the food was good. But the company was lacking. [Alex pushes more popcorn in his face, now completely absorbed in Monique’s reality date].

MONIQUE: We — or should I say he — talked most of the night. I was talking about how stressed I was with my Physics class, and all he wanted to do was give me advice. I doubt he heard a word I said!

ALEX: Well, did he help you solve your problem?

MONIQUE: That’s it; I didn’t want him to solve my problem! I just wanted someone to listen. Why can’t you boys get that through your heads! Girls need someone to listen to them.

ALEX: Hmm, could that be why Samantha isn’t interested in working with me anymore on the youth staff?

MONIQUE: What do you mean?

ALEX: Well, every time she’s had a problem with the youth group I’ve given her advice instead of listening. I thought I was helping. Maybe I’m making it worse.

MONIQUE: It might be time to start listening. Women like that, you know. Kids do, too. You might see some changes all around.

ALEX: Yeah. You know, maybe your right. How about some more reality TV?

MONIQUE: Nah, I think I’ve had enough “reality” for one week. How about we take a walk and talk some more?
THINK IT THROUGH MEASURING THE LEADER

What kind of relationships are you building within your youth group? Are they deepening friendships that will last a lifetime? Will they have any eternal impact? Here are some questions for you to consider.

1. What kind of relationship would my youth say I have with them?
   A. Friend
   B. Authority figure
   C. Spiritual leader

2. When was the last time I sat down with a young person and just listened?
   A. Last week
   B. Last month
   C. I can’t remember

3. What do I do when young people come to me with their problems?
   A. Offer a quick prayer and send them on their way
   B. Tell them stories about when I had a similar problem
   C. Listen actively and help them look for a next step

WHAT RELATIONSHIPS WERE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU DURING YOUR TEEN YEARS?

“...words with skin on them, words that hug you and play with you and love you and rebuke you…”

Tom Wright, The Crown and the Fire

BREAK IT DOWN UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

THE MOST IMPORTANT YOUTH MINISTRY SKILL

Building and nurturing relationships is the most important youth ministry skill you can develop. If you don’t believe it, ask anyone what they remember from their youth group years. Most will tell you it is times of fun and friendship. Youth thrive on relationships with their friends and leaders.

Because relationships are so important to youth, leaders need to become experts in this area. Good relationships not only make a successful youth group, they are also the foundation for teaching your youth about a
relationship with Jesus.

Jesus knew the only way to communicate the Father’s love was through a face-to-face encounter. It wasn’t enough to be God. It wasn’t enough to speak from the heavens. To gain our trust He would have to develop a personal relationship with us here on earth. In fact, He was longing to do it!

Reflecting on Jesus’ example provides many valuable lessons in relationship building for youth workers today. Here are just a few.

RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRE SACRIFICE

Building relationships can be costly. In order to befriend us, Jesus left His heavenly position and became one of us. Think of all He must have given up. “Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing...” Philippians 2:6-7, NLT. What an amazing sacrifice!

In order to reach youth, adult youth workers may have to forfeit some things, as well. Pete Ward, in his book God at the Mall, says that the roles adults play often separate them from the world of young people. When we enter young people’s territory it is often to correct them or take charge of the situation. To connect with youth, Ward says, adults have to set aside their authoritarian roles. “This does not mean that we will suspend our values or commitments as Christians. It means that when we first make [a] connection with a group of young people we accept them as they are.” Only then can we earn the right to lead.

Loving young people, though, doesn’t guarantee they will love you back. Jesus “came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.” John 1:11. As he reached out to those He loved, He sometimes encountered rejection. Naturally, you will experience many fun and rewarding moments with your youth. But you may also meet defiance, apathy, and disregard. So what will you do when the going gets rough? Will you write those young people off? Turn in your resignation? Or will you stay the course that a Godly relationship requires?

RELATIONSHIPS TAKE TIME

Think of the many hours that Jesus invested in just twelve men. Have you ever wondered, why only twelve? Especially when so many others clamored
Go where the young people are rather than expecting them to come to you.

for His time? He could have spent all of his time speaking to large crowds and building his popularity. Yet Jesus poured his best energies into just a few relationships. Perhaps he knew that life-transforming relationships take time. That days, months, even years must go into the effort for each person. Maybe His plan was that we would make the same investment in others. Think about it. Have you spent that kind of time with your youth yet? Have you enlisted other adults to give of their time, as well?

**RELATIONSHIPS MEAN BEING PRESENT**

John says that Jesus moved into the neighborhood. He “made his dwelling among us.” John 1:14. It was all part of Jesus’ evangelistic strategy. He didn’t show up, rent a hall, and call a meeting. He mingled, got invited home, and made conversation at other people’s parties. Youth workers would do well to follow this same method. Go where the young people are rather than expecting them to come to you. Let them know that being with them at their special event or place is more important to you than who shows up to your next program.

**Just one caution: don’t barge in.** Enter as humbly into their world as Jesus did into ours. And when they trust you, you’ll be invited into their innermost circles. Then go ahead — hang out! Cheer them on at their after-school games, buy a ticket to the school play, shoot baskets in their driveways, and eat with them at the local fast-food joint. That’s where your best ministry will happen.

**RELATIONSHIPS BEGIN WITH INTEGRITY**

Before entering a young person’s world, we need to do some personal work. Prior to his ministry, Jesus spent time in prayer and the study of Scripture discovering who He was. That is why He could proclaim with confidence on several occasions, “I am…” John 6:48; 8:12; 10:7, 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:5. Knowing who we are in God is essential to healthy relationships. It keeps us centered on who God wants us to be for other people.

Youth leaders will be tempted, as Jesus was in the wilderness, to misuse their ministry. Pete Ward says, “We must remain certain that we are not engaging in youth work primarily to satisfy our own need for sexual fulfillment, emotional security, power, or significance.” A lack of self-awareness may

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**ASK YOURSELF…**

- Why am I attracted to youth work?
- What kind of person is God calling me to be for young people?
- Are there any unmet needs I expect young people to fulfill?
- Is there anything about me that could harm or hinder a young person in a relationship?
- Am I the same person privately as I am publicly with my youth?
- Where can I go outside of my ministry to get the personal support I need?
lead us to hurt young people emotionally, physically, or spiritually. To avoid this pitfall, youth workers should prayerfully reflect on themselves and their motives for being with young people (see sidebar questions).

Make no mistake: as a leader you are a standard. Paul says, “Remember your leaders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.” Hebrews 13:7. Is your way of life worthy of imitation? Young people want a leader they can look up to. Don’t try to be “cool” or “relevant” by doing questionable things. Youth leaders should make careful choices in areas like entertainment, speech, beverages, and dress. Integrity means being someone youth can respect, trust, and come to for spiritual advice.

RELATIONSHIPS CALL FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

God places us in the lives of other people for a reason. Do you believe that? Jesus did. He often acknowledged that He had been sent by His Father. “I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true.” John 7:28. So how did this affect His relationships?

1. JESUS’ RELATIONSHIPS WERE DRIVEN BY PURPOSE. He emerged from His years in the carpenter shop with a clear sense of mission. “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn its people. He sent him to save them!” John 3:17, CEV. Youth leaders without a purpose can confuse young people. Ask yourself, what does God want me to accomplish in my relationships? While young people don’t want an agenda forced on them, they do feel secure with a leader who has a strong sense of spiritual direction.

2. JESUS’ RELATIONSHIPS WERE DIRECTED BY GOD. Conducting our relationships based on what’s popular is a real temptation in youth ministry. It’s easy to be distracted from our purpose by superficial things. Jesus had to tell a crowd clamoring for more bread, “I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.” John 6:38. Day by day, Jesus received direction through the kind of prayer and Bible study we talked about in Principle One. It’s what kept Him on track. At the end of His ministry, He could give an accounting to His Father: “I have revealed you to those you gave me out of the world... I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them.” John 17:6-
8. Could you give a similar report? Have you faithfully ministered to the youth God has given you?

RELATIONSHIPS INVOLVE TRANSITIONS

Jesus realized His relationships on earth wouldn’t last forever. He prepared his disciples by saying, “I am with you for only a short time…” John 7:33. As that time drew to a close, he told them, “It is for your good that I am going away.” John 16:7. That’s because His departure would open the way for a new chapter—the coming of the Holy Spirit.

As youth workers, our relationships are no more permanent. We may have only three or four years with our youth before they move on. And we need to prepare them for that eventuality. One way to do this is to avoid exclusive, dependent relationships in the first place. Some youth workers become jealous of the attention and loyalty of their youth. Yet young people need a healthy balance of adult relationships. Make every effort to strengthen their ties with parents, teachers, coaches, and pastors. And as your time with them draws to a close, prepare them spiritually and emotionally for the next steps in their journey.

RELATIONSHIPS ARE ALL ABOUT GOOD TIMING

Finally, timing is everything—especially in relationships. Jesus told his mother and brothers “my time has not yet come.” John 2:4; 7:6-8. But then just before his crucifixion He announced in prayer: “Father, the time has come.” John 17:1. Jesus had a keen sense of timing. He was careful to reveal things about Himself and His kingdom at just the right moment.

Good timing in youth ministry is just as crucial. Do you know when to speak the truth and when to simply live it? Can you sense when it’s time to tag along with your youth and when to say “follow me?” Only the Holy Spirit can help here. Ask Him to show you when the time is right for sharing your testimony, offering a prayer, or calling for commitment.

HOW TO BUILD INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIPS

So what are the first steps? Let’s say you’ve walked into the youth room and don’t know a soul.

DO YOU KNOW WHEN TO SPEAK THE TRUTH AND WHEN TO SIMPLY LIVE IT?

INA TIVE YOUTH MUST BE YOUR FIRST PRIORITY.
Make Initial Contact
Introduce yourself. Get to know your kids by name. Find out about their lives. Here are a few ideas:

1. **Attach names to faces.** Have your youth write down their names, addresses, birthdays and email addresses on an index card. Then, take a picture of them and attach it to the card. Memorize the names and faces.

2. **Conduct a survey.** Ask questions like: What are your hobbies; where do you like to hang out; and what’s your greatest accomplishment? Now you’ve got a few basics on which to start building relationships (check out the sample Youth Group Survey).

3. **Create a file.** Place all pertinent information you discover about your kids in an easily retrievable location (computer database, card file, etc.) When you show up at your kids’ houses with birthday cards they’ll get the idea you care about them. They’ll also wonder how you remembered.

4. **Identify active and inactive youth.** Who attends youth group regularly and who comes only once in a while? Are there those who have stopped attending altogether? It’s this last group that will be the hardest to locate. But just like the shepherd who left the 99 sheep to go in search of the one (Luke 15:4), inactive youth must be your first priority.

5. **Mark a city map.** Highlight the locations of each youth group member’s home. Drop by as you are driving around town. Visit or leave notes expressing your care and concern.

Begin to Connect
Once you’ve made initial contacts and gathered some basic information it’s time to really connect. How do you do that with youth? Here are a few ideas:

1. **Listen.** You’d be amazed at how few adults really take the time to listen to young people. If you want to connect, this is the single best step you can take. (See the “Tips for Effective Listening” later in this chapter.)
2. **Talk about the things that interest them.** Not only will this indicate an interest in their lives, it will lead you closer to their deepest passions and needs as young people.

3. **Show up on their turf.** We’ve said this before, but we really mean it! Cheer them on at the science fair, visit them at the school cafeteria, and say ‘yes’ to dinner invitations at their homes. You’ll bring a lot of smiles with a simple visit.

4. **Play with them.** Protect yourself fully and skateboard alongside them at the park. Not only will they get a good laugh, they’ll also know you care enough to make yourself vulnerable.

5. **Pray with them.** Once you’ve built individual connections, nothing can deepen friendships with youth like spending time in small group prayer and Bible study.

**How to build community through small groups**

A community is simply a network of relationships. It’s a place where kids enjoy being together and feel safe to express themselves. Once that kind of place exists, every activity you plan will be more effective.

So, how do you build community in your youth group? Maybe you’ve inherited a group with great relational chemistry. Maybe you’re starting from scratch. Either way, you can build community by forming smaller groups that meet on a regular basis. Here are some general guidelines:

1. **Form small groups of six or eight.** Youth feel more comfortable participating in a group of this size. Groups larger than this make it difficult for some to speak up or join in. Having an even number in the group makes it convenient to do activities that call for pairs.

2. **Make a covenant.** Agree together that groups will meet for a limited period of time (nine weeks usually works well). Have members commit to attending all meetings, being on time, and making the group a safe place. Many groups then choose to close enrollment for the duration of the covenant period. Allowing new members later on changes the group dynamics.

**Sample small group ground rules**

- Sessions will start and end on time
- Keep what’s shared in the group confidential
- Listen actively
- Respect others; no put downs
- Be willing to forgive
- It’s okay to have fun
- All ideas are valid
- Don’t dominate the discussion; give others a chance to speak
- People need not agree; only respect differences
- No interrupting or side conversations
- Everyone participates
- Be open, but respect others’ privacy
3. **Invol ve Your Small Groups in Teambuilding Activities.** You can design these yourself or purchase books that will give you some great ideas (check out the Resources section in this chapter). These activities help break down the physical and social barriers that may exist between your kids, and build trust and cooperation within the group.

4. **Select a Curriculum.** There are many fine, small-group lessons available for youth groups. Check your local Christian bookstore or catalog. Some studies are topical while others go verse-by-verse through a book of the Bible.

5. **Create a Safe Environment for Sharing.** This is extremely important! Ground rules of confidentiality, respect and open dialogue enable group members to open up and share more deeply.

6. **Give Group Members Opportunity to Affirm Each Other.**
   
   Everyone likes to be affirmed. Give your youth times and places to do this. It may not happen naturally at first. That’s why you create opportunities for them. Your group will grow closer as they verbalize their appreciation.

7. **Get Them Out of Their Comfort Zone.** Putting your groups in situations that are new and a bit uncomfortable encourages them to rely on each other. “Stretching” groups can also release hidden potential within the group and allow members to make discoveries about themselves and others.

Small groups have been proven to build community in amazing ways. A group that’s bonded emotionally can grow together spiritually, reach out to the community more effectively and enjoy life more fully. Investing in small groups will be well worth your time and effort!

**HOW TO DEVELOP HELPING SKILLS**

Many youth long for a trustworthy adult who will listen to them and guide them. Sure, you’ll make friends with youth by playing games and eating together. But helping youth with their struggles will deepen those relationships like little else. We’ll spend considerable time on the subject of helping youth, not only because it strengthens relationships, but also because...
It’s so important to their future.

If you’re just beginning your youth ministry, you might not see yourself in a helping role. But if you continue to build the kind of relationships we’ve talked about, your youth will eventually come to you for help.

**DO’S AND DON’TS OF HELPING**

**Important Disclaimer**

When listening to a young person, you may be the recipient of sensitive information. You must learn the importance of confidentiality and when it cannot be kept. You’ll also find yourself confronted with complex situations. Unless you are a professional counselor, you need to recognize when you’re “in over your head.”

For example, when a young lady comes to you with a revelation about abuse, rape, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts or other tough issues, you must refer her to a professional counselor. You’ll want to check with a counselor in your state to find out what issues must be reported and/or referred.

With this in mind, we will refer to the youth leader as “helper” in this chapter. This will avoid confusing the “helping” we do with the counseling a professional does.

Professional counselors spend many years of study and practice perfecting their art. Always refer your young people to them in difficult situations. Still, there are some basic do’s and don’ts that youth leaders should master in order to be effective helpers.

First, here are some things **TO DO:**

1. **Do listen actively.** Few things are as valuable as having a friend who really listens to you. Doing it well can make a difference.

2. **Do acknowledge and accept feelings.** When a young person admits feelings of any kind, accept them as real. Reflect those feelings back to them by saying things like “that sounds upsetting” or “that must have been disappointing to you.” This helps them clarify their emotions.
and know that you are tuned into their concerns.

3. **Do explore options.** Resist the temptation to jump in with your own solutions. Youth need to think through difficulties for themselves and may blame you if your “perfect solution” doesn’t work. Problems can feel overwhelming. So help your youth break problems down into manageable pieces and think through their options. Let them choose the one that seems best.

4. **Do set a course of action.** After sifting through options, it’s important to set goals toward a solution. Again, don’t do this for your youth. Allow them to determine the mark, and then focus them on finding the “next step.” If they decide they need to gain control of their anger, you might ask the question, “What can you do now to begin controlling your anger?” Maybe their decision will be to attend an anger management class or to get help from a professional counselor.

5. **Do follow up.** Check with the young person in a timely manner to see if he/she has followed through with a decision. This accountability is one of the most helpful things you can offer.

6. **Do express hope.** Always express confidence that theirs is a problem that can be overcome or managed effectively. Without minimizing pain, difficulty, or the work that lies ahead, offer a sense of hope, both for the present and the future.

7. **Do ask if prayer is desired.** God never forces Himself on us and neither should we force our desires or prayers on young people. We should ALWAYS ASK. When they are ready, our prayers will mean that much more. And, of course, never stop praying for them privately.

8. **Do maintain confidentiality.** Before young people share sensitive information with you they have to trust you. If they hear information circulating that was shared only with you, you’ll have to start building trust all over again.

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**EXCEPTION TO THE CONFIDENTIALITY RULE**

Let a young person know there are some things you cannot keep secret. Impending suicide, harm to self or others and abuse of various kinds obligate you by law to inform authorities. Check with a licensed counselor in your state to be sure what your responsibilities are.
Now, here are some things NOT TO DO:

1. **DON’T LECTURE OR GIVE ADVICE UNLESS ASKED.** Often a young person comes to you because everyone else is either lecturing or giving them advice. Be a listener. That’s what is needed.

2. **DON’T TELL STORIES ABOUT YOUR LIFE.** Your young person came to tell you about his/her struggles. If you plunge headlong into the “story of your life,” he/she may get the idea you are more interested in yourself.

3. **DON’T MINIMIZE THE PROBLEM.** Recognize young people’s feelings and experiences as real. If you say things like, “It’s really not that big of a deal,” you’ve told them, in effect, that they’re silly for feeling as they do.

4. **DON’T USE GOD-TALK PREMATURELY.** If our pat answer to all problems is, “Pray and God will solve all your problems,” we’ve done a disservice. When people shared their problems with Jesus, He helped them in very real ways. Of course, we should bring God into the picture as the Spirit leads, but offering spiritual clichés early on sends the message that we really don’t want to deal with the problem.

Finally, the most important skill you can develop as a helper is knowing when and how to refer a young person to a professional. Even experienced counselors know their limits. Please refer to the sidebar for tips on referring your youth in times of need.
HOW TO REFER
Although you can’t force anyone to see a counselor, here’s a five-step plan that may be effective:

1. **Express your ongoing concern.** Let the young people know you wish to see the problem resolved.

2. **Communicate the need for outside help.** Alert them to the fact that you may not have all the answers. Ask them about seeing someone more skilled. This makes it clear that the situation is more than you are equipped to handle.

3. **Discuss the names of professionals that could assist.** It’s usually good policy to suggest at least three names of counselors you know and trust.

4. **Work with young people and their parent(§) or guardian(§) to arrange an appointment if they wish.** Encourage youth to talk to their parents about their problem and their desire for counseling. Again, if it’s an issue like suicide let it be known that you are obligated to notify others. If you are unsure about any of these procedures, consult with a licensed counselor in your state.

5. **Offer friendship and spiritual support.** Every young person reacts differently to difficult situations. Some may cling. Others may push you away. Simply offer your support and do whatever you can.

