

Youth Leadership Manual

2013

Center for Youth

Evangelism

# How to Organize a Young Adult Ministry

## ASSESSMENT

It is important to take inventory of your church and the young adults in it. Consider the following as you begin to develop your Young Adult Ministry:

* What is currently happening with the ministry at your church?
* How are young adults involved in the life of the church?
* What is the make-up of our young adult population?
* What is the history of Young Adult Ministry in your church?
* Do we have a local college/university nearby? *If yes.*
* Is there a campus ministry organized?
* How do these college students participate in the life of the church?
* What do we want for our young adult program?
* What resources and strengths do your church and young adults possess that will help this ministry?
* What are these young adults already involved in that might conflict with this ministry’s activities?
* What barriers do we face?
* How many young adults could we potentially serve?
* What is the population we are looking at?
* Who do we know that meets this criterion?
* Which other members of the church fit into the target population?
* Who knows them?
* How do we find the unknown?
* Who are the important people to have involved in the ministry?
* What do the young adults want from this ministry?

By understanding your needs and resources, you can properly determine the goals for your Young Adult Ministry. A good formula to follow is:

# Needs + Resources = GOALS

The most successful church programs plan ahead not just by one week or one month, but a whole year in advance.

## GOALS AND PLAN

After completing the assessment of your church community, develop some preliminary goals for the Young Adult Ministry.

Be realistic and start small—you can build from there. Consider the following questions:

* What purpose will this ministry serve?
* How will we meet this purpose? (meetings, activities, etc.)
* What resources are available to support the purpose of the ministry?
* When is the best time to hold activities?
* What do we want to do for our initial activity?
* What will be the different roles and responsibilities of people involved?
* How will we communicate activities?
* How will we plan activities?
* What obstacles might we encounter?

# Often times in church ministry, we fail to take the necessary time to plan. Planning may take extra work initially but it saves time in the long run. Sit down with your Young Adult Ministry Team and take the time to outline and set goals each year.

**IMPLEMENTATION STEPS**

## Find a central place to meet

* 1. Find a church to sponsor and support the young adult group.
  2. The group will require some assistance from a pastoral staff member, so the availability of a pastoral staff member for this ministry is an important consideration.
  3. Other important considerations include the meeting facilities of the church and the concentration of young adults living in the churches.
  4. Some groups may be sponsored by multiples churches working together as a team.
  5. It would be advisable to have the weekly meeting at the same church every week to avoid confusion.
  6. This also grounds the group more concretely in the life of the church, and helps the group to see itself as part of church life, and not just renting space at different churches.
  7. It will be beneficial for other sponsoring churches to host other events and regular meetings, however.

## Gather 10-12 young adults for a listening session.

1. To find out what the youth is looking for from their church.
2. Find out what they feel would be successful within the culture of the local churches.

## Find Interested Young Adults

1. Find a core group of young adults interested in starting a group.
2. Seven seems to be a good threshold number.

## Advertise an Organizational Meeting

* 1. Before holding any formal meetings, hold an organizational gathering, and advertise it through church bulletins, pulpit announcements, newsletters, etc., and ask those young adults who have already expressed interest to invite their friends.
  2. At this gathering, a vision of what a young adult group is about should be presented and discussed.
  3. Those present should discuss their views about what their group should be about, and then try to move toward a consensus about how to proceed.
  4. At this organization gathering, it will be important to set a night and a time for regular weekly gathering.
  5. Various individuals will need to take responsibility for preparing whatever is decided.

## Establish a Core Team

* 1. An open invitation should be extended to those interested in forming an initial core team.
  2. Volunteers may be elicited before, after, or during the initial organizational gathering.
  3. Volunteers should be asked to commit to a set period of time, something like six months.
  4. Based on their individual gifts and interests, invite each person to claim and lead one component.
  5. There may be rough spots as the group is trying to get started, but after six months, the core team should have a good sense of whether or not the group will be able to sustain itself.

## Discuss and put in writing descriptions of the group’s mission, the core team’s organization, and basic group policies

* 1. The core team should discuss and put in writing the group’s purpose, organization, and policies.
  2. Such discussions will clarify the nature and purpose of the group, heighten the core team’s sense of ownership, and prevent miscommunication.
  3. It is important that the core team’s decisions be put into writing for future reference.
  4. They should also be made available to the rest of the group.

## Begin Weekly Meetings

# The most important element to get started is a weekly gathering.

# For a faith discussion portion of the evening, the group may want to use only those formats that it finds easier to prepare (e.g., the Scripture Discussion format).

# Once things have settled down, and more volunteers come forward to help with the preparation work, other formats can be added to the rotation.

One Step at a Time

## Advertise Widely

# Once the group has started to meet regularly, it is important to flood all relevant channels with publicity and advertisements.

# In this beginning stage, it is important to build up a critical mass of young adults as soon as possible.

# Ask group members to spread the word with family and friends.

**Other Considerations**

Annual Events - When something works well, make it an annual event. It gives the young adults something to anticipate.

Consistency - Be consistent! This will build your ministry. Hold meetings at the same time each month.

Record and Review - Make sure to document every young adult gathering’s date, time and location. Review what went well and what did not at the end of each meeting and activity. Keep receipts for records. This will make future planning much easier.

Cost - Be careful of the cost when planning young adult gatherings. No young adult should ever feel excluded because an activity is too expensive. If you have an outing that is a little more expensive than others, find a discrete way to make arrangements for the young adult who may be experiencing financial difficulty to participate.

**Yearly Maintenance**

Participation in Young Adult Ministry will vary from year to year. Special efforts should be made to keep the ministry vibrant and healthy. When it is evident that a certain individual is not participating in the ministry, a special effort should be made to reach out to the young adult in order to bring them back to the group. Always consult with your church pastor first, as he may be aware of sensitive situations that may be preventing the young adult’s participation.

## How to do this

* Have the pastor/church leader contact them.
* Have a peer contact them by e-mail, phone or in person.
* Send a “we miss you” letter.
* Make a home visitation.

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