

Diocese of Dallas
Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries



Youth Ministry Handbook

A Prayer for Youth

“As Jesus with the disciples of Emmaus so the Church must become today the traveling companion of young people” (Pope John Paul II).
As traveling companions of the young people in our parish, let us join together in prayer.

We offer to you, loving God, the gifts and needs of youth.
Bless them with your guiding grace
as they face the challenges and opportunities of their lives.

Touch their hearts with the gentleness of your love,
that they may know they are valued and valuable beings.

Send your spirit of hope to their lives,
that they may believe in themselves
and know they are needed in this world.

Grace them with the gift of joy
that they may celebrate life through laughter and tears alike.

Guide us, as we continue to grow
in our appreciation of the many gifts of young people
in the ministry opportunities we offer to them,
in the journey of faith we walk with them,
in our shared mission as a community called discipleship in the
world.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen



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Thank you to all those in Youth Ministry that have lived and worked with this document over the years in our Diocese. You will continue to be our guides as we strive to keep this handbook relevant.

Introduction

- ❖ Purpose of the Handbook
- ❖ Mindsets of Ministry

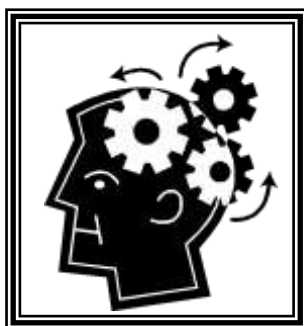
Purpose of the Handbook

Guidelines for Catholic Youth Ministry are needed in the Dallas Diocese in order to:

- Ensure that a comprehensive approach to serving youth is effectively promulgated and understood within the parishes of the Diocese;
- