

7 VITAL ELEMENTS OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Notes from a youth ministry volunteer staff to the brand new youth director.

Specific items we've tried not to allow to slide off our table

[especially when there is no paid youth leader]

1. Every visitor is followed up and invited back for special events if they don't become regular attenders. A "youth squad" can certainly do the heavy lifting in his area with some guidance.
2. Various **jobs we know our kids can handle** if properly trained *[with guidance]*:
 - * making announcements
 - * preparing skits
 - * planning and/or bringing refreshments, set up, clean up
let kids be in charge of getting other kids to rotate responsibility of doing this
 - * greeting new kids
 - **explain to newcomers what they can expect tonight*
 - **introduce them to peer leaders as well as adult leaders*
 - **sit with them*
 - **help them to find Bible verses reading your Bible*
 - * serving as co-leaders in small groups *[with adult leader]*
 - * choosing music, leading music, finding "special music" *[solos, groups, instrumentals, etc.]*
 - * leading in prayer
 - * giving a quiz or review over last week's topic *[with team points?]*
 - overseeing game time before and/or after *[choosing team captains, refereeing, halting games, etc.]*
 - Kids can learn to run games*
 - Adult leaders need to be active in guiding kids in this phase of leadership*
 - * leading games
 - There is a time to ask, "Who would be interested in helping me next week lead the games? Meet me in that corner after club.*
 - You better be already very well prepared with all of next week's game props and directions. see my blog, [How to Lead Games](#)*
 - * crowd control
 - * turning on/off lights & A/C, projectors, sound system
 - * locking up
 - * setting up chairs
 - * passing out paper & pens
 - * helping straighten up prior and/or afterwards
 - * erasing the white board
 - * responsible kids need to scatter themselves out among the crowd and to help in keeping esprit de corps up, squelch dissention, intercepting whisperers, gigglers, etc.
3. 10 Committees, Plus One - Train kids to "chair" and serve on all committees when planning larger events

planning	food/refreshments
phone visitors, mail	decorations
prayer	finances
contests	games/activities
getting rides, especially for visitors	social media

Plus One—Disciplinary Counsel

4. Social media - Pick & choose how much? Who does it? Who approves before it is published? How often? How to unsubscribe?

website, weekly announcements

Bible reading schedule

public prayer requests [*sending prayer requests to adult prayer meeting*]

post upcoming events

phone numbers to call a kid you met needs a ride

info

registration for special events, deadlines

help or peer counseling

birthdays

announcements

student awards' night at school

5. Youth Council *Leaders-In-Training?*

Develop officers: boy & girl = co-captains [*change each semester + summer? or every 6 months?—can be re-elected once, then sit out at least one rotation*]

co-captains must meet at least bi-weekly face-to-face, *text only in emergencies*

Add as many members as earn the right to lead [*the first council helps write a Youth Council Handbook, edited as often as necessary*]

New members are recommended [*and voted on*] by Youth Council members and must be approved by adults

Train peer leaders to witness after meetings, to counsel, to ask perceptive questions to peers about their spiritual growth, to make reticent visitors comfortable, and to engage in follow-up.

Some youth groups have 4 officers. Numbers 3 & 4 often automatically take the place of 1 & 2 at the end of their terms.

Disciplinary Council may fall under the purview of this group

6. In churches which have no paid youth staff, kids [*and parents*] must know whom to call for answers. The church secretary should always know whom to contact if calls come into the office about the ministry.
7. Don't get too busy with busyness!! Delegate, please, delegate.
Leaders who cannot give away lots of tasks risk becoming dictators. No kid wants to be in a group with someone who leads that way. Teens must own the group. It does not belong to the adults! It is theirs for 3 precious years of their lives. It must be something they are interested in bringing their unsaved friends to.
The lure of busyness is to make a nest in which to feel comfortable. Beware!