

YOUTH MINISTRIES COORDINATOR

A MINISTRY DESCRIPTION FOR LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

Introduction

Jesus gave us clear instruction as to the importance of our young people when He said, "And whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me . . . Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:5, 10).

When His disciples would have sent the young people away, thinking that they were interrupting the important work of the Master, Christ said "Let them come . . . for such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14). Teenagers form a precious, most important part of God's church. They are not only the "church of the future," but also the church of the present.

Christ created the church to be a fellowship where people share in a common purpose and help one another grow in faith. The New Testament describes the church as "... his body, the fullness of him who filleth every thing in every way" (Eph. 1:22). God calls us into His body for the purpose of establishing a saving relationship with Him and supportive community with one another.

God calls every member of the church into ministry. The church is "a kingdom of priests" (I Peter 2:9). Our priesthood is to each other within the church and to the world. Each Christian is called to ministry, gifted by the Holy Spirit, and in baptism ordained for ministry (Eph. 4:11-12).

As youth coordinator, you are a minister called by God to a particular and vital ministry within your congregation and in your community. God supplies each person in the church with the resources for ministry—scripture, spiritual power, God's character, and spiritual gifts. He will supply your needs as you assume this important responsibility!

Duties of the Youth Coordinator

The following duties are included in your responsibilities:

1. *Chair the youth ministries committee.* You will want to meet with those who nurture youth in Sabbath School, the Adventist Youth Society and any other youth ministries of the church, such as choir and summer camp. The agenda at these meetings should include the scheduling of all activities, fund raisers and trips for the year and a discussion of the Bible curriculum in Sabbath School. Together you can reduce overlap, look for gaps in programs, and coordinate efforts. Your leadership should encourage a cooperative spirit in which all of the leaders of the various programs work together.
2. *Planning and ideas.* In consultation with individual leaders and in the meetings of the youth ministries committee, you have a wonderful opportunity to spark new ideas. It is your responsibility to work with the program leaders and to draw together an overall plan and budget for a comprehensive program of youth ministries for your church.
3. *Program administration.* You will represent the interests of youth ministries to the church board, the pastor, the church ministries council, the youth Sabbath School leader, leaders of youth groups, and church treasurer.
4. *Information.* You are the primary source of information about youth ministries to the congregation. You should put together a calendar listing all youth activities and events for the local church and see that these events get advertised in the church bulletin and newsletter. Keep an up-to-date, permanent record of all the youth in grades 9-12 who are members in the church and those of non-members who have attended outreach programs or visited Sabbath School. Also, provide information to your leaders about training events and new resources.
5. *Age level specialist.* Because spiritual development is linked to intellectual and physical development, people are divided into developmental levels when their spiritual nurture is planned. This is related to chronological age. So these developmental levels are often called "age levels" or "grade levels." You can help teachers and leaders understand how to organize activities for this specific age level.

You are responsible for conducting a needs assessment among the teens in the congregation and the community, and helping the leaders of youth activities understand these needs. You will want to support church leaders, while at the same time safeguarding the enthusiasm of the youth for whom you are responsible.

Resource Centers

Center for Youth Evangelism. Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 49104.

Call 1-800-YOUTH-2-U or 616-471-3628

John Hancock Center for Youth Ministry. La Sierra University, Riverside, CA 92515.

Call 1-909-785-2091.

Piece of the Pie Ministries. Contact Steve Case, Director, 3732 California Avenue., Carmichael, CA 95608. Call 916-944-3928.

Resource Materials

The following resources are recommended for your ministry. You can purchase these by calling AdventSource (800-328-0525), the Adventist Book Center (800-765-6955) or your local Christian bookstore.

7 Principles for Youth Ministry Excellence, by Jim Feldbush and William Hurtado. Proven strategies you and your youth leaders can use with your youth group.

ABZ's of Adventist Youth Ministry, editor Stuart Tyner. Everything you need to know about youth ministry.

Building Youth Ministry, by Barry Gane. A foundational guide for youth leaders.

Changing Lives: Experience the Power of a Teen Prayer Conference, by Sarah Coleman Kelnhofer. Provides guidelines and motivation for reproducing the excitement of a teen prayer conference in a local church.

ChristWise Discipleship Guide for Youth and ChristWise Leader's Guide, by Troy Fitzgerald.

Do It Right, by D. C. Edmond. Answers to questions teens have about dating, love, sex, and relationships—from his popular advice column in *Insight* magazine.

Evangelism for Youth, Daryl Howard. Comprehensive guide to how your youth group can do public evangelism.

Expect Great Things: How to Be a Happy, Growing Christian, by Richard O'Ffill. A template for successful Christian living, with the goal of being like Jesus.

Lifestyles of the Remnant, by Keavin Hayden. The author takes another look at church standards, taking it out of the context of legalism or orthodoxy—presents much needed principles.

Straight Talk: How Teens Can Make Wise Choices About Love and Sex, by Loretta Spivey.

Young Adventists share their testimony about extramarital sex and resisting temptation.

The Family & Youth Ministry, by Fred Cornforth helps you discover dozens of ways to build relationships and multigenerational involvement. One of the best resources around.

The Sounds of Grace in Our Churches, by V. Bailey Gillespie provides 100 creative ideas to enrich your church.

Who Cares? A-Zillion Ways You Can Meet the Needs of People Around You by Linnea Torkelsen. A powerfully motivating collection of youth service projects, and the true stories behind them. Fun and convicting.

Why Our Teenagers Leave the Church: Personal Stories from a 10-Year Study, by Roger Dudley. Find out why they leave and what keeps some of them in the church.

Visit AdventSource On-Line at www.adventsource.org/youth for a complete list of the latest resources available for local church leaders. You can place an order or request a catalog by calling 1-800-328-0525.

For information about additional resources and answers to your questions call the Adventist Plusline at 1-800-732-7587 or visit them on-line at www.plusline.org.