THE OPPORTUNITY OF DISCIPLINE
Ideally, your youth group will learn to love each other and respect their leaders. Chances are, for the most part, this will be your experience. But there may be times when challenging situations arise. When this happens, it’s important to see discipline as an opportunity for learning rather than for punishment.
TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE

1. **Get to know your youth individually.** You’ll understand each of their situations better, and they’re more likely to know you have their best interests at heart.

2. **Let your rules be few and fair.** When you trust your kids to make good decisions, they usually will.

3. **Avoid unnecessary conflicts.** Stand strong on what you must, but on the points about which you can be flexible, flex.

4. **Don’t threaten, belittle or punish.** It puts young people in a position where they feel like they’ve lost self-respect and have to defend themselves.

5. **Don’t discipline when you’re angry.** It’s perfectly fine to say, “I’m not sure what to do about this situation now. We’ll talk when I’ve thought it through.”

6. **Correct misbehavior by calmly identifying it and working with the young person toward solution.** This helps build self-esteem in the midst of a difficult situation.

7. **Match consequences to misbehavior.** Give young people the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions. Teach them to deal with consequences by righting wrongs themselves. Whether they have to repair, replace or apologize, doing so will have a much greater impact than if you exact an arbitrary punishment.

What about that young man who completely disrupts your program every time he comes? Why does he come at all? Obviously, it’s not for the spiritual blessing—or is it? You may have a youth crying for attention. He’ll get it anyway he can—even if it means ruining your program (which may be insignificant compared to what he’s going through).

So what should you do? Kick him out of the room because the others deserve to get a blessing? Make him write Bible verses in a notebook while sitting in the corner? It may be possible to avoid such confrontations.
Nurture Relationships

•

PASS IT ON

SHARING THE PRINCIPLE

This chapter has talked about nurturing relationships. Here are few suggestions for getting your youth to do a little nurturing themselves.

Discipline is much more pleasant when it begins with building good relationships and positive expectations. Then when problems do arise, you can work from a foundation of trust and understanding. Remember, whenever corrective action must be taken, always let your youth know you still love them and so does God. Help them to see that every mistake is an opportunity for personal and spiritual growth.

1. **Encourage them to reach out.** Affirm their relationships with non-believers. Invite them to build those relationships and look for opportunities where God might be able to use their influence. Create youth group activities where your young people can invite these non-believing friends to come along.

2. **Train them to lead small groups.** We’ve talked about it; now why not prepare your youth to lead small groups? This will give them the opportunity to encourage, affirm, and support each other.

3. **Begin a prayer partner program.** Randomly divide your group into pairs for a set period of time (same-gender pairing usually works best). Ask them to pray for each other throughout the week. Offer time in your weekend programming for the partners to meet and pray together. Encourage them to get together occasionally for lunch or some other outing where they can talk and share concerns.

Imagine how it must make young people feel to know that there is someone who will never give up on them.
In this chapter we’ve talked about being there for our youth; about nurturing the kind of relationships that say, “I’ll never leave or give up on you.” That’s exactly the kind of relationship Ruth and Naomi had.

Ruth married Naomi’s son. Over time, she and her mother-in-law became very close. Their bond grew even stronger as, one by one, all the men in the family died. But eventually, Naomi’s losses turned to bitterness. Had she not left Israel years before with a husband and two sons? Were they not driven out by famine, only to meet with more hardship and death? Now she had no one—no one, that is, except her two daughter-in-laws, Ruth and Orpah. In her pain she decided to go back to her homeland.

But as Naomi set out on her journey, Ruth refused to leave her side. Even if it meant leaving the land, people, and gods she grew up with, she would stay with Naomi. Her impassioned plea as Naomi headed down the road was, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.” RUTH1:16-17. And nothing else did separate them. Ruth moved to Israel.

What an amazing pledge! Think of how it must have made Naomi feel to know there was someone who would never leave her, who would always be loyal to her.

Imagine how it must make young people feel to know there is someone who will never give up on them, who will always accept them. It’s quite possible you may be the first person who’s pledged that kind of support to them.

So build those relationships. They are life changing. In fact, the life you change may be your own.
Wow, what a huge responsibility! You are building relationships with young people—relationships that can lead them to Christ. Maybe this prayer echoes some of your thoughts:

“Lord, You know each young person in my group. You’ve entrusted them to me. At times they’re so open; other times they won’t say anything at all. Sometimes it’s so easy to be with them, then there are days when I feel like a total stranger. Please give me Your perfect timing. Help me know when to just hang out and when to speak up. Show me what your will is in each and every situation. And most of all, help me know when to call them to follow You. I’m not up to this task alone. But with You, I can do all things. Thanks for being there. Amen.”

Well, here we are! We’re ready to jump off the edge of this chapter into building relationships that really count. Are you ready to make a commitment? If so, here are five things to do in the next 60 days that will bring results.

1. I will make a plan to contact (e-mail, visit, phone) everyone in my group.
2. I will get a personal information sheet filled out for each youth and mail or deliver it to those who are inactive.
3. I will recruit at least one other adult leader to assist me with these tasks.

BOOKS

and words of affirmation — to the lives of teenagers and those who care about them.


**MULTIMEDIA**


**WEBSITES/E-NEWSPAPERS**

www.youthministry.com. *Group’s YouthMinistry.com: Life-Changing Ideas for Youth Leaders*. Offers a number of great resources and ideas, including a section on group-building. Site registration required to access materials.
www.centerforyouth.org.  *Center for Youth Studies: Serving those who serve kids.* Includes an on-line encyclopedia of issues related to youth, as well as a section of statistics on youth culture.


**TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

*Giraffe University.* Center for Youth Evangelism.  800-YOUTH-2U.


*Generacion Lideres.* Youth Specialties.  www.youthspecialties.com. A one-day youth ministry training event held throughout Central and South America.

*Group Ministry Live.* One-day youth ministry training events in 100+ U.S. cities from the people at Group Magazine.  Go to www.groupmagazine.com/gml for more information.

*Piece of the Pie Ministries.* Steve Case can personally present his material on relationships to your leaders, or lead out in a tem-building retreat for your youth.  Contact him at www.pieceofthepie.org.
YOUTH GROUP SURVEY

Name ____________________________________________
Street Address ____________________________________________
City _____________________________________________________________
State ____________ Zip ___________________________

Home Phone _________________________ Cell Phone __________________________
Email Address ____________________________________________ Website __________________________
Birth Date ____/____/______ Workplace __________________________________________

Parents’ Guardians’ Names ____________________________________________
Siblings Ages __________________________________________________________________________

Hobbies ________________________________________________________________
Favorite Kind of Music __________________________________________________________
Favorite Movie or TV Show _________________________________________________________
Favorite Artist or Group ____________________________________________________________
Favorite Class in School ___________________________________________________________
Favorite Bible Text ________________________________________________________________

List three activities you would like to do with the youth group:
1. __________________________________ 2. ________________________________
3. __________________________________

List three favorite songs to sing at youth group:
1. __________________________________ 2. ________________________________
3. __________________________________

List three topics or books of the Bible you would like to discuss:
1. __________________________________ 2. ________________________________
3. __________________________________

What is your greatest accomplishment? ____________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

What’s one thing that very few people know about you that you’ll tell us? _________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

Additional comments or questions:
PRINCIPLE FOUR
PLAN WITH PURPOSE
PLAN WITH PURPOSE

Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails. Proverbs 19:21

May He give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. Psalm 20:4

Jesus gave them this answer: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; He can do only what He sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.” John 5:19

ACT IT OUT INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE

THE SCENE Mo and Alex are driving in his car looking for a perfect spot for Alex’s new youth activity idea. Alex hits the breaks as Mo screams.

MONIQUE What are you doing! You don’t just stop in the middle of the road!

ALEX Sorry, that park just kinda caught my eye.

MONIQUE Next time something catches your eye, give me a little hint so I can brace myself.

ALEX Alright, alright. I think there’s another park a couple miles from here.

MONIQUE So what are you planning on doing with your youth at the park?

ALEX Oh, you’re really going to dig this one. I thought of it last night while I was lying in bed. I guess you could say it kinda “came to me.”

MONIQUE Last time an idea came to you late at night, the youth room almost
ALEX

burned to the ground.

That was in the past. I've matured...I'm a new man.

MONIQUE

Yeah, I've heard that before. So what are you scheming?

ALEX

Imagine water balloons, lawn darts, and lots of mud. Are you seeing what I'm seeing?

MONIQUE

If you mean a bunch of angry parents and lawsuits, yeah I could see that. Did you really think this one through Al?

ALEX

Well...it sounded good at the time. Lawsuits, huh? That sounds ugly.

MONIQUE

Ugly could be an understatement. Maybe you need to think this one through again. What was the purpose?

ALEX

Well, I wanted to have the youth to have some fun...

MONIQUE

And...

ALEX

And maybe I need a little more direction.

MONIQUE

Speaking of direction, I'm pretty sure we're going to be lost.

ALEX

Why do you say that?

MONIQUE

The map just flew out the window.

ALEX

Oh, that's alright, who needs maps, anyway?
THINK IT THROUGH  MEASURING THE LEADER

So where is your youth group headed? Have you thought it through? If the answer is yes, this may be a good time to check your bearings again and make any necessary corrections. If the answer is no, then it’s time to set your sights on God’s purpose for your group. Take this short quiz to get a “read” on your group.

1. **THE DIRECTION OUR YOUTH GROUP IS GOING:**
   - A. was determined by the group through prayer and study.
   - B. was set five years ago by a popular youth leader.
   - C. changes from week to week depending on the activity.

2. **THE REASON OUR YOUTH GROUP EXISTS:**
   - A. is known by all who come in contact with us.
   - B. has yet to be decided.
   - C. is simply to cause me trouble.

3. **IF SOMEONE ASKED HOW WE MAKE PLANS FOR OUR YOUTH GROUP, I WOULD SAY:**
   - A. by doing things that help us fulfill our vision.
   - B. by polling the group to see what they’d like to do next month.
   - C. what plans?

BREAK IT DOWN  UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

SETTING YOUR DIRECTION
Knowing where you’re headed and understanding how to get there are essential to keeping your youth group moving and on track. How do you develop such a plan? It takes some effort. But with time in prayer, a little brainstorming, and the Holy Spirit’s guidance, you’ll set a course for your group that will give meaning and purpose to everything you do.

TWO ESSENTIALS DEFINED
Vision Statement — This is your group’s dream. It states where you are headed and what you hope will be. Maybe your group desires to be “Growing in God’s Word and Sharing in God’s World.” That’s a vision. It’s about having a destination in mind.
Action Plan — A vision is great, but as of yet you have no idea how it will be accomplished or specifically what you will do to get there. You need an action plan. This consists of specific actions you will perform to fulfill your vision. For instance, in order to grow and share your youth group could: (1) include Bible study and prayer in all of our activities, (2) creatively share the Scriptures each month with the church, and (3) conduct Bible activities for neighborhood kids three times a year.

Can you see how these actions help fulfill your group’s vision? An action plan and vision work together.

DEVELOPING YOUR VISION STATEMENT

What is your group’s destination? Do you know? Even if you think you know, does the rest of the group understand it? Have they agreed to it? If not you’ll have difficulty moving in that direction. Try this process for developing a group vision.

1. CALL YOUR GROUP TOGETHER FOR A VISIONING SESSION. This takes time, so it’s wise to set aside an entire day at a secluded, but comfortable location.

2. SPEND CONSIDERABLE TIME IN PRAYER. Pray before the group meets and then together as a team. Ask God to direct in the development of a vision that will take your group where He wants you to go.

3. BRAINSTORM. Ask questions like: “What is your dream for this group?” “What should the ultimate goal of this group be?” “Where do we want to be six months, one year, or four years from now?” Let the ideas flow. Write them on a chalkboard or flipchart (see the Brainstorming Process later in this chapter). You may see a pattern emerge that will help define your vision.

4. DISCUSS AND CHOOSE. Discuss all ideas and craft a statement that best articulates your group’s vision. Don’t rush the process. The finished product should be short and inspirational.

Ask God to direct in the development of a vision.
5. **Advertise it.** Put your vision statement up on the walls of your youth room. Print it on all your flyers and documents. Talk about it in your meetings and parade it in front of the church.

6. **Use it.** Let it be a guiding light as you plan programs, do outreach, and train leaders. It will give your group a sense of purpose and direction in everything you do.

7. **Recast it.** A vision needs to be constantly renewed. Find new and creative ways to present your vision. Recasting will keep your dream alive.

**DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN**

Now that your group knows where it’s headed, you need to determine how you will get there. And specifically, what you will do to accomplish your vision. That’s where an action plan comes in.

How do you create such a plan? Again, use the brainstorming process to help your group come up with ideas that move you toward your vision. Let your action items be as broad or specific as they need to be. You’ll address the details of each item later. As you develop your plan, post your vision statement in front of the room to keep your group on target.

Look again, at our sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISION STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Growing in God’s Word and Sharing in God’s World”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION PLAN:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a community of Bible students, we will:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item #1: Include Bible study and prayer in all of our activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item #2: Creatively share the Scriptures each month with the church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item #3: Conduct Bible activities for neighborhood kids three times a year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once this step is complete (remember, you can always add more action items later), you are ready to move forward. Programming, budgeting, and calendar planning become more intentional as you coordinate them with
your vision statement and action plan.

WORKING OUT THE DETAILS
Programming is one of the staples of any successful youth effort. It’s where you’ll flesh out all the details for the action plan you’ve just developed. Before you start planning, though, you’ll want to consider a couple of principles.

SIX KEY AREAS OF PROGRAMMING

COMMUNITY. Activities that build trust, cooperation and appreciation.

WORSHIP. Services produced specifically for youth or led by youth for others.

SPIRITUAL NURTURE. Programs that nurture relationships in the context of small group Bible study and prayer.

TRAINING. Leadership training events, real-life leadership opportunities and mentoring.

OUTREACH. Service evangelism activities designed to reach your neighbors.

CELEBRATION. Large annual gatherings like youth rallies, congresses, and retreats. Smaller group celebrations like birthdays and baptisms.

Balance. It’s important in all areas of life. Your youth programs will be no exception. If you only threw parties, would you be fulfilling your vision? If all you held were training events, would worship time suffer? Consider the six areas of programming listed here. Does your youth program presently cover all of these areas? Are you doing too much in one area and not enough in another? Don’t forget that balance also includes the principle of moderation. Some youth leaders make the mistake of over-programming. This only contributes to burnout for leaders and youth group alike. Place time in your calendar for rest and renewal.

SAMPLE GROUP LIFE CYCLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug - Sept</td>
<td>Launch and Enlist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct - Dec</td>
<td>Build and Nurture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>Motivate and Train</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb - Apr</td>
<td>Reach Out and Win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May - Jun</td>
<td>Celebrate and Close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Rest and Rethink</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lifecycles. Many groups find it helpful to establish a yearly cycle. This allows them to focus their efforts on different types of programming throughout the year, and to get a fresh start at the beginning of each new cycle.

CREATING PROGRAMS

How can you come up with fresh programs week after week that fulfill your vision? The following principles will help you create interesting programs that stay on track:

1. **Pray.** Pray about your vision on a regular basis. Ask God to help you discover new and creative ways to accomplish it.

2. **Borrow.** Don’t think you have to reinvent the wheel. Time is limited for most youth leaders. There are plenty of books, videos, and CD’s full of ready-to-use programming ideas. Tweak them to fit your vision, but by all means use them.

3. **Adapt.** Look through programming books and get ideas from other youth leaders. Then do more than tweak—turn! Turn it all around. Cut some things out here and paste a few there. Springboard to new ideas. Just remember to focus on your vision.

4. **Create.** Brainstorm with your group and invent an entirely new activity. Doing things from scratch may take more time, but ownership will be high. Need a jumpstart? Check out the Idea Prompter on the next page.

Whatever approach you take, involve your youth in the process. They’ll have a stake in the program and work hard to make it successful.

THE BRAINSTORMING PROCESS

We’ve referred several times already to the brainstorming process. Now let’s look at it in detail. In order to run an effective brainstorming session you’ll need a few essentials (see sidebar). Once everything is in place, follow these steps and let the creating begin!

---

**THE ESSENTIALS**

- **Brain food** (munchies, drinks). It starts the fun and gets kids there.
- **Play things** (toys, straws, toothpicks, odd objects, etc.). You never know what ideas these items might spark.
- **Writing stuff** (whiteboard, markers, flipchart, easel, Post-it Notes). You’ll forget all your great ideas if you don’t write them down.
- **Comfortable atmosphere** (pillows, bean-bag chairs, sock-feet, etc.). Ideas often flow rapidly when everyone’s relaxed.
- **Group facilitator, scribe, and five to ten young participants.** Find a capable facilitator that can get your group to produce. A scribe should write everything down on a whiteboard or flipchart. Ideas written in front of the group often spark others.
**LIST A: 175 TOPICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abortion</th>
<th>Dependence</th>
<th>Gossip</th>
<th>Lust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abuse</td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Greed</td>
<td>Lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adornment</td>
<td>Devotion</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aging/aged</td>
<td>Discouragement</td>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>Mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angels</td>
<td>Disobedience</td>
<td>Habits</td>
<td>Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Disappointment</td>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>Hatred</td>
<td>Obedience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assurance</td>
<td>Doubt</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Occult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Drinking</td>
<td>Heaven</td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptism</td>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>Hell</td>
<td>Pain and Suffering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>Education/College</td>
<td>Holiness</td>
<td>Partying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betrayal</td>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>Holy Spirit</td>
<td>Patience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blessings</td>
<td>Endurance</td>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career/Vocation</td>
<td>Enemies</td>
<td>Homosexuality</td>
<td>Prejudice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for Others</td>
<td>Enmies</td>
<td>Honestly</td>
<td>Presence of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Eternal Life</td>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>Priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>Excuses</td>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>Procrastination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Promises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Humor</td>
<td>Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>Faithfulness</td>
<td>Hypocrisy</td>
<td>Rebellion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complaining</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Idol Worship</td>
<td>Rejection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Imprisonment</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Reputation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscience</td>
<td>Following Christ</td>
<td>Intelligence/Grades</td>
<td>Reputations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences</td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>Jealousy</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentment</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>Revenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>Judgment of God</td>
<td>Role Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>Future/Prophecy</td>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Sabbath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime/Punishment</td>
<td>Gender Differences</td>
<td>Kindness</td>
<td>Sacrifice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism</td>
<td>Gifts and Talents</td>
<td>Knowing God</td>
<td>Salvation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cults</td>
<td>Giving</td>
<td>Laziness</td>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dating</td>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Satan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>God's Love</td>
<td>Loneliness</td>
<td>Second Coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>God's Will</td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Self-control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>God's Word</td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Selfishness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LIST B: 50 ACTIVE LEARNING METHODS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree/Disagree</th>
<th>Creative Writing</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Paraphrase</th>
<th>Resolutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Inventory</td>
<td>Polling/Survey</td>
<td>Review Films/Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Project</td>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
<td>Investigate</td>
<td>Posts</td>
<td>Role Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>List</td>
<td>Pray</td>
<td>Simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Sketch</td>
<td>Discuss</td>
<td>Listen</td>
<td>Problem Solve</td>
<td>Song Writing or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charades</td>
<td>Dramatize</td>
<td>Memorize</td>
<td>Question and Answer</td>
<td>Story Completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart</td>
<td>Goal Setting</td>
<td>Multiple Choice</td>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>Story Telling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose (either/or)</td>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>Object Lesson</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Symbolize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuum</td>
<td>Illustrate</td>
<td>Panel Discussion</td>
<td>Readers' Theatre</td>
<td>Write Statements of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare and Contrast</td>
<td>Imagine</td>
<td>Parable</td>
<td>Real-life Situation</td>
<td>Belief</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Relate.** Engage the group physically and creatively.
   A. Body warm-up. Play an active group game (5-10 minutes).
   B. Brain warm-up. Think of as many uses for an object as possible (3-5 minutes—here’s where those odd objects come in handy).
   C. Brief the group on what they’re planning for and go over the ground rules.

