

Philosophy of Youth Ministry

Youth ministry is essential because students are beginning to form beliefs, values, and habits that will impact the decisions they make for the rest of their lives. Youth ministry is a supplemental and supportive ministry to the ministry that parents do in their child's lives.

Youth ministry follows the model set forth by Christ. Christ spent a certain amount of time with different groups. He spent time teaching the masses (evangelism), teaching and fellowshiping with the disciples (discipleship), and investing even more in three disciples; Peter, James and John (leadership training). All students vary in their spiritual maturity and a youth leader must identify where students are and lead them accordingly toward becoming mature disciples of Christ. A youth ministry should always be active in three areas: evangelism, discipleship and leadership training.

Evangelism involves sharing the knowledge of Christ as Savior to students. In youth ministry, this is done through the adult leaders or through the students. Recently, more emphasis is being placed on students to reach their peers and share this knowledge or to bring them into contact with an adult leader who can. Security issues at schools have prohibited youth workers from going to the schools and the opinion of their peers is increasingly important.

Discipleship involves helping students discover the truths of Scripture and guiding them to become more conformed to the person of Jesus Christ. This is done through small group Bible study and one-on-one discipleship. The best method is through small group Bible study with peers of a similar age and same gender. Students have the ability to discover Scriptural truths and how it relates to their lives and their peers. Formal one-on-one discipleship should be prayerfully considered for certain students who are ready to be challenged further in their walk with Christ. An informal version of this happens as students build close relationships with youth leaders and seek to mimic them as they are mimicking Christ. Discipleship also allows students a chance to serve and to fellowship with the body of Christ, while evangelism is primarily concerned with those outside the church.

Leadership training involves identifying students who are at a point in their lives where they are willing and able to lead other students in and outside of youth ministry. These students must be challenged to adopt the qualities of leader's in Scripture. As a result, when students graduate they will be equipped to become spiritually mature leaders in organizations, businesses and ministries around the world.

Depending on the dynamic of the church and community, more emphasis may be put on a certain area, but all areas should have some presence.

We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.