

YOUTH LEADER RETREATS



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My Commitment as a Youth Leader

Essential reading for ALL leaders in our youth ministry

PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH

2006

Ministry Team

**We are a team of Christians
who have a real passion.**

**We have a passion for Jesus ...
We have a passion to reach youth ...
We have a passion to make disciples.**

**To achieve this passion we are prepared to make a
real commitment to ministry.**

Our Vision

1. Why does Youth Group exist?

We exist to give huge honour
to our awesome God

2. What does God want us to achieve?

We will impact the world for Christ
by empowering students
to be passionate disciples of Christ

3. How do we make disciples?

By bringing our friends to Christ,
by building each other up in Christ
and by sending us out for Christ.



“Above Reproach”

Setting a Biblical Example in Youth Leadership

We want a ministry that is characterised
by grace and forgiveness
not by rules and regulations.

But the bible is concerned that leaders have a
particularly high standard in their personal life
We are to be examples to those whom we lead.

By agreeing to become
youth leaders at Youth Group
we are agreeing to the following standards –
which centre on personal growth and integrity.

1. Setting an example – in what we say and what we do

(Ephesians 4:29, 5:4)

- a) We need to watch carefully our language and our humour to ensure it does not degrade our Lord, or anything good he has created.
- b) We will strive to be genuine encouragers who sow positive “words of life” into each other, and into the students we minister to.
- c) We need to be careful that nothing we do or say as leaders could be interpreted as “flirting” - either by our peers, or by students.
- d) The way we dress and present ourselves - whilst consistent with the culture we are trying to impact - should not be provocative or immodest. We need to be aware of what slogans our T-shirts display, and what more subtle messages our appearance sends out. Leaders need to be particularly aware of this at swimming activities. What we do should never be the opportunity for someone else to stumble.

2. Setting an example – in our use of Alcohol / Smoking

(1 Tim 3:8, 1 Corinthians 8:13)

- a) Drunkenness is specifically shown to be disobedient in the bible (Ephesians 5:18). We must ensure that this sin does not characterise our lifestyle! Whilst youth leaders may well be involved with non-Christian adult friends who both drink and get drunk, leaders should not be encouraging this at their own functions. Certainly, leaders should not invite students to functions where there is the likelihood of guests getting drunk.
- b) Because of the high profile of alcohol / smoking in our society, and the easy misinterpretation by a young person of any “approval” of this in the lifestyle of their leader, no youth leader should normally be consuming alcohol or smoking where there are students present.
- c) Alcohol / smoking should not be present at any Woonona Youth Activity. No leader should have been consuming alcohol or smoking before interacting with young people.

3. Setting an example – in our personal relationships

(Ephesians 5:3, 1 Timothy 3:2)

- a) Our relationships with the opposite sex are to be “above reproach”. We must not place ourselves in situations where our integrity might be seen to be compromised. No youth leader should be “spending the night” unsupervised in the same proximity as a member of the opposite sex (e.g. 2 alone in a house/tent overnight etc). We need to be careful about the “uninterruptible aloneness” that we spend with our boy/girlfriend.
- b) No youth leader should be romantically linked with any high school student. The only exception is where there is a pre-existing student/student relationship (e.g. a Yr12 & Yr 11 are dating, and the following year the ex-Yr 12 becomes a leader. The ex-Yr 12 can still lead, but not in the age group their partner is in).
- c) No youth leader should be romantically linked with a non-Christian.

4. Setting an example – in our relationships with students

- a) Our relationships with younger people are extremely privileged. No abuse of this relationship is tolerated. There is an official protocol in place for dealing with any abuse of young people by church workers. There will be no “protection” for those who abuse our young people.

- b) Male students are to be counselled only by male leaders, and female students are to be counselled only by female leaders. If a student of the opposite sex requests personal counselling from you **involve a leader of the opposite sex straight away**. All 3 of you can then continue talking.

- c) You should never be alone with any student in a non-public place. If you need to talk privately (e.g. counselling, pastoral work, individual discipling etc), then do it where you can be easily interrupted (e.g. in a house, where there are other people in other rooms, at the side of the hall when there are other people passing, in an open park where you are clearly visible from a long distance etc).