2. **Generate.** Describe the challenge. Create as many ideas as possible (25-30 minutes).

3. **Eliminate.** Remove duplicate or impossible ideas (5-10 minutes).

4. **Germinate.** Pause and ponder the remaining ideas.

5. **Evaluate.** Sift through the possibilities. Place ideas into three categories:
   A. Front Burner: Will work. Get going on it right away.
   B. Back Burner: Might work. More time and thought needed.
   C. Oven: Needs work. Keep warm for later brainstorming.

---

**Ground Rules**

- There are no bad ideas.
- The more ideas, the better.
- Think wild and crazy—out of the box.
- Discuss and judge ideas later—keep ’em flowing.
- No put-downs, frowns, groans or ridicule.
- Build on each other’s ideas.

---

Brainstorming develops leadership skills and gives youth a stake in everything your group does. To make sure your final ideas have a good chance of success, plan well ahead of time. And again, plan activities that will help you carry out your vision. (Did we mention that before?).
ORGANIZING A CALENDAR

A great program can flop simply because there wasn’t enough advance planning. Conflicting events can steal people from each other because calendars weren’t coordinated. God wants us to listen to the spontaneous leadings of the Holy Spirit, but even He planned for the flood 120 years in advance!

So before planning your own events, get a 12-month calendar or planner and fill in those “unmovable” dates. You can find many of these already listed in calendars from your local public high school, academy, conference, and church. Here are a few dates to consider when building your youth ministry calendar.

1. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL EVENTS:
   A. Sporting events and tournaments
   B. National Day of Prayer
   C. Banquets, homecomings, and proms
   D. Plays, concerts, and science fairs
   E. Community service days
   F. Mid-terms, final exams, standardized test dates
   G. Graduations and awards ceremonies
   H. School vacations
   I. Holidays

2. LOCAL CHURCH EVENTS AND MEETINGS
   A. Socials
   B. Work bees
   C. Church board meetings
   D. Potlucks

3. DENOMINATIONAL EVENTS (LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL)
   A. Mission trips
   B. Youth rallies and area-wide gatherings
   C. Leadership training events

4. PROFESSIONAL SPORTING EVENTS
5. **Christian concerts in your area**

6. **Birthdays**
   - a. Members of your youth group
   - b. Pastor(s)
   - c. Area youth director
   - d. Youth group supporters

While this list isn’t exhaustive, it’s a good start. Why are these dates important? Imagine how your youth will feel when you show up with the group at one of their sporting events and cheer for them. You don’t want to have a late-night social on the night before your students’ big school exam. Take your kids to that Christian concert and save the pizza party for the next week. Are you beginning to see why a calendar is so valuable? It isn’t just a piece of paper with dates on it. It’s a tool for making the most of your opportunities.

**THE BIG, BAD BUDGET**

Why is it that some youth groups seem limited by their budget and some always have more than enough? Here are some financial planning concepts that will help no matter which situation you find yourself in.

1. **Have a budget.** It sounds obvious, but the first key to a successful financial strategy is simply having a budget. Even if your group has limited monetary resources, having a plan to use them is important. Know when the church board begins its budgeting process. Estimate your needs, and then submit a proposal to the budget committee. Once your budget has been finalized, allocate those resources for your events and stick to it. While you don’t want to overspend your budget, remember that unused financial resources may indicate to a church board that you don’t need as much support the following year.

2. **Keep a record of your expenses.** Hang on to any receipts or invoices and file them by event or budget line item. These may be important in order to receive reimbursement for items bought with personal funds, for estimating future costs, or for answering any questions your church treasurer might have.
3. **Seek Professional Help.** If you’re not a financial whiz, don’t worry. There’s someone in your church who is. They can help plan and balance your budget. They might also have a few ideas for bringing in some extra money.

4. **Involve Your Kids.** One advantage of having your kids plan the budget is that they become aware of the group’s financial position. They’ll be more likely to participate in fundraising activities than to complain about what they can’t do. Teach them how to put together a financial proposal and let them assist you in presenting it to the board. Give them financial responsibilities under your supervision.

5. **Fundraising.** Most youth groups don’t have enough money. If you find yourself short of cash your options are to:
   - A. Fund raise
   - B. Make a proposal to the church board for additional funds
   - C. Find private donors
   - D. Cut back or re-allocate your spending

   If you choose to fundraise, you may want to read fundraising books, solicit ideas from your youth, and ask adult members to pitch in. Fundraisers not only add to the bottom line, they create a sense of team spirit.

6. **Align Your Budget with Your Vision.** Here it is again! Are you spending money in areas that will help you fulfill your vision? If something matters to your group, you’ll invest in it.

7. **Make it a Matter of Prayer.** This isn’t the last suggestion because it’s the last thing you should do. Pray first, pray in the middle, and pray at the end. Encourage your kids to ask and trust in God’s provision.

**Managing Risk**

Most teenagers seem to enjoy taking risks. Sometimes it’s to prove themselves to their peers. Other times it’s to experiment with life or just to have fun. Although many teens act as if they’re immortal, adult leaders know better. We’re responsible for their safety. This is no small matter, and
it has many legal implications for church organizations, as well as for leaders. How do we manage risk and potentially harmful behaviors? Here are some suggestions for minimizing hazards and maximizing fun when planning activities.

1. **Beware of the Big Four!** While youth leaders must pay constant attention to safety, planning an activity that involves any of the following four elements requires special precautions. Most accidents occur when one or more of the following are present:
   - **A. Water**
   - **B. Animals**
   - **C. Height**
   - **D. Vehicles or Equipment**

2. **The Risk Filter.** Part of managing risk is asking good questions. Every proposed activity should be evaluated to determine if the risks are acceptable and whether you’ve prepared adequately for them. You’ll never eliminate risk completely, but you can protect yourself and your young people if you’ll run activity ideas through a process like the one found in the Risk Filter (see next page).

3. **An Ounce of Prevention.** Managing risk also includes giving good instruction. A safety-conscious leader helps a group understand risks in advance, and teaches them what they can do to minimize or avoid them altogether. This should be done BEFORE the activity is in progress. Don’t count on an accident not happening. Assume that they can and will happen and then do everything possible to prevent them.

4. **Permission, Consent to Treat, and Medical Information Forms.** Whatever you do, don’t neglect these! It could be a matter of life or death. What are they? Who needs them? Read on.

   a. **Permission Form.** This is a form letter distributed to parents. It should describe the activity, location, transportation, sponsors, departure and arrival times, contact information and any special instructions (like money required, special clothing, etc.). Have a place for a parent or legal guardian to sign and have the letter returned to...
ACTIVITY RISK FILTER

1. ASSESS the risk
   • What are the risks associated with this activity?
   • Do the benefits of this activity justify the risks?
   • What positive or negative experiences have others had with this activity?
   • Is this activity covered under the church's insurance policy?

2. PREPARE for the risk
   • Will the activity be properly supervised?
   • Will someone be trained and prepared to handle emergencies?
   • Will you brief your group on safety guidelines and enforce them?
   • Will you provide appropriate safety equipment and enforce its use?
   • Will you do everything possible to prevent foreseeable accidents?
   • Will your group be trained by qualified staff if training is needed?
   • Will you write an emergency plan and share it with your staff?
   • Will you account for everyone before, during, and after the activity?
   • Will you review the safety record of any equipment or company being used?
   • Will drivers, equipment operators, and adult volunteers be properly screened?

3. DISCLOSE the risk
   Seek the approval of the church board
   • Has the church board reviewed the risks and voted to approve the activity plan?
   Seek the approval of parents
   • Have parents of participants been informed of the activity plan and its risks and signed a consent form?

PROPOSED ACTIVITY

Immediate decision required?
• Is the activity outside the scope of an approved activity plan? If yes,

Risk Too High
Activity is NOT insurable and/or the risk unacceptable

Avoid the activity

Risk Acceptable
Activity IS insurable and the risk manageable

SHARE the risk
Purchase event-specific insurance; contract with professionals

MODIFY the risk
Make changes to bring the activity within acceptable limits of risk

ACTIVITY APPROVED
you. It’s a good idea to ask for permission slips well ahead of time so you won’t have to be worrying about them at the last minute. Note: Every minor needs a permission slip signed by a parent or legal guardian.

B. Consent to Treat: This form gives you permission to take a minor (under 18 years old) to a hospital or doctor for treatment in case of an accident. In today’s lawsuit oriented society, doctors won’t usually treat a minor without one. Note: Every minor needs a “consent to treat” form properly signed by a parent or legal guardian.

c. Medical Information Form: This form, often combined with the “consent to treat” form, gives all pertinent medical information about each person in your group. Allergies, blood type, medical history, etc. are need-to-know items for doctors when treating. Note: Every person in your group needs a properly completed medical information form.

5. Volunteer Screening. It may seem silly to have your youth department volunteers fill out an application, provide three recommendations from someone other than a relative, and consent to criminal and social services background checks, but it’s not. People who have committed crimes against children have joined organizations for children. Why? Because no one checked on them. Contact the risk management department of your church headquarters to see what precautions can be taken in your area. You’ll also need to consider things like requiring volunteer drivers be of a particular age, making sure volunteer vehicles have proper insurance, inspecting volunteer vehicles before each trip, and assigning one person to a seatbelt. Taking the time to check your volunteers carefully will give everyone peace of mind, minimize risk, and maximize fun.

6. Emergency Plan. It only takes one disaster for a youth leader to wish they’d thought through an emergency plan. You should:
   A. Know how to reach the nearest medical facility from your activity site.
   B. Have transportation available and know local emergency numbers (most, but not all locations have 911 services).

ARE YOUR VOLUNTEERS PROPERLY SCREENED?
C. Make sure one or two of your staff know basic first-aid and are CPR certified.

D. Carry medical release emergency information sheets in a binder.

E. Carry a first aid kit (see First Aid Checklist in the appendix).

F. Report any incidents or damage by documenting what happened in writing within 24 hours of the occurrence. The report should be signed and dated by two or three witnesses (see the Incident Report Form in the appendix).

EVALUATING AN EVENT

Your event went just as planned. Attendance was good. You stayed within budget. No one was hurt. So what’s next? By all means, breathe a prayer of thanks and take some time off. But then, evaluate. Your group can learn things from every program, activity, or event. What can be improved on? What lessons can be shared with others? What needs to be reported to the church? All these questions need to be considered as soon after the event as possible. As always, include your kids in the process. They’ll have ideas that might surprise you.

It’s also good to conduct an end-of-the-year evaluation. This allows you to look at the big picture and ask whether or not you have come closer that year to reaching your vision.

See the Event Evaluation Form and the Year-end Evaluation Form in the appendix to help you through these processes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Have you …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Envisioning</strong></td>
<td>— Developed a vision statement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is your group</td>
<td>— Publicized it in several ways?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>going?</td>
<td>— Re-cast your vision lately?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action Planning</strong></td>
<td>— Developed action items for the year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are you going</td>
<td>— Aligned them with your vision?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get there?</td>
<td>— Included your group in the planning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budgeting</strong></td>
<td>— Made a proposed budget?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What will it cost and</td>
<td>— Submitted it to the church board on time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who will pay for it?</td>
<td>— Considered other sources of income?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scheduling</strong></td>
<td>— Scheduled already established dates?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What will you do and</td>
<td>— Coordinated these with your own programs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when will you do it?</td>
<td>— Considered the need for balance and a lifecycle?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programming</strong></td>
<td>— Outlined tasks to be accomplished for each event?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What needs to be done</td>
<td>— Delegated responsibilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and who will do it?</td>
<td>— Considered risk, insurance, and consent issues?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>— Evaluated the success of each program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you accomplish and how can you improve?</td>
<td>— Measured it against your vision?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>— Conducted a year-end evaluation?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PASS IT ON SHARING THE PRINCIPLE

Can you really trust kids to work with the budget, set the yearly calendar, and organize youth programs? Absolutely! Part of your role as adult youth leader is to help teens become leaders themselves. In order to do that, you’ll need to give them some hands-on training.

When choosing your student leaders consider the following:

1. **Ask for creative and detail-oriented volunteers** to help you organize calendars, programs, and budgets.

2. **Pray with them.** Tell your youth that you believe God is the source of all wisdom.

3. **Give guidance and direction.** The process of developing student leaders requires mentoring. Don’t leave everything to inexperienced youth and set them up to fail. Give them instruction and encouragement.

4. **Validate their ideas.** When they come up with a great idea or process or suggestion, let them know it. Encourage the gifts God has given them.

5. **Give honest feedback.** React positively to all you can and when necessary express concern. Your kids will appreciate your wisdom and thank you for helping them avoid trouble.

6. **Talk them up.** Let everyone know that your kids planned this program or that budget. Talk them up. One day, those same kids will be holding major church leadership positions as a result of your mentoring and encouragement.
Plan with Purpose

You may remember that when Nebuchadnezzar took Daniel and his three friends captive, he also burned Jerusalem to the ground. After seventy years of charred ruins, Ezra started rebuilding the city. Unfortunately, enemies of Israel managed to halt the progress.

When things finally settled down, Nehemiah persuaded the King of Persia to issue a royal decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. He took over the project, got Jerusalem put back together and led a religious reform!

How did Nehemiah do it? Take a look at the following verses and see the picture they paint of this man:

1. When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. Nehemiah 1:4. Nehemiah cried. His heart ached over the broken-down walls of Jerusalem. Through his tears he turned to God for help.

2. I went to Jerusalem, and after staying there three days, I set out during the night with a few men... examining the walls of Jerusalem...” Nehemiah 2:11-15 Before going public, Nehemiah did his research. He made sure that he knew what it would take to accomplish the vision God had given.

3. So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart. Nehemiah 4:6. After receiving God’s instructions, Nehemiah acted. He inspired others with the vision God had given him. In spite of ridicule from others, his team eagerly pressed forward.

4. From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. Nehemiah 4:16. Nehemiah understood the risks of the task he had undertaken. He cared for his people, and put a bold plan in place to provide for their safety.

5. When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, all the people assembled as one man in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded for Israel. Nehemiah 7:73-8:1. Once the wall was completed, Nehemiah didn’t stop there. He evaluated his project, and decided to turn his...
attention to building the people of the city. His first act was to have the Law read to the people and to re-establish the spiritual leadership of Jerusalem.

There’s no question. Nehemiah was a leader’s leader. How did he become that? He sat and cried over broken-down walls. Doesn’t sound like much of a leader, does it? But Nehemiah’s strength, genius, and persuasiveness came from above. His brokenness before the Lord was his greatest asset.

Nehemiah is not the only leader to have inherited a broken situation. Youth leaders today face the challenges of broken kids, broken-down ministries, and broken homes. The task of repair can seem overwhelming at times. So why not start where Nehemiah did. Drop to your knees. Cry out to God like Nehemiah, and ask Him to show you what to do. He will lead you step-by-step.

**PRAY IT OVER PRAYING ABOUT THE PRINCIPLE**

Godly planning begins with prayer. It starts with seeking God about the situations and people that we are called to influence. No amount of visioning or action planning can lead us to the right steps unless we have first sought God’s counsel. Pray this prayer before you plan with your group:

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Dear God, we need a vision. Not our vision, but Your dreams for this group. Please show us what You want this youth group to be. Where do You want us to go? We humbly ask for Your direction. Then show us how we can accomplish that in Your strength. Lead us step-by-step. Supply us with wisdom, creativity, and resources. Give us faith to move ahead even when discouragement comes. And keep us true to Your leading in all that we plan and do. This we ask in Jesus name. Amen.
LIVE IT OUT  ACTING ON THE PRINCIPLE

So now it’s time to get down to the business of planning. Have you just been doing things from week to week? Do you have a well organized program, but no real direction? Here are a few commitments you can make to correct that:

1. I will schedule a planning retreat for my youth group.
2. I will begin praying that God will reveal His direction for us.
3. I will ask my youth to join me in praying that God will give us a vision.

RESOURCES

BOOKS

Chromey, Rick. *Youth Ministry in Small Churches*. Group, 1990. How to develop an effective ministry to only a few youth. Includes 28 ready-to-use small group Bible studies.


**MULTIMEDIA**


**WEBSITES/E-NEWSLETTERS**


www.elca.net.dcm.youth.helpsheets/index.html. *Youth Ministry Help Sheets*. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Informational sheets on a number of youth ministry issues, including how to make a budget and risk management issues.


**TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

*Giraffe University*. Center for Youth Evangelism.

800-YOUTH-2U.
PRINCIPLE FIVE

EMPOWER OTHERS
PRINCIPLE FIVE

EMPOWER OTHERS

“The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few’…And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.”
MATTHEW 9:37; 10:1

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”
EPHESIANS 4:11,12

“Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business, but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”
ACTS 6:2-4

ACT IT OUT INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE

THE SCENE
Alex walks in and finds Monique struggling over thousands of pieces of a puzzle laid out on the table top.

ALEX Hey Mo, how’s it going?

MONIQUE Fine, fine, just trying to finish this border.

ALEX Ahhh, a puzzle! I used to love putting puzzles together. My sister and I used to have races to see who could finish first.

MONIQUE How old was your sister?

ALEX Three...but that’s not the point, I was good. Hey, do you mind if I help?

86 · Empower Others
MONIQUE  Sure, as long as you can handle working with someone your own age.

ALEX  Okay, here we go. [Trying to fit pieces together] Hey, I was going to get that!

MONIQUE  Sorry. I just spotted it. And look, that one in front of you goes right here. Oh, and let me see that one in your hand. It connects these two pieces just like so.

ALEX  Mo, would you mind giving me a chance to put at least one piece in?

MONIQUE  Whoops, sorry. I guess when I see something that needs to be done, I do it.

ALEX  Yeah, that actually sounds familiar.

MONIQUE  How’s that?

ALEX  Well lately, instead of letting my youth do things, I’ve been doing everything myself. Kind of like you hoarding all the pieces.

MONIQUE  Hey! I only want to see this thing get finished.

ALEX  But wouldn’t it be better if we finished it together?

MONIQUE  That’s it, right over here! Give me that...(Monique looks sheepishly at Alex and hands him the piece to put together) Oh, sorry... Please, you go ahead. I think you — I mean we — have finally finished this border!
THINK IT THROUGH MEASURING THE LEADER

So how much do you trust your youth? Do you let them lead out in programs from time to time? Would you ever give them responsibilities as large as Jesus gave His disciples? Answer the following questions to get you thinking about it.

1. **YOU CAN TELL I TRUST MY YOUNG PEOPLE BECAUSE I:**
   - A. let them answer the questions I ask our Bible studies.
   - B. make them serve food at the church potluck.
   - C. put them in charge of programs and guide them through the process.

2. **I GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE LEADERSHIP ROLES IN MAJOR EVENTS BECAUSE:**
   - A. it gets me out of work.
   - B. it gives their self-esteem a boost.
   - C. they begin to realize the blessings of serving Jesus.

3. **IF A MEMBER COMPLAINS THAT THINGS WEREN’T PERFECT AT THE LAST YOUTH-LED CHURCH SERVICE, I SAY:**
   - A. “I told those kids they should have practiced more.”
   - B. “I won’t let it happen again.”
   - C. “I’m proud of them. Next month they’ll do it again and learn even more.”

BREAK IT DOWN UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

DELEGATE TASKS: THE JETHRO PRINCIPLE

Remember what we said about Moses in Principle Two? How God made up for his deficiencies with the help of others? One of those was Jethro, a priest and the father-in-law of Moses (see Exodus 18).

Moses was leading God’s people through the desert to the Promised Land. Like most large groups of people, the Israelites had their share of disagreements. And like most societies, a court system was put in place. There was just one problem. Two million people had only one judge—Moses.
While visiting the Israelite camp, Jethro noticed his son-in-law was overloaded and on the verge of burnout. Moses was handling hundreds of minor disputes. Jethro told him if he didn’t delegate some responsibility he would be no good to himself or his people.

What was Jethro’s advice? Find some honest, capable men who loved God. If they were empowered to handle the simple day-to-day problems, Moses could be free to focus on the “big picture.”

Moses followed Jethro’s plan and set up a system of judges to share the load. It worked! Not only did the new structure help Moses, but many other Israelites also gained valuable leadership experience.

Do you feel Moses’ pain in your youth ministry? Are you overworked and ready to throw in the towel? Why not discard the idea that says, “If you want something done right, do it yourself?” Put young people in charge of church programs and community events. If you already do, that’s great! This chapter will help you become even more effective. If you’re still going it alone, now is the time to empower your youth.

WHAT IF THEY MESS THINGS UP?
Some leaders hesitate to hand things over to young people for fear they won’t do things right. Remember, youth ministry is not about planning the perfect program. It’s about letting God work through youth. Trust them, and trust God. If things don’t turn out as planned, be patient and know that He is still at work. If older members question your judgment, just ask them to pray for the youth. Mistakes will happen, but your youth will grow through responsibility and the entire congregation will be blessed. It’s an exciting process to watch!

DON’T ORDER THE EASY CHAIR JUST YET
So this should be easy, right? Just let the youth do things from now on. Be careful! All this talk of youth-led ministry can be misleading. Just because you’ve decided to let your youth be in charge, doesn’t mean you’re not the leader anymore, or that adults aren’t needed on your leadership team. Many veteran youth leaders have found that a one-to-one ratio of young leaders to adult leaders is required for effective ministry. This allows adults and

“Think of what you were when God chose you. Not many of you were considered wise by human standards. Not many of you were powerful... But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. He chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.”
1 Corinthians 1:26-27, NIRV
Empower Others youth to pair up and tackle leadership responsibilities together. It’s called mentoring (a process we’ll explain later in the chapter). Your responsibility as the team leader is to ensure that young leaders are being developed and supported.

SELECTING YOUR LEADERS

So how should you choose young leaders? Should you grab any warm body you can? Select your best students first? Cross off the candidates with questionable pasts? Here are a few suggestions.

1. Get down on your knees. Your ability to see what God sees is limited. By relying on your own judgment, you may overlook a very important leader. Ask God, as Samuel did, to show you whom you ought to appoint as your next youth activity leaders.

2. Don’t assume anything. Don’t assume your “all-star” should be the one to lead. Don’t suppose “just anybody will do” because you’re afraid nobody will help. And don’t think your most challenging youth aren’t up for the job. Making assumptions like these cause leaders to tap into the same youth over and over again. Make it your goal to broaden the circle of leadership, and then be open to God’s leading.

3. Know their SHAPE. Pastor Rick Warren of the Saddleback Church talks about each person having a unique SHAPE for ministry (see sidebar). Why not help your youth discover God’s design for their lives? There are numerous inventories that test for spiritual giftedness, personality type, and so on. But the most practical way of identifying a young person’s potential is through interaction with them. Spend time getting to know your youth. Let them try things out. Evaluate what comes naturally to them. Talk with them about their interests, dreams, and passions. Ask those who know them well for their impressions. Test your hunches by saying things like, “I noticed you really have a way with kids. Are they a group you’d like to work with more?” If necessary, create new ministries that fit their SHAPE.

4. Make a personal invitation. Once you become convinced that God is calling a young person into leadership, share that conviction with them.

“The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:7

Don’t think your most challenging youth aren’t up for the job.
privately. Make your invitation simple and to the point. Assure them of your support. Gently encourage the young person who is hesitant, but never coerce.

5. **Set clear expectations.** Be clear with those who have volunteered for leadership about the time involved, what’s expected, and to whom they will report. Putting this in the form of a written job description keeps everyone on the same page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHAPE. Pastor Rick Warren’s acronym describes each person’s “one-of-a-kind” fit for ministry. Try leading your youth through the following questions from the last (E) to the first (S):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual Gifts.</strong> What special abilities has God given me to serve the church family and reach out to the world? Rom. 12:4-8. Eph. 4:11-12. 1 Cor. 12:4-11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heart.</strong> What activities, subjects or circumstances do I feel strongly about? What do these say about where and how God might want to use me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abilities.</strong> What skills do I have that God might be able to use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personality.</strong> Am I an extrovert or an introvert? Am I structured or spontaneous? What does that say about the kind of work I would be best suited for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiences.</strong> What experiences has God brought me through? How have these prepared me to help others?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Support and resource them.** Provide young leaders with everything you can to help them succeed. Remind them often of your prayers. Be available for consultation. Take them to youth leadership conferences. Order any resources they might need. Let them know you’ll be there no matter what.

### Expose your youth to excellence in action.

**THE M-POWER PROCESS**

It’s one thing to give a young person a job to do. It’s quite another to bring them to a point where they’re doing it well. How can you take your
volunteers to that level? Should you give them some books to read? Maybe sign them up for a seminar? While these can be helpful, there’s nothing else like giving them you — your time, your talents and your trust. Let’s spell it out with the M-Power Process.

1. **Modeling: Observe.** Teachers know that to teach a skill properly it must be modeled. Students have to see how it’s done. But what if you have never built a web page or you can’t play the guitar? Should you take a crash course? Probably not. But you can expose your youth to excellence in action. Go with them to watch a top-notch praise leader at work. Meet with an award-winning web designer, or attend an innovative youth program. Let your youth be inspired by the skill and success of others.

2. **Mentoring: Connect.** Think of how young people learn to drive a car. They grow up watching mom and dad drive. Later, they attend a driver’s education class where the teacher explains the rules of the road. But then do they go out on the road alone? Hardly! They get behind the wheel with a driving instructor seated next to them.

   As a leader, your next step in empowering your youth is to connect them with someone who can sit beside them as they take the wheel. Who can give a young person guitar lessons or coach the youth praise team? Would the pastor or head elder be willing to guide a young person through the process of writing and delivering a sermon for your next youth service? Young people need mentors, and it’s your responsibility as a leader to make that connection.

3. **Monitoring: Support.** Now that you’ve established a mentoring relationship, continue to support that young leader. Monitor their growth. Are they progressing from week to week? Are their new skills being utilized in an effective way? Do they have all the resources they need to do the job? Are they becoming discouraged? Most importantly, have they heard words of appreciation from you lately? By thanking the praise team for a job well done, or telling the web designer how great the new website looks you will affirm their newly-developed skills.
4. **Multiplying: Send.** Some of your students will reach the point where they are ready to pass along what they have learned to someone else. We’ll talk more about this in the “Pass It On” section of this chapter. But for now, know that the last step in the empowerment process is to send your young leaders out to teach or inspire someone else. That’s what God’s kingdom is all about — multiplication!

**THE POWER OF THE SIX P’S**

Now that you have the big picture of how to empower young people for leadership, let’s consider a real-life scenario. Your youth group is planning a weekend youth rally for your area. You’re not inviting a “high-powered” guest speaker. Your youth are speaking. It’s a big job, but God has laid it on your hearts. Volunteers have stepped forward in response to God’s call. What now? To fully empower your young leaders, you’ll want to share six things with them. We call them the Six P’s.

1. **A Picture.** Spend time with your group in prayer. Ask God to give you a vision of what this youth rally should look like. Brainstorm, using the process outlined in Principle Four. Ask your youth what their friends really need. Is there an issue they’re struggling with that could be addressed? How could you do that? Take your time and let a picture of the rally emerge. This gives each person on the team a clear goal to work toward.

2. **A Plan.** Now it’s time to start planning. Gather your group a second time. Develop action items as described in Principle Four. Then set up a timeline to keep you on schedule. When does your proposal need to go to the board for approval? When will you start publicizing the event? When should the messages be complete and the songs chosen? When will you start having rehearsals? A plan puts everyone on the same page. Your job is simply to stay alongside, answer questions, and keep everyone on schedule.

3. **A Position.** Hand the reins to your young leaders. Give them titles like Music Director, Drama Producer, PowerPoint Specialist, Marketing Guru, and Greeting Coordinator. You may wish to pair each of them with an adult mentor. Ask the youth to make their own decisions, draw

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**Your job is not to change their plans, even if they’re doing things a little differently than you would have done them.**
up progress notes, and then report back to you. Remember, your job is not to change their plans, even if they’re doing things a little differently than you would have done them. Let them be in charge. If you must offer counsel, let it be in the form of questions like, “Have you thought about how you’ll greet the guests?” or “What is your plan in case it rains?” That’s good mentoring.

4. **A Purchase.** Few things will demonstrate trust like giving young people money to spend on their area of responsibility. Of course, you’ll have to monitor their purchases. But give them as much control over the spending as possible. Let them evaluate their needs, choose the best deals, and calculate how much they have left to spend. They can do it! Purchasing not only empowers, it educates. When the youth rally is in full swing, your kids will see how important the stewardship of God’s money is.

5. **A Word of Praise.** At every stage, let your kids know what a great job they’re doing. When they speak, tell them how much you were personally blessed. When they sing, let them know how many people were moved. Even when you have to correct them, affirm them for all the good things they’ve done. You’re words of appreciation will affirm what God is doing in and through their lives.

6. **A Prayer.** If we were operating only in the natural realm prayer wouldn’t be necessary. But we’re in a spiritual battle. So pray for and with your youth – before, during, and after the rally. Don’t be the adult who always steps in with the answer, or “bails them out” when things go wrong. Let them face their own inadequacies. When their need becomes apparent, direct them to depend on God for strength, wisdom, ideas, and miracles. He can provide more than we might ever imagine.

Wow! Look at how much you’ve been able to share with your youth! Isn’t this much better than doing everything yourself? When you’ve completed the youth rally you’ll have a whole group of youth leaders excited and empowered to do even more for God.
PASS IT ON SHARING THE PRINCIPLE

Remember the final step in the M-Power Process? Multiplying. Utilizing what God has given us and developing that in someone else. Why do you suppose we talk about “passing it on” in every chapter of this book? It’s because most of us don’t think that way. We’re more comfortable doing things ourselves. So be patient with your youth. The thought that they could train or inspire someone else may be new. Here are a few suggestions on how to involve them in that process.

1. Place them with younger students. This is one of the easiest and most natural ways to get youth involved in mentoring. If they’re in high school, arrange for them to work with children. Go to the local elementary school or host a big brother/big sister activity with inner city kids. Younger students naturally look up to the older ones, and want to be just like them. This makes them eager learners, and high school students naturally into the role of being their teachers.

2. Let them display their talents. Give your youth a chance to demonstrate their skills and talents with the younger crowd. Have your musicians perform for the local boys or girls club or ask your speakers to hold a week of prayer for the lower grades. They’ll begin to inspire the next generation of youth leaders!

3. Give them a specific task. Young people find it easiest to mentor others when they have a clear task at hand. It might be directing children in a dramatic production, teaching them skills in a particular sport, or tutoring them in math. Specific tasks provide a focus for the interaction, while allowing opportunity for casual conversation and deeper sharing.

LOOK IT UP ILLUSTRATING THE PRINCIPLE

Timothy. What a dynamic young person for God! Thanks to his mother and grandmother, Timothy had received a solid foundation in the Scriptures. But that alone wasn’t enough to prepare him for the powerful ministry God had in store. He needed the guidance, mentoring, and empowerment of a Everywhere Paul preached he looked for those he could train to carry on the work of Christ.

Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 Timothy 4:12
Godly leader. That youth leader was the apostle Paul.

Everywhere Paul preached he looked for those he could train to carry on the work of Christ, thereby multiplying his efforts. Paul was not under the impression that he was the only missionary on the face of the earth. He looked for God’s calling in the lives of others. Should youth leaders be taking notes?

During Paul’s travels he met Timothy. Timothy stood by Paul, even when the going got rough. And because he didn’t run when Paul was persecuted and nearly killed, Paul knew that Timothy would be a bold leader for God. The first thing Paul did was train Timothy in pastoral leadership. Paul modeled prayer (I Timothy 2:1), made sure Timothy’s theology was correct (I Timothy 2:5-6), taught him how the church should be run (I Timothy 3), and prepared him for the struggles he would face (I Timothy 5).

When Paul saw that his mentorship of Timothy was bearing fruit, he knew that Timothy was ready for the task of leading God’s church himself. II Timothy 4:1-2 says, “I charge [you] in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus … Herald and preach the Word!” Paul guided Timothy in ministry until Timothy was ready to bear the great responsibility God had given him to teach others. Doesn’t that sound like the M-Power Process? What a great example for youth leaders!

PRAY IT OVER PRAYING ABOUT THE PRINCIPLE

Youth empowered to do God’s work are a natural result of effective youth ministry. This takes place when talents, training, and the Holy Spirit’s touch come together. Here’s a prayer to help you empower youth for the greatest work ever.

“Lord, I know that You look into the heart of each one of my young people. Show me what you are calling each of them to do. Help me to know how to encourage and inspire them. Lead me to skilled people who can mentor them. Give me a heart that is quick to encourage and support, even when things aren’t going my way. And give all of us a desire to do more for You and those You love. Thank you. Amen.”
LIVE IT OUT  ACTING ON THE PRINCIPLE

It’s time for action. Talking about empowerment will only do so much. Here are four things you can act on in the next several weeks:

1. Help your youth identify their SHAPE using Rick Warren’s model.
2. Let youth plan your next event. Ask for volunteers. Begin taking them through the process outlined in this chapter.
3. Recruit other adults who are experts in the tasks you’ve assigned to your youth. Mentoring is time-intensive. You’ll need their help!
4. Engage your young people in ministry to children. Let them inspire and train the next generation of youth leaders.

RESOURCES

BOOKS


MacGregor, Miriam. Designing Student Leadership Programs: Transforming the Leadership Potential of Youth. Youthleadership.com, 1999. A guidebook for developing a youth leadership programs from an experienced leadership
educator (not written from a ministry perspective).


**WEBSITES/E-NEWSLETTERS**


**TRAINING EVENTS**

*Giraffe University.* Center for Youth Evangelism. 800-YOUTH-2U.


*Next Generation Conference.* Willow Creek Church. www.willowcreek.com/events/student. Youth ministry leadership training designed for junior high, high school, and 18 to 20-something leaders and their adult staff.

PRINCIPLE SIX

PROMOTE YOUR MINISTRY
PRINCIPLE SIX

PROMOTE YOUR MINISTRY

“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways.” **Hebrews 1:1**

“The woman then left her water pot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, ‘Come, see a man who told me all things that I ever did...’ Then they went out of the city and came to Him.” **John 4:28-30**

“He went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.” **Mark 1:45**

**ACT IT OUT**  INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE

**THE SCENE** Mo and Alex are in the shopping mall. Alex stares up at the hundreds of shirts all marked as half off.

**MONIQUE**  Wow, this is a great deal. You brought your coupon for the promotion they were offering, right?

**ALEX**  Coupon? Men don’t use coupons, we go in, buy what we need, and leave.

**MONIQUE**  Leave with an empty wallet! Good thing I brought my coupon, you’d be out twenty dollars.

**ALEX**  Yeah, but I’m sure I’ll figure out a way to blow it on another sale. So how did you hear about this deal?

**MONIQUE**  Through the mail. I’m a preferred customer! They always send me a flyer when they introduce their new season of clothes.
ALEX  Flyer? Flyer... [stares blankly, yet desperately off into space]

MONIQUE  Yeah, a flyer. You know...

ALEX  I am such an idiot! I completely forgot to send out the flyer for the benefit concert this weekend.

MONIQUE  Didn't you have a check list of things you needed to do? I'm sure I saw it on your list.

ALEX  Yeah you did, right before I put my jeans through the wash. I can't believe it! I had everything in order except for that.

MONIQUE  [waves a finger in Alex's direction] Advertising is a must, Al. Didn't you have someone who was supposed to take care of that?

ALEX  I think I did. I just don't remember. And now it probably doesn't matter anyway.

MONIQUE  [continuing to lecture] Wow, you really blew it, huh?

ALEX  What? What kind of friend talks like that? I'm in serious trouble here!

MONIQUE  The kind of friend that has your back. I've got it all covered. I went to the radio station yesterday, called the paper, and brought posters to hang up at the mall. They're right here in the bag!

ALEX  Wow! I owe you big time, Mo.

MONIQUE  And don't you forget it!

ALEX  I guess I need to put advertising right at the top of my list next time. Hey... maybe you could be my full-time marketing executive.

MONIQUE  Nice try, Al. But you can't afford my level of talent. Come on. We've got posters to put up.
THINK IT THROUGH MEASURING THE LEADER

A communication plan is essential to any youth program. You can plan creative programs, uplifting Bible studies, and fun-filled social activities, but if nobody knows about them your efforts are for naught. Take the following quiz and think about how well your group is getting the word out.

1. **MY YOUTH DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION PLAN CONSISTS OF:**
   A. Muttering to myself that no one will show up anyway.
   B. Telling two or three youth and hoping the word will spread.
   C. Regularly using six or seven channels of communication.

2. **WHEN IT COMES TO TELLING THE REST OF THE CHURCH ABOUT OUR YOUTH ACTIVITIES:**
   A. I don’t bother because too many members criticize them.
   B. I humbly refuse to talk about my accomplishments.
   C. I do it because I am promoting God’s work.

3. **IF PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW WHAT’S GOING ON IN THE YOUTH DEPARTMENT:**
   A. They should show a little interest and ask me.
   B. They should read the annual youth newsletter stored in youth room closet.
   C. They only need to attend church, check their e-mail, read the bulletin board, listen to their voice mail, or check under their windshield wipers.

BREAK IT DOWN UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

Have you ever put hours of planning into a program only to have a very few people show up? Even though good things happened for those few, so many more might have been blessed. What can you do? You might want to take a look at your communication plan. Do you have one? Could it be more successful? Do you communicate enough, employ the right methods, and provide enough advance notice? The following ideas may help you as you work to improve communication.
STAY ON YOUR MESSAGE

Good communication is simple. Get the word out as often as you can, in as many ways as you can, to as many people as you can. It may feel like you’re announcing your programs a few too many times, but keep doing it. Stay on your message. You’ll gain the most support from your church, the largest possible turnout from your youth, and the most help from volunteers. What does staying on message look like?

1. **Be Consistent.** Keep your youth group and their activities in front of your church, community, and youth as consistently as possible. If you do a media blitz for a week straight and then no one hears from you for another six months, they’ll forget you have a youth program. Keep them updated on a regular basis.

2. **Be Concise.** People’s attention spans are short. Tease your audience with quick tidbits. Arouse their curiosity. They can always ask you for more information after church. Talk your program up, but keep your message simple and to the point. People will thank you for it.

3. **Be Prompt.** Give timely notice of programs before they begin, and deliver prompt reports when they’re done. Even if a program didn’t turn out so well, talk about what you learned. If the event struggled because you ran out of funds, you might just have someone “step up to the plate” with financial help the next time around.

4. **Be Positive.** When you promote upcoming programs or your program in general, be enthusiastic and positive. If you’re not upbeat, you certainly can’t expect anyone else to be. It’s God’s work! Get people excited about what He’s doing in and through your youth.

5. **Be Creative.** You say you’re not the creative type? Don’t worry. Enlist the talents of your youth as artists, actors, technicians, and singers to help you get your message out in as many different ways as possible. You’ll be amazed at what they come up with.

THE SEVEN-TIME RULE

By some estimates, people need to see and hear something seven times before it’s firmly fixed in their minds. Here’s a suggestion. Repeat your message in seven different ways. Try flyers, platform announcements, skits, videos, newsletters, bulletin announcements, etc. Repeating your message with variety will catch people’s attention.

GET PEOPLE EXCITED ABOUT WHAT GOD’S DOING IN AND THROUGH YOUR YOUTH.
WHO’S THE AUDIENCE?

One of the first questions professional communicators ask is, “Who’s the audience?” Knowing your audience determines the way you communicate your message. E-mailing parents who check their messages once a month may not be as effective as instant messaging those youth who practically live in front of their computers. So who are the youth leader’s audiences? There are at least four:

1. **YOUTH AND THEIR FRIENDS.** They’re the reason you exist. Use the means of communication they’re familiar with. Living on this side of the “digital divide,” today’s youth are technologically advanced and media-savvy. You’ll most likely be calling their cell phones, using e-mail and instant messaging, creating websites and video spots, and relying on old-fashioned word of mouth — which is still one of the best methods around.

   **Family-Based Youth Ministry**

   Many youth experts now agree: the most effective youth ministry happens when parents and other adults interact with youth. The isolation of adolescents is serious and hurtful problem in today’s culture. Getting parents/adults and teenagers communicating with one another is one of the most powerful things you can do in youth ministry. Stay in touch parents, and help them stay in touch with their youth.

   Bring your message across in a fun and exciting way. If your program is an in-depth study of the third chapter of Romans, make sure your posters and e-mail talk about **Romans 3** — but make it interesting! Use phrases like, “Tired of keeping the rules? Come study **Romans 3** with us.” If you’re not creative enough to come up with a catchy phrase (warning adults can be “corny”), find one of your youth who is. Youth know how to speak to their peers. They’ll respond!

2. **PARENTS AND FAMILIES.** Don’t leave these important people out! You need their support and involvement in your ministry. Parents want to know you’re concerned about the safety and well-being of their children. If it sounds like the youth are having good, clean fun, then parents’ are generally happy. If youth are growing spiritually, then you’ve really “hit the nail on the head.”

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**COMMUNICATE WITH YOUTH**
- Cell phones
- E-mail
- Instant & text messaging
- Posters
- Videos
- PowerPoint
- Websites
- Word of mouth

**COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS**
- Parent meetings
- Phone chains
- E-mail
- Newsletters
- Postcards
What’s the best way to talk with parents? Parents want to see you face-to-face. You can demonstrate your trustworthiness in person far easier than you can over the phone. Have parent meetings as often as possible. Talk about what’s happening in our ministry. Discuss the issues they’re facing as parents of teenagers. You’ll find them to be your strongest allies and your most helpful volunteers.

Additionally, you can use phone chains, e-mail, postcards and anything else the parents in your area use to stay in touch with one another. Tune into your parents. Know what they need to hear and communicate, communicate, communicate.

3. **CHURCH LEADERS AND MEMBERS.** You might wonder why you would need to communicate with the rest of the church. After all, if you’re with the kids and you’ve told the parents, why does anyone else need to know? The reason for informing church leaders and members is simple—you need their help! You need adult drivers and chaperones. You need finances. You need emotional support. And it’s much easier to run a thriving youth program when the church is behind you.

Don’t forget to involve your youth, either. You might be tempted to do all the talking. But pastors, church leaders, and members need to hear directly from their young people. Let them share their stories in church and make presentations to the board. Members are more likely to be supportive of youth they know personally.

4. **THE PRESS AND THE COMMUNITY.** Some events should be done in secret and others broadcast widely. For instance, one youth leader actually buys gift certificates from local clothing stores and secretly leaves them at people’s homes. If you were to take a group of youth on a jaunt like that, you certainly wouldn’t want to alert the press. Jesus says, "When you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets... do not let your right hand know what your left hand is doing, so that it may be in secret." **Matthew 6:2-4.**

Other events you may want to publicize. Like the youth leader who gets bags from the local grocery store and invites her youth to decorate them with anti-drug slogans. The store allows them to bag the customer’s groceries...
with their decorated bags. Meanwhile, youth have plenty of opportunities to talk with customers about making positive life choices. For this event, press releases are sent to local television stations so that reporters and cameras spread the important anti-drug message even further.

Be sure to teach your youth that doing things for publicity is not what it’s all about. Perform many services without recognition. This gives everyone an opportunity to experience the true spirit of giving. But, when there’s an important cause that people in your community should know about, use press releases (see sample release), local radio and TV, newspapers, civic clubs, flyers, public access cable TV, and corporate sponsors to help you get the word out.

**DELIVER AS PROMISED**

It’s so important to do what you say you’ll do. The best advertisement is a satisfied participant! People will be supportive if they see your group doing their very best to deliver as promised. If you must cancel an event, be sure to notify everyone. There’s nothing more disappointing than showing up for an event only to find the building dark and the doors locked. In the case of inclement weather or power outages, turn to the local media outlets that announce cancellations due to such conditions.

**AFTER THE EVENT**

The importance of communication follow-through should not be underestimated. If you plan to publicize your event, be sure to have a camera on-site to capture the action. Assign a young person or two to serve as reporters. Follow-up articles and reports, testimonies, and audiovisual presentations let your supporters see that they contributed to something worthwhile. These accounts of your activities also gain support for future programs and let young people bask in the excitement of what they’ve experienced.

And don’t forget to send out those thank you notes in a timely fashion! Everyone likes to be appreciated. Even Jesus knew the significance of a simple “thank you.” After he had healed ten lepers, only one returned to give thanks, prompting him to ask, “Where are the other nine?” Luke 17:17. So thank your supporters, and don’t forget to include God, as well. He enjoys and dwells in our praise!
PASS IT ON  SHARING THE PRINCIPLE

Now, don’t think you have to do all this communicating yourself. Youth, with all of their enthusiasm, are some of the most effective communicators around. Talking about their own programs is also one of the most empowering experiences they can have. Here are a few ways to enlist their help.

1. **Have your youth make announcements** about upcoming events from the front of the church. They’ll love it and people will respond.

2. **Go with your kids to the church board.** If you need financial or any other kind of support for your upcoming youth rally, your youth should make the appeal.

3. **Tap into the creativity of your youth.** Do you need to make an announcement or stage a promotional event to let your community know about your cause? Your young people will have ideas. Use them!

4. **Youth are on the cutting edge of technology.** Would you like to create a website, set up a live chat room on the internet, zap members’ palm pilots with the latest youth calendar, or send text messages to your board members’ cell phones? Your youth will know how.

LOOK IT UP  ILLUSTRATING THE PRINCIPLE

Esther was a young person with an important message to communicate—a life and death message. If she didn’t say the right thing at the right time to the right people, thousands of Jews would lose their lives.

It all began when Esther discovered that Haman, a top official in Persia, was plotting to destroy all the Jewish people in the kingdom. To prevent this disaster, Esther bravely came before the king, knowing that without an invitation her life could be in jeopardy. When the king asked Esther what she wished, she invited both the king and Haman to a dinner. At the dinner,
the king asked again what Esther desired. Rather than answer, she invited them to another dinner the following night.

When the two returned to Esther’s residence the next evening, the king asked one more time what she desired and offered up to half of his kingdom. This time, Esther told the king about Haman’s plan. As a result, Esther’s people were saved and Haman met a sad end.

Youth leaders can learn several lessons from Esther’s courageous and intentional plan of communication. First, Esther communicated with God. She organized a time of prayer and fasting, asking that she and her message be received. Esther 4:16. Second, Esther developed a good relationship with the king. It was obvious the king wanted to please Esther. Third, Esther stayed on message. She met with her intended audience several times, keeping him informed at every step. Fourth, Esther was creative. She created a sense of curiosity, using two dinner parties to set the stage for her very important message. Fifth, at just the right moment, Esther told the king very directly what she wanted. Her message was clear and concise.

Why not communicate our youth programs in the same way? Let’s build good relationships with our audiences. Let’s stay on message. Consistency will keep our program at the front of people’s minds. Being creative will capture their interest and keep them curious. And let’s be clear. When the stage is set and the time is right, tell people exactly what you want them to know. Above all, let’s be courageous. We have the responsibility of communicating a program intended to keep our youth focused on God. What could be more important than that? Let’s pray that our message will be bold and well received.
**PRAY IT OVER**  PRAYING ABOUT THE PRINCIPLE

Are you ready to begin promoting your youth program? Put first things first. Go to God and ask Him for the wisdom to promote His program effectively. Here’s a simple prayer to start you on your way.

“Dear Lord, this business of promoting is so important. I want to see our youth group grow and be a witness to the community. And I know this can only happen when we have the attention and support of others. So help us to communicate boldly, creatively, and effectively for You. As we do, keep us humble. Show us when to publicize what we’re doing for Your glory, and when to lead a life of quiet example. And through all that we do, may others come to know and share the good news. Thank you. Amen.”

**LIVE IT OUT**  ACTING ON THE PRINCIPLE

Do you see the importance of promoting your youth ministry? It’s not about us, it’s about God. It’s about His young people. It’s about getting the word out to a world hungering for good news – about youth, about their communities, about God’s love. So tell them and – as Francis of Assisi said – “when necessary, use words.” Here are a few things you can do right now to begin successfully promoting your ministry.

1. Make a list of the things your group is planning in the near future.
2. Develop a strategy with your youth leaders for communicating these events to youth, families, church leaders and members, and the community.
3. Pair up adult and student youth leaders. Give each pair an event to promote and report on. Ask them to use the seven different methods of communication.
4. Engage your young people in ministry to children. Let them inspire and train the next generation of youth leaders.
RESOURCES

BOOKS


MULTIMEDIA

WEBSITES


**TRAINING EVENTS**

*Giraffe University*. Center for Youth Evangelism. 800-YOUTH-2U.

PRINCIPLE SEVEN

MOBILIZE FOR SERVICE

EVANGELISM
PRINCIPLE SEVEN

MOBILIZE FOR SERVICE EVEANGELISM

“Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men.” Ephesians 6:7

“If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.” 1 Peter 4:11

“Those who have served will gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

ACT IT OUT INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLE

THE SCENE Alex and Mo are walking on a sidewalk street in the city headed for a concert.

ALEX I can’t believe we’re actually going to this concert! (Alex begins singing a popular Christian tune.)

MONIQUE Yeah, isn’t this awesome!

ALEX I can’t wait. I hope we get some good seats.

MONIQUE Alex, look out!

ALEX Oh, sorry sir. I, uh, didn’t see you there.

MONIQUE Yeah, we’re really sorry. We’re headed to a Christian concert.

(After walking a few yards past the man conversation picks up again)

ALEX Man, did you see that guy? Better yet, did you smell him?
MONIQUE  Yeah, it’s sort of got me thinking.

ALEX  Well, he could find a better spot. I mean he must get tripped over all the time!

MONIQUE  That’s the thing. I wonder how many people actually stop to talk with him or give him a bite to eat.

ALEX  Hmm…what do you propose we do?

MONIQUE  How about we get him something to eat?

ALEX  And miss our chance at some great seats?

MONIQUE  I don’t know. I think Jesus said something about the good seats in heaven being reserved for those who came in last down here.

ALEX  Point well taken. What do you think he would prefer to eat — a burrito or sub sandwich?

MONIQUE  I don’t know. Let’s ask him.

THINK IT THROUGH  MEASURING THE LEADER

How would your youth group feel about sacrificing their time and comfort to serve someone else? Would you be uncomfortable if someone asked about your faith? Consider the following questions as you think about your attitude:

1. **Servicing Others Is:**
   - A. one of the most exciting things my group has done lately.
   - B. okay as long as I don’t have to deal with anything that smelly.
   - C. not something I’ve had time for lately.

2. **Evangelism Is:**
   - A. something that pastors do.
   - B. a series of meetings our church holds every couple of years.
Youth who volunteer just one hour a week are 50% less likely to abuse drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, or engage in destructive behavior. (Search Institute, 1995)

3. To keep the right perspective on our outreach activities:
   a. our group prays for Christ’s love and humility.
   b. I share stories of others who have made great sacrifices for God.
   c. we hang up all of our service awards in the youth room.

BREAK IT DOWN UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

GOOD NEWS!
Today’s youth are the most service-minded generation to come along in years. Over the last decade, there has been a steady increase in volunteerism among teens. Eighty-three percent of college freshman in 2003 said they volunteered while in high school (Volunteering Among Young People, www.civicyouth.org). And that’s not all. A recent study of Adventist youth reveals that nearly six out of ten have tried to encourage someone to believe in Jesus Christ in the last year (Valuegenesis: Ten Years Later). So, as we begin this chapter, let’s affirm our youth for what their service and evangelism. Let’s also be sure we are ready to join them!

WHAT IS EVANGELISM?
Ask your youth what comes to mind when they think of evangelism. Some will mention soul-winning efforts like giving Bible studies. Others will bring up witnessing opportunities such as inviting friends to church. Still others will talk about service activities like feeding the homeless. All of them are right! Evangelism is simply doing whatever it takes to spread the good news of God’s love. Paul says, “The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose...For we are God’s fellow workers...” 1 Corinthians 3:8-9. In other words, evangelism is a team effort!

WHY IS SERVICE IMPORTANT?
Of all the ways to share the gospel, service finds the most common ground with unbelievers. High schools have added service activities to their curricula. Colleges offer service trips during spring breaks. And organizations like Do Something (www.dosomething.org) involve thousands of young people each year in community projects. The value of service is something many people agree on. So what is the importance of service to Christian
young people? Let’s look at five Biblical principles regarding why serving others is at the heart of our Christian experience.

1. **We are created for service.**

   Paul says that we are not saved as a result of our good works. **Ephesians 2:8-10.** Rather, we are God’s “workmanship.” We are created and now saved with one purpose in mind: **“to do good works.”** God’s plan is not only to rescue us from sin, but to restore us as **“a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.”** **Titus 2:14.**

   Think about it. Has your relationship with Jesus resulted in a desire to do something good for others? Has that desire been planted in the hearts of your youth? If so, don’t hesitate to act. Henry Blackaby says **“we cannot stay where we are and go with God”** (**Experiencing God**). We must move forward into the good works “which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

   You might not feel that you have what it takes to live a life of good works. That’s just the point! Service is not about our work; it’s about letting God work through us. He **“is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to the power that is at work within us.”** **Ephesians 3:20.**

2. **Service puts our faith into action.**

   As youth leaders, our role is to help young people develop their faith. What does well-developed faith look like? Mature faith not only involves a personal relationship with God. It is also expressed in acts of compassion toward others. A relationship with Jesus results in a life of service.

   James understood this. He saw there were Christians who professed to have faith but were neglecting the poor. He wrote: **“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”** Religion that honors God is found in caring for orphans and widows. **James 1:22-27.**

   Fortunately, today’s young people are wired for action. In fact, they prefer the Internet over television. Why? Because it’s interactive. They can participate. If religion is only about sitting in the pew and

   **SERVICE EVANGELISM**

   This chapter uses the term “service evangelism” to describe the way Jesus reached out to people. First, He met their needs. Then, He called them to follow Him. Throughout this chapter, we’ll be talking about serving others. We’ll also be looking for opportunities to invite them into a relationship with Jesus. Both are important to communicating God’s love.

   “For it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” **Ephesians 2:8-10.**
Mobilize for Service Evangelism

Service is not about our work; it’s about letting God work through us.

“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has not deeds? Can such a faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” —James 2:14-17.

Listening, youth will quickly tune out. Their faith needs involvement. Why wouldn’t we move with them into action?

3. Service establishes our priorities.

Remember the rich young man? He had kept the commandments “since he was a boy.” Yet, he felt there must be something more. “What do I still lack?” he asked Jesus. “Go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven,” was the answer. Matthew 19:16-22. Sadly, his priorities lay elsewhere.

Though few young people would consider themselves rich, they are well-to-do in comparison with the 500 million youth who live in poverty. Should we assure our young people a place beside the rich young man, or lead them into a life of service?

Gary Haugen, founder of International Justice Mission (www.ijm.org), has said that many churches seem more interested in preserving their youth than saving them. Their primary concern is to prevent youth from leaving the church. Yet Jesus says, “Whoever wants to save [preserve] his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.” Luke 9:24. Perhaps we should be less anxious about keeping our youth in the church, and be more eager to get them out of the church: out into the streets, shelters, and orphanages where losing yourself in the needs of others is possible.

4. Service is an encounter with Jesus.

Something happens when young people band together to help a family who have lost their home in a fire. It’s the same thing that happens when they stoop to shine shoes with boys on a faraway street, or when they reach out to befriend a new student at school. God becomes real.

There’s a reason for this which Jesus explains in Matthew 25:35-40. “I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink… Whatever you did for one of the least of these… you did for me.” Though we’re often unaware of it, when we serve others, we actually serve Jesus.

Would you like your young people to meet Jesus personally, not just know about Him? Then begin living like Jesus. Care for those He
Begin living like Jesus, and you will come to understand and appreciate Him more.

5. SERVICE LETS OUR LIGHT SHINE.

There’s one more thing that service accomplishes. Jesus says, “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:16. Loving others draws attention to God.

What happens when the spotlight centers on God? Well, the questions start to come. “Why are you different from the rest?” “Would you pray for me?” “What do you believe, anyway?” It’s at moments like this that words become important.

As we shared in Principle One, the Holy Spirit will give us the words to speak when opportunities arise. But that doesn’t take away the need to prepare. Peter encouraged believers to “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” 1 Peter 3:15.

The recent National Study of Youth and Religion found that American teens were “incredibly inarticulate about their faith.” Researchers concluded that many teens simply haven’t been encouraged to talk about their faith (Soul Searching). What about it? Are we talking about our faith with our congregation’s young people? Are we asking them to share what they believe and why? Putting faith into words is just as important as putting faith into action.

THE GREAT OMISSION

So, now that we understand the importance of serving and sharing, why not rally the youth and pile into the vans? Didn’t Jesus tell His disciples to “Go?” Matthew 28:19. He did. But just after that He said to wait. “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For... in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 1:4.

By rushing into the Great Commission many make the Great Omission. They run off to work for God and leave His gift behind. Don’t make the same mistake! The Holy Spirit will guide you in making critical decisions. He will make you bold in seizing important opportunities. Most importantly, He will put love in your hearts for those you serve.
Paul calls love a “fruit” of the Spirit. **Galatians 5:22.** Love is the key to everything we do in service and sharing. We might be able to speak like angels, but if we don’t do it in love, we’re just making an irritating noise. We might give all we have to the poor, but if we don’t love them in the process, our service will be of no real value. **1 Corinthians 13:1-3.** So before you go, wait and pray for the gift of God’s Spirit.

### THREE TYPES OF SERVICE EVANGELISM PROJECTS

There are many kinds of projects your group could tackle. Most will fit into one of three categories:

1. **Entry-level projects.** Entry level projects focus on brief one-time encounters, like passing out cold bottles of water to thirsty pedestrians or going door-to-door to pray with strangers. Some think of these activities as “sowing seeds” that will reap benefits later on. Others describe them as “contact evangelism” – touching as many people as possible with a kind act or simple message. The advantage of entry-level projects is that they’re easy to plan, and can be done by many different people. The downside is their “hit-and-run” quality. Volunteers may do a few nice things, but leave without any sense of continuing commitment. Looking out for needs or interests to follow up on is one way to turn entry-level projects into long-term ministry.