- d) You should not visit an individual student in their home, unless there are others present. You should not have an individual student in your home unless there are others present.
- e) You should never be alone with an individual student overnight in the same house / tent etc. Always work in groups larger than just the two of you.
- f) When you are the only person in your car, you should never give a lift to an individual student of the opposite sex. If you are transporting a group, the last person you drop off must be a member of the same sex - even if this means going out of your way. The alternative is to have another adult with you.
- g) Physical contact with students is a vital part of affirming and strengthening relationships. Please use it! (Handshakes, pat on the shoulder etc) But we need to be careful that our physical touching will not be misinterpreted. Do not hug students of the opposite sex!
- h) Leaders need to make sure that their contact with students of the opposite sex is not open to misinterpretation. No leader should be regularly phoning, writing to, or visiting a student of the opposite sex. Where needed, this sort of contact

must be only occasional, in accordance with the above guidelines. Similarly, whilst a leader might have occasional or brief contact with a student of the opposite sex via the internet (E-mail, ICQ etc) or SMS, no leader should have lengthy, frequent or "deep" discussion with students of the opposite sex via their computer or phone.

- i) To maintain our position of integrity, no leader should partner a high school student of the opposite sex to any social function – including end-of-year School Formals.

6. Setting an example – in our submission

- a) We will model submission to those who have pastoral oversight over us (Hebrews 13:17).
- b) Our obedience to the governing authorities (eg. road rules, copyright etc) should be evidenced by our lifestyle (Romans 13:1).
- c) We will submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21). When we fail to maintain biblical standards, we need to understand and model the God who is full of grace and forgiveness. We need to know that where we ourselves have failed God by our continuing sin, that we have a God who wants us back, who calls us to repentance, and is ready to offer forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32).

7. If something goes wrong ...

- a) If you step outside these guidelines - do not panic! It is not the end of the world! We still love you dearly!
- b) If you have stepped outside these guidelines, it is important that you inform your Youth Pastor immediately. It is **really important** that we hear it from you first, rather than us discovering it through other people! There is always a way forward! Let us help you find it!
- c) If you are aware that **another** leader has stepped outside these guidelines, then in prayer, see if you can lovingly restore them.

Galatians 6:1

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

- d) Model the 3-step pattern of **Matthew 18: 15-17**
15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. 16 But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that `every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Step 1

Go to the other leader and share your concerns.

15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over"

- * Check your facts
"This is what I thought I saw you doing. Did I see it right? Is that what actually happened?"
- * Check your understanding
"It seems to me that what you're doing might be stepping outside our leader's guidelines. How do you see it?"
- * Offer your help
"Can I help you deal with this? Can I help you talk with someone who can help you?"

Step 2

Go again with one or two others.

16 "But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."

Take one or two other leaders with you who share your concerns. You show by this that it is not a "personal" thing with you, but it is a concern shared by many.

Step 3

Go again with your youth ministry leaders.

17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector"

The youth staff – representing our "congregation" can then work to help restore the person to a position of integrity.

**Our Passion
to be
Effective**

How can I be a great youth leader?

We don't just want you to "do a good job",
we want you to build real relationships

The biblical picture is not only the
skilled leader and teacher,
but also the loving shepherd
who cares for his sheep.

You need "integrity of heart"
as well as "skilful hands"

Psalm 78:70-72

"He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens;
from tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his
people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance.

And David shepherded them with integrity of heart;
with skilful hands he led them"

Integrity of Heart

The 3 relationships of a youth leader

1. Know Christ, your Shepherd

Jesus is the true shepherd. Immerse yourself in him, that you might show his love to others.

1Peter 5: 2-4, Rev 7:17, 1 Peter 2:25

2. Know Your Heart

Beware the ever present danger of being a false shepherd who looks after his own interests.

Matthew 7:15, Jude 1:12, 1 Peter 5:2-4

3. Know Your Sheep

Just like Jesus, know each of your sheep personally.

John 10:2-4

Skilful Hands

The 3 tasks of a youth leader

1. Find your Sheep

Never forget about the one who strays.

Matthew 12:11-12 Luke 15:4-7

2. Guard your Sheep

Protect your sheep from wolves that will devour - even at the risk of your own life.

Acts 20:28-31, 1 Peter 2:25, Matthew 26:31, John 10: 7-18, John 10: 28-29

3. Feed your Sheep

Guide them to the green pastures where they will feed on God's word and be equipped for active ministry.

John 21:15-17, Mark 6:34, Revelation 7:17,
Ephesians 4:11-12

And lastly,
thank you for the commitment you have
showed with the way you already care for the
youth group.

And remember the only way we can move
forward is through our relationship with God and
then with each other.

If this is right the rest will fall into place a lot
easier.