2. **Short-term projects.** Short-term projects range from two days to two weeks. They bring a team around a “mission,” such as painting a playground, building a church, or holding a series of meetings. Short-term projects often involve travel to another location, adding a sense of adventure. As young people are immersed in an inner-city environment or a different culture, their comfort zones are challenged and their views broadened. One of the temptations in short-term work is to strive for spectacular but short-lived results, leaving others to pick up the pieces after we’re gone. This can be avoided by linking up with an organization that has a long-term ministry in place. Let them determine what needs to be done and how.

3. **Long-term projects.** Long-term projects involve making a lasting commitment to serve a particular group, or to solve an ongoing
Putting faith into words is just as important to making it real as putting faith into action. A great resource for entry-level projects is Steve Sjogren’s site, www.servantevangelism.

WHERE CAN I FIND OPPORTUNITIES?
Maybe you’ve never organized a service evangelism project before and you’re wondering where to start. Don’t worry; opportunities are all around you—some of them no further than the next pew.

1. **Opportunities exist in your church.** There are members of your church family that daily find themselves in physical, emotional or spiritual need. Don’t ignore your own brothers and sisters in Christ! Talk with your pastor or church elders. They may be able to point you in the direction of members who need help.

2. **Awareness** – Getting involved in service opens young people’s eyes to the needs of others, and how God is working in their lives. It also produces real opportunities for earnest prayer.

3. **Witness** – Many youth have never put their faith experience into words. Service offers that opportunity. When people ask, “Why are you doing this?” the door swings wide open for sharing the gospel.

4. **Fulfillment** – At the end of a long-day of service, young people know they’ve done something worthwhile. It gives meaning and purpose to life. It also banishes teenage boredom!

5. **Discovery** – Service provides a real-life laboratory for young people to discover interests, abilities, and spiritual gifts. Outreach projects provide an environment for youth to test and stretch themselves.

6. **Friendships** – Years later youth will value the friendships they formed while serving others. Working together on a mission creates a special kind of bond.

7. **Networking** – When the word gets around that your young people serve others, you’ll never have to look for more opportunities. People will start coming to your group with requests for help.

A problem in the community. Tasks might include working with local educators to reduce school violence, or developing a weekly ministry to the mentally-challenged in a nearby facility. Long-term projects take a lot of planning and hard work, but probably yield the most significant results. Youth learn that service evangelism is a lifestyle that can involve setbacks and sacrifices along the way. Rather than simply creating involvement, long-term projects build responsibility and leadership skills.
The Center for Youth Evangelism assists groups looking for short-term domestic projects. You can call them at 1-800-YOUTH2U. Maranatha Volunteers International has been serving short-term international mission groups for years. You can visit them at www.marantha.org.

2. **Opportunities exist in your school.** Students can minister to those they meet every day—their classmates. School is a great place to look for those who need a friend or a listening ear. Find out what Christian groups are already meeting on the school grounds. Perhaps your youth could join them. Have your students talk to the principal about ways they can make a positive difference in their school.

3. **Opportunities exist in your community.** Opportunities to serve in your community are as close as your local newspaper. The newspaper daily reports stories of those in need. Read it through prayerfully. Look for families who have gone through tragedy or for problems in your town that need to be addressed. And by all means, get out into the community. Talk with community and service agency leaders. Conduct door-to-door surveys. Let it be known you’re looking for ways to help.

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**THE SERVANT EVANGELIST’S CHECKLIST**

**Serve with humility**

- Do you have a teachable attitude? Are you willing to learn from others?
- Are you willing to serve even if you don’t see results or receive credit?
- Are you adaptable and willing to work with the situation at hand?
- Do you consider those you serve as better than yourself?

**Serve with integrity**

- Have you planned to give and do only your best?
- Is your team appropriately trained and skilled for their work?
- Have you been honest and fair in all of your dealings?
- Will you keep the promises you make?

**Serve with sensitivity**

- Are you contributing to the long-term goals of those you serve?
- Are you planning and cooperating with an existing local ministry or organization?
- Will your work be continued or built upon once you are gone?
- Are you working within the accepted customs and practices of the host culture?
4. **Opportunities exist in the world.** Everyday, somewhere in the world there’s a group of people serving on a short-term mission trip. Contact mission organizations to see what opportunities exist. Consider ways to get involved from home, as well. Groups such as REACH International (www.reach.org) and World Vision (www.worldvision.org) will let you sponsor a child on a monthly basis. ADRA (www.adra.org) publishes a “Really Useful Gift Catalog” full of projects in need of funds – from $1 to $1000. Contact the nearest Adventist college and get the names of student missionaries you can support. Or find out how you can assist missionaries in some of the remotest parts of the earth by visiting Adventist Frontier Missions (www.afmonline.org).

**A FEW SERVICE EVANGELISM IDEAS**

Now that you know where to look for service ideas, what kind of things can you do for those you want to serve? Here are just a few project ideas to get you thinking:

**CHURCH PROJECTS**

1. **Adopt-a-Grandparent:** Youth can gain wisdom by developing a relationship with a senior citizen. By spending a day at the zoo, sharing family photos, or just going for a walk, your young people will learn much, and your older church members will appreciate the company.

2. **Greeters at Church:** Most churches have a group of volunteers assigned to greet people as they enter the church. Few churches assign teens to that task. This is a great opportunity for youth to learn some valuable people skills, while demonstrating to those greeted that young people are an important part of your church’s life.

**SCHOOL PROJECTS**

1. **Cheering Janitors:** High-school athletes love their cheering sections. Load your kids up and take them to one of the group member’s next high school game. When you get there, be the official cheering section for that group member. When the game is over, don’t leave. Your youth can be the volunteer cleaning crew, picking up the empty...
1. **GIVE 5**

   **If you have 5 minutes**
   You could place a friendly phone call to an elderly shut-in.

   **If you have 1 hour**
   You could give blood.

   **If you have 5 hours**
   You could clean up a city park.

   **If you have 5 days**
   You could build homes for Habitat for Humanity or other housing groups.

   **If you have 1 month**
   You could join a clean water project to dig a new well in India.

   **If you have 1 year**
   You could join a theater group or church choir.

   For more info go to: http://www.independentsector.org/give5

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2. **Drug-free Team:** Most high schools celebrate a week in October called “Red Ribbon Week.” It’s a nationwide celebration of living a drug-free life. Obtain some drug-free skits and put on a program for a school assembly. High schools are always looking for quality assembly programs.

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

1. **Unsung Heroes Appreciation Day:** There are many people who serve us faithfully each day, with little appreciation. The check-out lady at the local grocery store, the crossing guard at school, the man who takes away our garbage, to name a few. Now it’s time to say “thank you!” Arm yourself with flowers, cards, or other small gifts, and begin making the rounds.

2. **Graffiti Cleanup:** That which creates an eyesore for the community also presents a service opportunity for your youth group. Contact your city, get donated paint, and offer to cover up the graffiti in your town. You’ll make your city a more beautiful place in which to live.

**DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS**

1. **Shipping Buddies:** Many churches in other countries need what we take for granted. Books, clothing, supplies, and even money are needed to carry on their ministry. Your group probably has what some cannot afford. Ship it to them and then stay in touch with their growing ministry.

2. **Church Storming:** Look for a sister church in another town or state that could use some help. Contact the pastor or youth group and ask if they might be willing to house your group for a few days while you gave them a hand with painting, cleaning, or working in the surrounding community. Your group will enjoy the change of scenery and make new friends in the process.

This is only the beginning! There are hundreds, if not thousands, of project ideas, many of which could happen only in your town. Have your youth
research the needs of your community, pray over them, and then brainstorm ideas for projects.

**USE THE LEARNING CYCLE**

Planning a project takes a lot of work. So why not get the most for your effort? It’s easy to finish a project and either collapse or begin looking for the next challenge. But there’s a lot to be gained by debriefing your group members regarding their experiences. Build on everyone’s insights by using the learning cycle described below. As you do, God will teach you, and your group will become more effective for Him with each round of experience.

**PLAN**
(Now What?)

Incorporate what you’ve learned as you pray and plan for your next round of experience.

**DO**
(What?)

Go out and have an experience.

**REVIEW**
(So What?)

Review what happened, reflect on what you have learned, and celebrate your accomplishments.

(For more about learning from experience go to Roger Greenaway’s *Active Reviewing Guide* at reviewing.co.uk)
LEARNING CYCLE STEPS

Step One: Plan. Plan the activity with your group and provide them with the knowledge and skills needed to participate and benefit from it.

A. Spend time researching and praying about needs in your area
B. Identify an activity
C. Coordinate with those being served
D. Plan and train for the activity

Step Two: Do. Implement your plans. If you have planned well students should:

A. Find the activity meaningful
B. Have a sense of ownership in the project
C. Be supervised and encouraged during the activity

Step Three: Review. Ask your group during the project to reflect on what they are learning. After the project:

A. Replay what happened by taking reports from various members
B. Discuss ways in which God provided; thank Him for His blessings
C. Share personal reflections and record lessons learned
D. Celebrate group accomplishments and affirm individual contributions
E. Evaluate the impact of the project on the participants and the people served
F. Recommend any changes or improvements for the future

Back to Step One: Plan. This time, incorporate the lessons and recommendations gained from the previous experience.

Rejoice in the Miracles

In the process of preparing for and implementing your service evangelism activity, whether raising money, preparing a sermon, or making phone calls, it’s important to focus on the miracles. God will work in the lives of your youth, the people you serve, and those who organize. Be aware of those miracles through this simple two-step process.
1. **INVITE AND EXPECT GOD TO WORK.** The Bible says in John 16:24, “Before now you have asked nothing in my name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.” God wants to bless our service to others! Why not ask him to do so?

2. **GIVE HIM ALL THE PRAISE.** That’s what Jesus’ seventy disciples did. Luke 10:17 says, “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying Lord, even the demons are subject to us through your name.” Be quick to give God the credit for every good thing that happens. Ask your pastor to let your group take a church service for a time of thanks and testimony.

**PASS IT ON** **SHARING THE PRINCIPLE**

As in all of youth ministry, service evangelism offers a great opportunity to train young leaders. Involve your youth in every step of the process. Here are a few suggestions on how to include your youth when planning activities:

1. **PLANNING** – Your youth can brainstorm, make contacts with potential service clients, and plan the details of your service evangelism activities.

2. **PREPARATION** – Your group can gather the needed materials, raise funds, and encourage others to participate.

3. **ACTION** – Your youth will participate in carrying out the activity.

4. **FOLLOW-UP** – Have your kids clean, visit people requesting Bible studies, fix and return borrowed tools, write thank-you notes, and lead fellow youth in debriefing sessions. Your youth can also conduct a praise service in your church.
There are many stories in the Bible that tell of mighty men who did great deeds. But the Book of Acts tells the story of a quiet woman who is remembered for the compassionate things she did. The Goliaths she slew were the giants of poverty and despair. She brought happiness to many by sewing clothing, offering a kind word, and relieving suffering. **Acts 9:36 says, “...she was full of good works and kind deeds...”**

Dorcas is still remembered today because she served. The Bible says there was great sadness when she died. People brought the clothing she had made for them and wept in honor of her life. **Acts 9:40-41** tells how God’s intervened in Dorcas’ death. He used Peter to bring her back to life. You can be sure that as soon as Dorcas was raised, she went right back to serving others.

We have the opportunity to keep Dorcas’ work alive. The deeds we do may be small, but never believe for a minute that it doesn’t make an eternal difference. Dorcas served one person at a time. It’s the way we ought to serve. Make a difference in one person’s life today.

Planning service and evangelism projects can be exciting. But don’t forget to bathe all of your planning and doing in prayer. You will be working for and with God, so include him regularly in your conversations. Here is a prayer you might pray:

“Dear Lord, your Word tells me that serving others is the purest form of religion. Please help me and my group to focus on the needs of others. Teach us to see the world around us the way you do. And give us opportunities to tell others of your love.

“As we plan our service activities, please show us where we can join You in Your work. Help us to prepare thoroughly and carry out our mission faithfully. And when we’ve accomplished a job well done, I pray that we’ll give all the glory to you. Amen.”
LIVE IT OUT ACTING ON THE PRINCIPLE

Now it’s time to serve. Are you fired up and ready to go? Commit to taking just one of the following steps in the next week, and you’ll be on your way to an exciting adventure in service evangelism!

1. Call a local community service agency such as a food bank, homeless shelter, or United Way office and ask how your group can help.

2. Sit down with your local pastor and ask what your group can do to assist him in meeting the needs of members in your congregation.

3. Appoint one member of your group to find out what kind of Christian groups or service clubs are already active in your local high school and how students can get involved.

4. Ask your youth group if they’d like to go on a mission trip sometime in the next year.

RESOURCES

BOOKS


Available from

McKee, Jonathan. *Do They Run When They See You Coming?* Zondervan, 2005. Reach out more effectively to students outside of your church.

youth find and use their own style of evangelism.


MULTIMEDIA

WEBSITES/E-NEWSLETTERS
www.adra.org. Adventist Development and Relief Agency. Pray for a special need, read the quarterly newsletter, donate to a project using the Original Really Useful Gift Catalog, or access the interactive Adventures for Kids.

www.adventistyouth.org/wecare. We Care Domestic Mission Trips. Center for Youth Evangelism organizes several mission trips a year in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Visit the website or call 800-YOUTH-2U.


www.ijm.org. International Justice Mission. Click on The Justice Mission link to access a teaching curriculum for youth and to learn how you can get involved in freeing the oppressed around the world.

www.maranatha.org. Maranatha Volunteers International. Get involved in a variety of domestic and international building and evangelism projects. Check out the Ultimate Workout for teens, the Multiple Group Project for small youth groups, or the Christmas Family Project for families. Participate from
home through the Ten Dollar Church Program. Free e-newsletter, Maranatha Matters.

www.reach.org. **REACH International.** Sponsor a child at one of REACH’s orphanages, or consider being an orphanage volunteer for a year.

www.servantevangelism.com. **Servant Evangelism.** Steve Sjogren’s site is packed with entry-level outreach ideas, resources, and training opportunities. Free newsletter offered.

www.teenmania.org. **Teen Mania.** This ministry sends 4000 teens a year on Global Expeditions, and trains 600 high school students in a year-long Honor Academy. Learn about an Acquire the Fire conference near you.

www.worldservants.org. **World Servants.** Short-term trips and cross-cultural training opportunities for youth and families.

www.worldvision.org. **World Vision.** Sponsor a child or choose to sponsor a project through the Gift Catalog.

www.ywam.org. **Youth With a Mission.** Go on an outreach project. Adopt A People to pray and work for. Learn about the Discipleship Training School.

www.csm.org. **Center for Student Missions.** Offers urban short-term mission opportunities (one to six nights) for youth and families in eight major cities in North America.

www.groupworkcamps.com. **Group Work Camps.** Choose from over 60 different domestic and international locations for a one-week service experience.

www.afmonline.org. **Adventist Frontier Missions.** Follow the reports of missionaries on the frontlines of mission work around the world. Receive their instant e-mail updates. Support them with prayers, e-mails, and donations.

**TRAINING SEMINARS**

**Understanding and Reaching the Unchurched Seminar.** Jonathan McKee. www.thesource4ym.com/reach. A one-day seminar that helps your youth group lay a strategy for reaching youth who are not in a church.
## APPENDIX

In this appendix you will find “Staff Meeting”, “Investigate” and other interactive activities that you can contemplate on your own, but that are specifically designed to utilize in your youth group or in a workshop setting. It will help you and those you teach understand the main point of each principle. Along with each activity you’ll find Leader’s Notes to help you teach that activity.

### GROW SPIRITUALLY
- “Where Did the Time Go?” – Using time wisely ................................................................. 1
- Where Did the Time Go? – Activity Boxes – Prioritizing activities in our lives ......................... 2
- Hour Power – Prioritizing Daily Hours – Evaluating use of time ......................................... 3
- Which Floor Am I On? – Determining where you are spiritually ......................................... 4
- An Explosive Touch – A small group Bible study for beginners ........................................... 5

### EQUIP FOR LEADERSHIP
- “What You Got?” – Sharing Talents & Abilities .................................................................... 6
- Leadership Evaluation – Assessing your own leadership qualities ......................................... 7

### NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS
- “4 A Friend” – How to become a better friend ...................................................................... 8

### PLAN WITH PURPOSE
- “Tower of Cards” – Working together when planning ................................................................ 9
- “What’s the Plan” – Evaluating your planning skills ................................................................. 10
- Youth Needs Survey – Identifying the needs of others ............................................................. 11
- The Youth Minister’s Ideal Calendar
  - Organizing your youth ministry weekly calendar ................................................................. 12
- A Practice Budget – Creating your own budget ....................................................................... 13

### EMPOWER OTHERS
- Your Town News – Helping others visualize future success ..................................................... 14
- Am I Empowered to Empower? – Evaluation worksheet ......................................................... 15

### PROMOTE YOUR MINISTRY
- What Did You Say? – How to listen better .................................................................................. 16
- The Seven Time Rule
  - How to communicate the good news about your program ................................................... 17

### MOBILIZE FOR SERVICE EVANGELISM
- News Hounds – Finding service opportunities ....................................................................... 18
- Planning to Serve Worksheet – Preparing for a service project ................................................ 19
- Youth Federation Constitution – How to establish an area-wide youth council ....................... 20
Staff Meeting

“Where Did the Time Go? (10 minutes)

Start the group activity by saying ENTHUSIASTICALLY:

1. Have on person in your group take your paper and pen and draw a vertical and horizontal line that intersects in the middle of your paper. Your paper should now be divided into four equally sized boxes.

2. Next, put the following labels at the top of each quadrant. Label the top left box (1) “crisis and deadlines.” Label the top right box (2) “preparation and relationship building.” Label the bottom left box (3) “routines and running around.” Finally, label the bottom right box (4) “just a wastin’ time.” (Worksheet on next page.)

3. Now, I will give each group thirty seconds to answer each of the following four questions. Place the answers in the appropriate boxes.

4. After the groups have written their answers, give two minutes for each of the small groups to share their results with each other.

5. Now allow one minute for the small groups to share responses with the whole group.

6. Now ask, “Which box do most of your activities fit into? Which box should truly effective youth leaders focus on?” (The ideal answer is box 2.) “As you invest more time on the planning, problem-prevention, and relationship-building activities, you’ll find that you spend far less time picking up the broken pieces in box 1 or reacting to the urgent demands of others in box 3.” (Stephen Covey, Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.)

LEADER’S NOTES

This activity is designed for your youth group or workshop setting. It is to be used to help each participant prioritize the activities in their lives.

1. Split your group into smaller groups of four. Give each person a piece of plain paper and a pen.

2. After reading the instructions for the activity, read the questions given at 30-second intervals.

3. When the writing part of the activity is complete, debrief on the second set of questions.

4. Finally, have person work on the “Hour Power” activity and individually decide on their devotional time during the day.
"Where Did the Time Go?"

Place your answers to the following questions in the appropriate box.

1. What activities in your life are/have been crises, deadlines?
2. What activities in your life are/have been preparation, relationship building?
3. What activities in your life are/have been minor issues, interruptions?
Hour Power

Individually, write the number of hours you spend per day doing these activities:

- ___ Sleep
- ___ Eat
- ___ Work
- ___ Study/School
- ___ Travel
- ___ Kicking back
- ___ Miscellaneous
- ___ Hygiene (bathing, brushing, etc.)
- ___ Family and Friends (fellowship)
- ___ Recreation (hobbies and sports)
- ___ Entertainment (TV, etc.)

- ___ Total Hours

How many hours a day are left for prayer, Bible study, and witnessing?

What activities can you change or cut back to make more time for God?

Where and when can you find time to be alone with God each day?

TIME: ____________________________________________

PLACE: _________________________________________

1. LAWLESSNESS
Do you want nothing to do with God and religion?  Yes  No

2. STRUCTURED
Are you deeply concerned about following the rules for the sake of following the rules?  Yes  No

3. QUESTIONING
Do you have serious questions about God, the church, and its rules?  Yes  No

4. RELATIONAL
Have you understood that religion is about a forever relationship with God?  Yes  No

Are you still in love with Jesus?  Yes  No

Are you increasingly at home with the Bible?  Yes  No

Are you making prayer your first priority?  Yes  No

Can you see how God is leading in everyday situations?  Yes  No

Do you realize when Satan is attacking?  Yes  No

Do you rely on human methods to accomplish spiritual work?  Yes  No

Do you know who you are in Christ?  Yes  No

Have you come to terms with inner pain, jealousy, fear, and so on?  Yes  No

Have you surrendered control of your time, money, and spiritual gifts to the Lord?  Yes  No

Are you letting the busyness of the unredeemed world set your agenda?  Yes  No

Is the fruit of the Spirit becoming evident to you?  Yes  No

Do you keep serving those who are ungrateful?  Yes  No

NOTES OF YOUR OWN
Here’s an actual small group study that you can use with your youth.
An Explosive Touch
A Small Group Bible Study for Beginners

COMMUNITY TIME
Spend some time mingling. Then have people sit in a circle, share their names, and one thing about them no one in the group knows.

DISCUSSION STARTER
Choose one of these questions to begin: 1) What are some things you want to do or see before you die? Or 2) Share a time when you lost someone or something close to you (this question will continue the sharing process, but it will also be a great transition to the Scripture).

BRIEF PRAYER BY LEADER

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STUDY BY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE . . .
“I believe God will speak to each of us. As we read, let’s look for details, ask questions, and share insights. Let’s make sure everyone gets a chance to talk because our view of God will be more beautiful and complete if we see Him through many eyes.”

THE STUDY Luke 7:11-16
Direct students to read one verse each until you’ve read the entire passage. Now, read through each verse again and ask the questions outlined below. Don’t be afraid of silence, but don’t let it drag on too long either. Study each verse, one at a time. Here are some questions you might use.

Verse 11—What’s the context of this story? What was the crowd like?

Verse 12—What do we know about this woman? Of the following, what does the widow fear the most? Why?
A) Never seeing her son’s face again C) Starving to death
B) Having no one to talk to D) That she will be the next one to die

Verse 13—Why did Jesus say “Don’t Cry?”

Verse 14—Jewish Law said that anyone who touched a coffin would be defiled for seven days.
Why did Jesus touch the coffin?

Verse 15—What do you admire most about Jesus and why?

A) The way he notices the widow  
B) His simple words and style  
C) His rebellious way of breaking tradition  
D) That He was motivated by love, not popularity

Verse 16—What was the most common reaction of someone meeting Jesus for the first time?

AFTER DIGGING INTO, SHARING AND EXPERIENCING THIS PASSAGE, SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS . . .

“Bid deal. This happened 2,000 years ago. What does this do for us today? What message could God be trying to send each one of us through this story? In a minute, you’ll be given the opportunity to share one thing you believe God is saying to you through this story. You can pass if you want, but remember this, sharing with others is a good experience. It confirms what you believe and encourages the people around you.”

NOW, WRAP UP THE STUDY BY ASKING THESE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Is there an example for me to follow? Is there a sin for me to avoid? Is there a command for me to obey? Is there a promise for me to claim? What does this passage teach me about God? If Jesus were here today and you had just seen this miracle, what would you have learned?

YOU MIGHT HAVE STUDENTS WRITE DOWN THEIR ANSWERS

It might be in the form of a letter to God. This form of journaling is a great way to keep your kid’s minds focused and a record of their thoughts, experiences, and insights.

NOW, FINISH YOUR TIME WITH PRAYER:

Option 1: Groups of two take one request and pray for each other.

Option 2: Popcorn Prayer – Someone starts with opening prayer and you close. In between, your kids can share songs, Scriptures, or short prayers. Before you begin, say this, “In the stillness, God is there.” Don’t be nervous about silence between prayers.

End of Study

(Bible Study section modified from Giraffe News, Spring 1997, Gary Parks and Sam McKee)
What You Got?
(5 minutes)

Start the group activity by saying enthusiastically:

- Everyone stand up!
- As quickly as you can, find five other people you don’t know at all or very well (groups could be larger or smaller depending on the size of your group, but try not to make them any larger than eight or smaller than three).
- Find a spot, form a circle, introduce yourselves if necessary and then share with the group two talents or abilities that you possess.

After people have had time to share, say:

- Each of us has a unique, God-give mixture of qualities that we can contribute to our youth ministry.
- Now, have one person in your group share how the person on their left might be able to use their abilities to lead in youth ministry. Continue the process until everyone has shared. Help each other brainstorm on how to use their talents to lead in youth ministry. Make sure that your entire group affirms and encourages each person in the group.

LEADER’S NOTES

This activity is designed for your youth group or a workshop setting. It is to be used to help each participant recognize that they have been called to youth ministry with their unique bundle of talents and abilities. At the completion of this activity, every person should be affirmed in some way for the gifts that God has given them.
Investigate

Leadership Evaluation

Assess your own leadership qualities

(5 minutes)

SCALE

0=Never  1=Seldom  2=Sometimes  3=Usually  4=Always

1. I have influence.  0 1 2 3 4

2. I have self-discipline.  0 1 2 3 4

3. I do not accept the status quo.  0 1 2 3 4

4. I have a deep love for youth.  0 1 2 3 4

5. I am willing to serve others.  0 1 2 3 4

6. I display a positive spirit.  0 1 2 3 4

7. I understand people.  0 1 2 3 4

8. I am willing to take responsibility.  0 1 2 3 4

9. I display patience.  0 1 2 3 4

10. I am willing to make changes.  0 1 2 3 4

11. I have integrity.  0 1 2 3 4

12. I am growing closer to God.  0 1 2 3 4

13. I have the ability and desire to keep learning.  0 1 2 3 4

14. I take initiative.  0 1 2 3 4

LEADER’S NOTES

1. Photocopy enough of the “Leadership Evaluation” worksheets for everyone in the group and distribute one to each participant.

2. Explain that self-evaluation is very important for improving leadership skills and give some time for everyone to fill out their evaluation. Explain that there is no magic total score that indicates a good or bad leader. This evaluation is simply intended to point out strengths and weaknesses in the 14 areas selected.

3. After five minutes ask: Do you feel encouraged or discouraged now? What are your strengths and weaknesses? What strategies might you use to improve your leadership skills?

ADDITIONAL POSSIBILITIES

• If time permits you might have the participants break into smaller groups and discuss strengths, weaknesses, and strategies with each other.

• You might also use this
Investigate

4A Friend

The “4A Friend” evaluation will help you see how well you connect with young people. Circle the number that best indicates how often you put these skills into practice.

5 = all the time  1 = never

Once you’ve finished the quiz look at the questions that you scored a three or below and determine what you might do to increase your effectiveness in those areas.

AVAILABILITY
1 2 3 4 5 Are you frequently present among youth?
1 2 3 4 5 Do you take time to listen to them?

ASSERTIVENESS
1 2 3 4 5 Are you initiating positive friendships with youth?
1 2 3 4 5 Do you give personal attention to the popular and unpopular kids?
1 2 3 4 5 Are you sensitive to your youth’s feelings?
1 2 3 4 5 Are you an advocate for youth?

AFFIRMATION
1 2 3 4 5 Do you say positive things to and about youth?
1 2 3 4 5 Do you smile, nod, have good eye contact, give them a handshake, high five, or pat them on the back when you speak to them?

ACCEPTANCE
1 2 3 4 5 Do you accept your youth as they are, not as you’d like them to be?
1 2 3 4 5 Do you trust kids with responsibility, even when the risk seems great?

LEADER’S NOTES

1. Photocopy enough of the “4A Friend” evaluation sheets for everyone in the group and distribute one to each participant.

2. Read the introduction to this section aloud. Explain that making a positive impact on kids’ lives means that we need to make contact, affirm, and accept them. Explain that this quiz will give them an idea of where they are in this process. Give the participants three minutes to answer the questions.

3. After three minutes ask: How well do you know the kids in your group? Are you taking steps to get to know your kids better? What are some issues within your group you may need to be sensitive about? How easy is it for you to love...
LEADER’S NOTES

This activity is designed for a workshop setting. It is to be used to help each participant recognize that planning is one of the most important elements of any youth program.

Split your group into smaller groups of five or six. Give each group a pack of cards.

Use a table or any other windless surface.

Staff Meeting

“Tower of Cards”
(5 minutes)

START THE GROUP ACTIVITY BY SAYING ENthusiastically

“I want you to take the deck of cards that has been given you and carefully build a tower. You may bend the cards if you wish. I will time you for five minutes and the group with the highest tower is the winner. Plan your strategy carefully before just throwing cards together.”

After 5 minutes of “Card Tower” building, bring the group back together and have them debrief on these questions:
1. How did your group decide on the best plan to build your card tower?
2. How do the “planning principles” you used to build the tower relate to planning in youth ministry?
3. Did anyone’s tower fall apart in the process? What mishaps can cause a youth program or activity to fall apart?
4. What problems can planning your youth ministry prevent?
What’s the Plan?

EVALUATION

I GENERALLY PLAN MY YOUTH ACTIVITIES
   a. Six months ahead of time
   b. One month ahead of time
   c. Three days ahead of time
   d. I prefer to work under pressure—I plan on the spot

MY YOUTH ACTIVITIES CALENDAR
   a. Is always with me
   b. Is somewhere on my desk
   c. Is as white as the newly fallen snow
   d. What’s a youth activities calendar?

OUR YOUTH DEPARTMENT’S VISION AND MISSION
   a. Is well developed
   b. Is in the works
   c. Is not formulated
   d. Is still at the optometrist

THE SPIRITUAL AND TOPICAL GOALS I’VE SET FOR MY YOUTH GROUP
   a. Are written out in my youth group planning book
   b. Are clearly defined in my brain even if no one else does know about them.
   c. Are constantly changing
   d. Who’s got time to set goals?

MY YOUTH DEPARTMENT’S BUDGET
   a. Is set every year by my church board
   b. Is supplemented by fund raising
   c. Is non-existent
   d. I hadn’t even thought to ask for one

THE WAY I EVALUATE PROGRESS IN THE YOUTH DEPARTMENT
   a. Is by distributing a formal survey
   b. Is by informally interviewing people and getting their input
   c. Is solely determined by my own judgment
   d. Who needs a report card—it isn’t school
Youth Needs Survey

I am making plans for the upcoming youth group programs.

Please help me know the issues you would like to discuss by prioritizing the following list on a scale of 1-5 (1=very interested; 5 not at all interested)

- My relationship with God
- Making and keeping friends
- Peer Pressure
- Drugs and/or drinking
- Dealing with temptations
- School
- Dating
- Racism
- Loneliness
- Getting along with my parents
- Music
- Suicide
- Self-esteem
- Sharing my faith
- Choosing a college
- Other
The Youth Minister’s Ideal Calendar

SUNDAY
· Early morning devotional (Grow Spiritually)
· Family time
· Prepare youth newsletter (Plan with Purpose)
· Contact youth- Just to say “hi” (Nurture Relationships)

MONDAY
· Early morning devotional
· Read youth ministry materials (Equip for Leadership)

TUESDAY
· Early morning devotional
· Contact youth- Just to say “hi”

WEDNESDAY
· Early morning devotional
· Youth council (Empower Others)

THURSDAY
· Early morning devotional
· Contact parents and church board (Promote Your Ministry)

FRIDAY
· Early morning devotional
· Friday evening get together

SABBATH
· Early morning devotional
· Sabbath School
· Sabbath afternoon outreach (Mobilize for Service Evangelism)

LEADER’S NOTES

1. In groups of five or six, construct an ideal weekly youth minister’s calendar. Include personal activities along with youth ministry activities. You have five minutes to do this.

2. Bring the groups back together and by consensus form the ideal weekly youth minister’s calendar.

3. Individually, underline the items you are already doing and write down some ways you can improve in the action planning section provided.

4. Circle three other items that you are not doing. What must be done to accomplish them? What is your starting date?
A Practice Budget

TRY IT OUT
Now that you’ve seen the importance of creating a budget for your department, let’s do a little budget work right here and now.

- Where is your income coming from?

- What are your expenses?

- Do your income and expense totals match, or are you in trouble?

- Where might you find that extra cash.
Staff Meeting

Your Town News

(5 minutes)

START THE GROUP DYNAMIC BY SAYING ENTHUSIASTICALLY

1. Visualize your youth group as the most exciting group to be with in your town. Pick a time of the week—it could be Wednesday night, Saturday morning, Saturday night, etc. Pick a place and try to imagine what would be happening, who would be there, and what it would feel like.

   How many people would be there?
   How are they dressed?
   Is there music?
   Is there an award ceremony?
   What was done to win the award?
   Are the media there?
   How many of your friends are there?
   Why did they come?

   Leader’s Notes

   This activity is designed for a workshop setting. It is to be used to help each participant recognize that empowering youth for ministry can transform their youth program. Encourage each or your participants to imagine their youth leading out in the youth program and how that would affect everyone present.

2. Now imagine that the next day, you picked up your newspaper. Your youth group made the front page! What would it say? What was the lead sentence?

   Start the activity by saying:

   1. This is an individual activity.
   2. Fill out the lead paragraph, story, etc., on the next page.
   3. You have 5 minutes to complete this activity.
   Are there any questions?
   4. After 5 minutes, have people read their news release to their neighbors.
Your Town News

HEADLINE

LEAD PARAGRAPH

THE STORY

CHIEF CHARACTERS

RESULTS

FUTURE PLANS

NOTES OF YOUR OWN
Am I Empowered to Empower?

Empowering others to do ministry is something that most of us have to work on. It takes planning, letting go of our egos, and training youth. But when it happens, it’s exciting! It’s great to see our youth leading out and doing ten times the work we could accomplish ourselves. If Jesus, our Savior, who could have done it all Himself, empowered disciples to do the work, I think we’d be wise to use the same plan.

Write your answers to the questions below and with each make a plan to improve your “empowerization” skills.

• How easy is it for me to trust youth to be responsible for major activities?

• Here’s what I’ll do to put more trust in my youth when it comes to major activities:

• How much have I involved youth in the planning of my youth program during the past six months?

• What upcoming events can my youth plan?

• How many times in the last six months have I put kids in charge of some major activity or program?

• My goals for empowering young people in this way for the next six months are:

• What would I do if I put young people in charge of a program and things didn’t work out the way I felt they should have?

• What is my plan for using mistakes to teach my youth lessons about leadership?

LEADER’S NOTES

1. Photocopy enough of the “Am I Empowered to Empower?” worksheets for everyone in the group and distribute one to each participant.

2. Explain that empowering youth for leadership involves planning and that this worksheet can be the beginnings of that plan. Read the introduction to the activity aloud and get everyone working. This is an individual activity.

3. After five minutes ask:
   How often have you been using your youth in leadership positions? What are your concerns about empowering youth for leadership? What happens if the kids “goof up” when given this responsibility? What would leadership do for particular members of your youth group?

ADDITIONAL POSSIBILITIES

If time permits, you might have the participants break into smaller groups and discuss more ways to involve youth in leadership roles.
LEADER’S NOTES
This activity is designed for a workshop setting. It is to be used to help each participant recognize that effective communication is vital to youth ministry. Communicating to as many people in as many ways as possible lessen the chance that the message will be garbled or missed. If your group isn’t already situated in rows please ask them to arrange themselves in rows for this activity.

RESOURCE NEEDS
Chairs

Staff Meeting
What Did You Say?
(5 minutes)

START THE GROUP ACTIVITY BY SAYING ENTHUSIASTICALLY

- Will rows one, three, five, etc. please turn your chairs around and face the row behind you.
- The row facing the screen will act out the words below using only hand motions.
- The row facing away from the screen must not see the words and will try to guess the words as their teammates act them out.
  - Uncertain
  - Surprised
  - Jungle
  - Sea-Sick

After one minute, have people swap sides and repeat the exercise. Use paper or a chalkboard to write the words on. Here are some words to use for the second round.

- Fearful
- Fire Truck
- Shocked
- Santa
The Seven Time Rule

A good communication effort includes a number of different types of promotion. People need multiple “advertisements” for your upcoming event in today’s world of media bombardment. You need to tell people what you are doing, remind them that you are doing it, jog their memory a time or two, and then tell them again so they will not forget. A good rule of thumb is the seven time rule:

Tell people about your event in seven different ways to guarantee adequate communication.

DIRECTIONS
You can use the same means to communicate to youth, parents, and church leaders. List seven methods you would like to implement in your ministry. How can you accomplish the first one? The second?

- church bulletins
- flyers
- mailings
- telephone chains
- newsletters
- signs
- personal invitations
- calendars
- posters
- verbal announcements
- letters
- postcards
- e-mail
- periodic meetings
- “BIG Mouths” (Good people assigned to spread the news)

LEADER’S NOTES
1. Photocopy enough of the “Seven Time Rule” worksheets for everyone in the group and distribute one to each participant.
2. Explain that the theory behind the Seven Time Rule is repetition. If you make an effort to communicate in seven different ways most people will get the message.
3. Read the directions for the activity. After five minutes ask: How difficult will it be for you to communicate in seven different ways? Who can help you in your communication effort? How effective do you think the seven time rule will be in your local church? What will the obstacles in your local church be? How can you overcome those obstacles?

ADDITIONAL POSSIBILITIES
- If time permits you might have the participants break into smaller groups and discuss communication ideas with each other.
**News Hounds**

*(10 minutes)*

Start the group activity by saying enthusiastically:

There are hundreds of ways to serve your community right under your nose. The newspaper is usually looked at as a report of the previous day’s headlines, but today you’re going to look at it in a different way. Think of the newspaper as a report of the previous day’s service opportunities. There are literally hundreds of people mentioned every day in your hometown newspaper that need your help.

This activity will show you and your kids how to use the newspaper to help people next door and across town.

**LEADER’S NOTES**

This activity is designed for your youth group or in a workshop setting. It is to be used to help each participant realize that service opportunities exist all around them. By using a recent newspaper, a host of ideas for new projects can be found.

1. Split your group into smaller groups of four. Give each person a piece of plain paper, a pen, and a newspaper from the previous week. (The “news” portion of the paper works best.)
2. Read the instructions for the activity.
3. All groups should design at least two service projects based on needs they discover in the newspaper. Each group will write their plan as instructed on the paper.
4. After each group has their projects planned, everyone will come back together and share their plans with the larger group.
5. After everyone has had an opportunity to share their projects, debrief with the following questions: What preparation is needed to accomplish your project? How many people will be needed to complete the project? How much financial support will be required? Do you know any “experts” (painters, carpenter, plumbers, auto-mechanics, etc.) that you can enlist for your project? What kind of impact will this project have on your kids? How could using this newspaper activity with your kids help them buy into the community service project?
HERE ARE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Break into groups of four (at this point you should hand out a newspaper, pencils, and a sheet of plain paper to each group).

2. Now give a section of the newspaper to each person in your group and look for possible service activities (i.e., giving food to victims of a burned home, writing cards to, or visiting an accident victim in the hospital, volunteering at a local event, etc.) Make your activities as creative and exciting as possible.

3. Divide your sheet of plain paper into two sections. On one section write down how you will promote your project. On the other section write what you will need to accomplish your project (people, supplies, food, etc.)