Thanks again

APPENDIX A

Leader's retreats

Leader's retreats are great opportunities for the leaders to bond together and strengthen their relationships with each other. Retreats also provide relevant training and discussion times while away, making sure you still have plenty of time for hanging out together, and structured activities which will force interaction amongst the leaders.

Not sure where to start? Following is a program outline starting on a Friday evening after youth group and finishing Sunday afternoon. With it are outlines for materials you may wish to go through.

Friday night is a relaxed time with optional activities such as cards, board games, swimming pool, etc.

After breakfast it is best to start the retreat off with a time of sharing. Have all your leaders share their life stories, from where they grew up to how they became a Christian and to why they are leading at youth group. Make sure you allow plenty of time for this as people may share for approximately 10-15 minutes each and you don't want to be rushing people. It may be appropriate to have a time after each leader has shared for the other leaders to ask a question about their life. This time will easily take you up to morning tea, maybe even longer.

On the Sunday morning it would be a good idea to have your own mini church. This will also help to build your leaders

closer together. Have a bit of a worship time with a few songs, maybe a couple of psalms and a testimony. Do what ever you like to get your leaders in the mood of adoration to God. Have one of your leaders or yourself do a talk on a passage of the bible, and then possibly a discussion about what they just heard.

The Saturday night dinner would be a great time for an interactive game, such as 'How to host a murder" over dinner to get your leaders interacting.

In your other training/discussion times you may want to look at some of the following:

Beyond reproach

Go through what a godly leader looks like and how that affects you as a youth leader. Discussing matters such as: Is it okay to go out with a non-Christian? Is it okay for a leader to drink and smoke? Does it matter what sort of clothes I wear? Plus a whole lot more.

It is very important to go through this material with your leaders, as we are all accountable to each other. And it gives a foundation on where our standards are as leaders. It is very hard to pull a leader up on their lifestyle if they don't know what is expected of them in the first place.

Purpose

Another critical element for your leaders to know is the whole purpose of the youth group. We all want to be on the same page with what we are trying to achieve at youth group. So throw around

ideas, come up with your own purpose statement for your youth group which encompasses the reason why your youth group exists.

Take this time serious and allow time to reflect on how the various aspects of your youth group meets the statement you have come up with.

Following is an outline for preparing a purpose statement.

Other Material

The *ministry papers*, which is full of useful and easy to follow lesson plans.

A few examples are:

- Kids talks
- Leading church

In Training, which is full of great resources such as:

- Preparing a bible study
- Leading small groups
- Sharing your testimony

APPENDIX B

How to build a great relationship with those you're following up

1. Trust the Holy Spirit to use you in the opportunities He gives.
2. Don't feel the need to push them if they're slow to develop - pray that God will ripen them.
3. Keep building your relationship with them by:
 - a. Being faithful in prayer for them (Phil. 1:7-8)
 - b. Being a friend to them (Proverbs 18:34)
 - c. Sharing your life as well as your message (1 Thess. 2:6-7)
 - d. Living a life worthy of imitation (Phil 4:9)
 - e. Accepting them on the basis of love and trust, not performance
 - f. Not laughing at their questions
 - g. Not being negative about people at the church
 - h. Doing things together
 - i. Getting excited about their growth
 - j. Encouraging them to share with others what God has done

APPENDIX C

Developing a Purpose Statement

1. Definition:

A purpose statement is a clear concise statement of why the youth group exists. This statement should be spoken about, prayed about, printed, pictured, and ingrained in the consciences of the leaders and members.

The leaders need to:

- a. See it clearly (Single-minded)
- b. Want it desperately (Integrity)
- c. Do it enthusiastically (With enthusiasm)
- d. Follow it faithfully (With tenacity)
- e. Review, realign and rededicate themselves regularly (Evaluation)

2. A purpose statement should:

- a. Encompass the comprehensive, long range reasons why your youth group should exist
- b. Be written in direct simple sentences
- c. Answer the basic questions as to why we have various activities
- d. Deal with the vertical relationship between your group and God and the horizontal relationships between group members
- e. Strive for quality and honesty - it can always be revised

3. Key passages of scripture:

Mathew 28:18-20

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Colossians 1:27-29

²⁷To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

²⁸We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. ²⁹To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

Ephesians 4:11-14

¹¹It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

The purpose of our youth ministry is to



Sample:

The purpose of our youth ministry is to win young people to Christ, help them grow to maturity and send them out to disciple their peers, building a group that will reach the world

Youth Ministries – strategy seminar