4. After you’ve designed your projects come back to the main group and share your plans with everyone.

LEADER’S NOTES

1. Photocopy enough of the “Planning to Serve” worksheets on the next page for everyone in the group and distribute one to each participant.

2. Read the instruction to this section aloud. Explain that successful service projects take a lot of planning. Split your group into trios and have them work through the sheet.

3. After 7 or 8 minutes of planning, have the group come back together. Now ask: What surprised you about the planning process? Was there anything you thought of that was not included on this list? What challenges will you face as you put your project together? How do you think this project will affect the members of your youth group? How will your project provide an opportunity for your group to share their faith?
NOTES OF YOUR OWN

Planning to Serve Worksheet

Project

Date of project

Service site contact person

Medical information and release form for your kids

Supervisory assignment for adult teachers

Work assignment for kids

Fundraising ideas to support your project

Budget

Supplies (paint, brushes etc.)

Organize kids to do worship before project

Eating arrangements

Transportation

Backup plan in case planned project falls through

Project photographer and/or videographer

After project get-together

Thank you cards

Other items and/or notes
Youth Federation Constitution

ARTICLE I – NAME
The name of this organization shall be the __________________________ Youth Federation.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE
The vision and mission for the area churches is as follows:

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP
Membership in the association is granted to all area churches in the ____________________. Each church shall elect a representative to vote and participate in all activities and meetings of the Federation. Dues shall be $ ____ per month.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS
Officers shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and Immediate past President. All officers shall be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Officers shall be elected by nomination and a majority vote of the local church elected representatives (whose churches are paying dues). The election will be held at the Federation’s annual meeting prior to the end of the current officer’s term. If for any reason an officer is unable to complete his her term, a new officer will be appointed by majority vote of the remaining officers.

ARTICLE V – TERM OF OFFICE
Each officer shall be elected to hold office for 4 years and may serve not more than two consecutive terms. After his her term has expired, the President shall remain an officer of the Federation as immediate past President for the first term of the newly elected President in a non-voting, consultant role.

ARTICLE VI – ORGANIZATION & STRUCTURE
The association shall operate independently and actions of the association will reflect the doctrines and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and will serve to further the goals and ideals as set forth by the conference’s youth council. The Federation will present an annual report to the conference youth council consisting of activities of the Federation for the previous year and any activities planned for the following year. A financial report will also be given annually. The President of the Federation will be a member invitee of the Conference Youth Council. He or she may give a report if requested. The Conference Youth Council must approve dates and activities for Federation meetings if they are intended to be for the entire conference. All news items or facts relating to the conference youth calendar will be submitted to the conference Youth Director before presentation to members of the conference Youth Council.

ARTICLE VII – FINANCIAL
All funds received by the Federation from membership fees, private donations or other means shall be used as the operating funds for the Federation unless otherwise specified. All funds raised by the Federation will be held in an account agreed upon by the Officers and will be distributed by the Treasurer of the Federation for projects voted upon by members of officers of the Federation. The Treasurer of the association will be solely responsible for the distribution of funds. A detailed financial report will be presented to the conference Youth Council annually or as requested. Any member of the Federation may inspect the accounts and records of the Federation provided that reasonable notice is made in writing to the Treasurer. No part of the net earnings of the Federation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Federation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES
Officers shall elect members to serve on committees, as they deem appropriate.

ARTICLE IX – MEETING
There shall be at least one annual meeting for all members of the Federation churches. Dates for said meeting to be approved by the conference Youth Council and or Federation officers. It will be communicated to members by the association at least one month prior to meeting. Officers shall meet at least quarterly at a location agreed upon by all.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS AND BY-LAWS
Amendments and or by-laws may be adopted by a majority vote of the officers in attendance at any of the quarterly meetings.

ARTICLE XI – DISSOLUTION
In the event of dissolution of the Federation, all assets shall become property of the Conference Youth Council and are to be distributed as deemed appropriate by the Conference Youth Department.
RESOURCE DIRECTORY
ADVENTIST EDUCATION HELPLINES

Atlantic Union College: 1-800-282-2030, www.atlanticuc.edu
Canadian Union College: 1-800-661-8129, www.cauc.ca
Columbia Union College: 1-800-835-4212, www.cuc.edu
Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences: 1-800-500-7747, www.fhchs.edu
Griggs University (HIS): 1-800-782-4769, www.griggs.edu
Kettering College of Medical Arts: 1-800-433-5262, www.kcma.edu
La Sierra University: 1-800-874-5587, www.lasiera.edu
Loma Linda University: 1-800-422-4558, www.llu.edu
Oakwood College: 1-800-824-5312, www.oakwood.edu
Pacific Union College: 1-800-862-7080, www.puc.edu
Southern Adventist University: 1-800-768-8437, www.southern.edu
Southwestern Adventist University: 1-800-433-2240, www.swau.edu
Union College: 1-800-228-4600, www.ucollege.edu
Walla Walla College: 1-800-541-8900, www.wwc.edu
Weimar College: 1-800-525-9192, www.weimarcollege.com

ADVENTIST INFORMATIONAL HELPLINES


ADVENTIST YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY HELPLINES

Center for Creative Ministries: 1-800-272-4664.
TOLLFREE AND WEB RESOURCE DIRECTORY

www.creativeministry.org

CENTER FOR YOUTH EVANGELISM: 1-800-YOUTH-2U,
www.adventistyouth.org

FAMILY MATTERS: 1-800-309-LOVE,

HANCOCK CENTER FOR YOUTH MINISTRIES: www.lasierra.edu/centers/hcym

SEMINARS UNLIMITED: 1-800-982-3344.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY CONSULTANTS: 1-800-440-1670
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY RESPONSE LINE: 1-800-SDA-7738

CHURCH COMPUTER/SOFTWARE RESOURCES:

APPLY SOFTWARE SYSTEMS, INC.: 1-800-932-7759


CHRISTIANITY ONLINE (AMERICA ONLINE): 1-800-827-6364.
jjm.aaa.net.au/articles/9695.htm

CONSISTENT COMPUTER BARGAINS: 1-800-342-4222, www.ccbnpts.com

LOGOS RESEARCH SYSTEMS: 1-800-87-LOGOS, www.logos.com

GROUP’S MINISTRYNET: 1-800-447-1070,
shop.grouppublishing.com/ministrynet/default.asp

NAvPRESS SOFTWARE: 1-800-777-SOFT,

ONLINE BIBLE: 1-800-243-7124.


DRAMA MINISTRY/ARTISTS/PUBLISHER RESOURCES


CONTEMPORARY DRAMA SERVICE: 1-800-93-PLAYS,
www.contemporarydrama.com
TOLLFREE AND WEB RESOURCE DIRECTORY

**Covenant Players**: 1-800-79-DRAMA, www.covenantplayers.org

Destiny Drama Company: 1-800-SOUTHERN, www.destiny.southern.edu

Dramatic Publishing Company: 1-800-HIT-SHOW,
  www.dramaticpublishing.com


One Way Street: 1-800-569-4537, www.onewaystreet.com

Pioneer Drama Service: 1-800-33-DRAMA, www.pioneerdrama.com

**FILM/VIDEO/AUDIO/MULTI-MEDIA RESOURCES**

**Adventist Communication Network**: 1-800-CAN-1119, www.acnsat.org

**Adventist World Radio**: 1-800-337-4AWR, www.awr.org

**American Cassette Ministries**: 1-800-233-4450, www.americancassette.org

**American Tract Society**: 1-800-54-TRACT, www.atstracts.org

**Camfel Productions**: 1-800-5-CAMFEL, www.camfel.com

**Crown Ministries International**: 1-800-433-4685, www.crownmin.org

**Family Research Council**: 1-800-225-4008, www.frc.org

**Vision Videos**: 1-800-523-0226, www.visionvideo.com

**FUNDRAISING/CLOTHING RESOURCES**


**Dutch Mill Bulbs**: 1-800-533-8824, www.dutchmillbulbs.com

**Evergreen Industries**: 1-800-284-3048, www.evergreenindustries.net

**Golden Harvest Fruit Co.**: 1-800-826-9099,
  www.golden-harvest-fruit.com

**Mickman Brothers**: 1-800-446-4229, www.mickman.com


**NewLife Industries**: 1-800-443-9523, www.newlifeshopper.com
TOLLFREE AND WEB RESOURCE DIRECTORY

SHERWOOD FOREST FARMS 1-800-767-7778,
www.sherwoodforestfarms.com

NATIONAL CRISIS HOTLINES

AIDS Project Inform Hotline 1-800-822-7422,
www.projectinform.org

AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION 1-800-342-2383, www.diabetes.org

AMERICAN DIETETIC HOTLINE 1-800-366-1655,
www.allpointhomehealth.com/ResourceList.htm

AMERICAN KIDNEY FUND 1-800-638-8299, www.kidneyfund.org

AMERICAN LIVER FOUNDATION 1-800-465-4837, www.liverfoundation.org

AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE 1-800-424-9393,
www.dcn.davis.ca.us/YoloLINK/programs/pAutoSafetyHotline-8556.html

BETHANY CHRISTIAN SERVICES 1-800-BETHANY, www.bethany.org

BIRTHRIGHT / ABORTION ALTERNATIVE 1-800-848-5683.

CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL NATIONAL STD HOTLINE 1-800-232-4636,
www.cdc.gov/nchstp/std/personal_health_questions.htm

CHILD FIND 1-800-426-5678, www.childfindofamerica.org

CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS FOUNDATION 1-800-662-4357, www.coaf.org

CHILDREN’S WISH FOUNDATION 1-800-323-9474,
www.childrenswish.org

DES ACTION USA 1-800-337-9288, www.desaction.org

HEALTH INFORMATION CLEARING HOUSE 1-800-336-4797,
www.nidcr.nih.gov/HealthInformation/SpecialCareResources/default.htm

HOMOSEXUALS ANONYMOUS 1-800-253-3000,
members.aol.com/hawebpage

JUST SAY NO FOUNDATION 1-800-258-2766, www.ndfyf.org

LOMA LINDA BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER 1-800-752-5999,
www.llu.edu/llubmc
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Directory</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Adoption Center</strong></td>
<td>1-800-862-3678, <a href="http://www.adopt.org">www.adopt.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National AIDS/HIV Hotline</strong></td>
<td>1-800-342-2437, <a href="http://www.ashastd.org/nah">www.ashastd.org/nah</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Alcohol &amp; Drug Abuse Hotline</strong></td>
<td>1-800-252-6465, <a href="http://www.nida.nih.gov">www.nida.nih.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Child Abuse Hotline</strong></td>
<td>1-800-422-4453, <a href="http://www.childhelpusa.org">www.childhelpusa.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Child Safety Council</strong></td>
<td>1-800-327-5101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Information on Drug Abuse</strong></td>
<td>1-800-622-HELP, <a href="http://www.bambooweb.com/articles/addictive.html">www.bambooweb.com/articles/addictive.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Response Center (Toxic Waste)</strong></td>
<td>1-800-424-8802, <a href="http://www.eluls.org/superfund_cleanup.html">www.eluls.org/superfund_cleanup.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Runaway Switchboard</strong></td>
<td>1-800-RUNAWAY, <a href="http://www.nrsccrisisline.org">www.nrsccrisisline.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Youth Care Hotline</strong></td>
<td>1-800-829-0989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Life Clinics</strong></td>
<td>1-800-NEW-LIFE, <a href="http://www.newlife.com">www.newlife.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Missing Children Help Center</strong></td>
<td>1-800-USA-KIDS, <a href="http://www.800usakids.org">www.800usakids.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open Quest Institute</strong></td>
<td>1-800-444-9999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prevent Blindness America</strong></td>
<td>1-800-331-2020, <a href="http://www.preventblindness.org">www.preventblindness.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safe Drinking Water Hotline</strong></td>
<td>1-800-426-4791, <a href="http://www.epa.gov/safewater/drinklink.html">www.epa.gov/safewater/drinklink.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spinal-Cord Injury Hotline</strong></td>
<td>1-800-526-3456, <a href="http://www.headinjury.com/linksci.htm">www.headinjury.com/linksci.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Venereal Disease National Hotline</strong></td>
<td>1-800-227-8922, <a href="http://www.niaid.nih.gov/factsheets/stdhpv.htm">www.niaid.nih.gov/factsheets/stdhpv.htm</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NATIONAL HELPLINES (LISTED BY ISSUE)**

**Aging** | 1-800-424-9046, www.ncoa.org/index.cfm?Type=ic4
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Category</th>
<th>Toll Free Number</th>
<th>Web Resource</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allergy/Immunology</td>
<td>1-800-842-7777</td>
<td><a href="http://www.healthieryou.com/allergyr.html">www.healthieryou.com/allergyr.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer’s Disease</td>
<td>1-800-272-3900</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alz.org">www.alz.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anorexia/Bulimia/Eating Disorders</td>
<td>1-800-BASH-STL</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stuartlichtmanseminar.com/bulimiahelpself">www.stuartlichtmanseminar.com/bulimiahelpself</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson (Reporting)</td>
<td>1-800-47-ARSON</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wetip.com/uswest/arson/westarsn.htm">www.wetip.com/uswest/arson/westarsn.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>1-800-822-2762</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aaaai.org">www.aaaai.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney Referral</td>
<td>1-800-324-8846</td>
<td><a href="http://www.scogginsrealty.com">www.scogginsrealty.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>1-800-4-CANCER</td>
<td>cis.nci.nih.gov/fact/2_5.htm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Support</td>
<td>1-800-537-7072</td>
<td><a href="http://www.childsupport-aces.org">www.childsupport-aces.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childbirth Education</td>
<td>1-800-624-4934</td>
<td><a href="http://www.icea.org">www.icea.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>1-800-COCAINE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.focusas.com/Cocaine.html">www.focusas.com/Cocaine.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsive Gambling</td>
<td>1-800-522-4700</td>
<td><a href="http://www.800gambler.org/ArticleDetails.aspx?ContentID=4">www.800gambler.org/ArticleDetails.aspx?ContentID=4</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>1-800-363-3732</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eren.doe.gov">www.eren.doe.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabilities</td>
<td>1-800-54-HEALTH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Smuggling (Reporting)</td>
<td>1-800-232-5378</td>
<td><a href="http://www.customs.gov/hot-new/pressrel/1999/1029-00.htm">www.customs.gov/hot-new/pressrel/1999/1029-00.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyslexia</td>
<td>1-800-ABCD-123</td>
<td><a href="http://www.interdys.org">www.interdys.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1-800-638-9675</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>1-800-451-5627</td>
<td><a href="http://www.co.san-bernardino.ca.us/jesd/businesspopup.asp?item=onthejob">www.co.san-bernardino.ca.us/jesd/businesspopup.asp?item=onthejob</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>1-800-332-1000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org">www.epilepsyfoundation.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>1-800-521-5247</td>
<td>my.webmd.com/hw/emotional_wellness/shc99dea.asp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospice</td>
<td>1-800-331-1620 D</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hospiceworld.org">www.hospiceworld.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration &amp; Naturalization</td>
<td>1-800-755-0777</td>
<td>immigration.about.com/library/blvisafaq.htm</td>
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</table>
TOLLFREE AND WEB RESOURCE DIRECTORY

**Impotence:** 1-800-843-4315, medicalreporter.health.org tmr0396/impotence.html

**Learning Disabilities:** 1-800-452-7323.

**Lou Gehrig’s Disease:** 1-800-782-4747, members.aol.com/Jerito/ALS.html

**Lupus:** 1-800-558-0121, www.lupus.org

**Marijuana:** 1-800-677-7433.

**Marrow Donor Program:** 1-800-688-1088.

**Mentoring:** 1-800-914-2212, www.hsph.harvard.edu/press/releases/press06041998.html

**Neurofibromatosis:** 1-800-942-6825, www.nfinc.org/nf2news.shtml

**Parkinson Disease:** 1-800-344-7872, www.sentara.com/neuro/parkinsons_sheet.htm

**Social Security Benefits:** 1-800-772-1213, s00dace.ssa.gov/pro/irms/irib.cgi?WFORM=A

**Spina Bifida:** 1-800-621-3141, www.shrinershq.org/patientedu/spinabifida.html

**Stuttering:** 1-800-992-9392, www.stuttersfa.org/whatsnew/newsbrfs.htm

**Sudden Infant Death Syndrome:** 1-800-221-SIDS, www.sidsalliance.org

**Teenage Prostitution:** 1-800-551-1300, www.childrenofthenight.org

**Production/Music Resources/Artist Agencies**

**Adoration Inc.:** 1-800-541-1950, www.adorationresources.com

**The B&B Media Group:** 1-800-927-1517, www.tbbmedia.com

**Clean Comedians:** 1-800-354-GLAD, www.cleancomedians.com

**Glad Productions:** 1-800-772-4523, www.glad-pro.com

**Interl’Inc:** 1-800-725-3300, www.interlinc-online.com

**Kennedy Communications:** 1-800-877-0485, www.kennedycom.net
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**Keynote Productions**: 1-800-311-0903, www.keynotemusic.com

**Morning Song Concerts / Steve Darmody**: 1-800-621-3059
www.morningsong.org

**Travel/Retreat/Adventure/Moving Resources**

**Acquired Tastes Whitewater Rafting**: 1-800-888-8582, www.atraft.com

**Alpine Conference Center**: 1-800-350-6289, www.alpine-cc.org

**American Adventure Expeditions**: 1-800-288-0675, www.americanadventure.com

**American Tours Travels**: 1-800-243-4365, www.travelgroups.com

**Bahamas Sailing Adventures**: 1-800-226-2050, www.bahamasail.com

**Christian Purchasing Network**: 1-800-927-6775, www.churchplaza.com

**Coker Creek Village**: 1-800-448-9580, www.cokercreekvillage.com

**Covenant Wilderness Center**: 1-800-392-1501, www.adventurouschristians.org

**Youth/Young Adult Ministry Publishers**

**Abingdon Press**: 1-800-251-3320, www.abingdonpress.com

**Adventist Book Centers**: 1-800-765-6955, www.adventistbookcenter.com

**Free Spirit Publishing**: 1-800-735-7323, www.freespirit.com

**InterVarsity Press**: 1-800-843-9487, ivpress.gospelcom.net

**NavPress**: 1-800-366-7788, www.navpress.com

**Randall House Publications**: 1-800-877-7030, www.randallhouse.com

**Tyndale House Publishers**: 1-800-323-9400, http://www.tyndale.com

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YOUTH/YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY RESOURCE/TRAINING/RESEARCH (INTERDENOMINATIONAL)

Dare 2 Share: 1-800-462-8355, www.dare2share.org
Student Discipleship Ministries: 1-800-880-8736, www.studentdiscipleship.org
Understanding Your Teenager: 1-800-561-9309, uyt.gospelcom.net

YOUTH SERVICE/MISSIONS/VOLUNTEER HELPLINES

Children International: 1-800-888-3089, www.children.org
Confrontation Point Ministries: 1-800-884-8483, www.confrontationpoint.org
Group Workcamps: 1-800-774-3838, www.groupworkcamps.com
SEVEN WAYS TO KILL A YOUTH MINISTRY

7. Don’t mobilize for service evangelism... and have a youth ministry without an impact.

6. Don’t promote your ministry... and have a youth ministry without a support.

5. Don’t empower others for leadership... and have a youth ministry that does not expand.

4. Don’t plan with a purpose... and have a youth ministry without direction.

3. Don’t nurture relationships... and you won’t ever have a youth ministry.

2. Don’t equip yourself or others for leadership... and have a team who is not prepared to lead.

1. Don’t grow spiritually... and have a youth ministry without a foundation.
SPECIAL THANKS

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Zork, Nick (Project Manager 3)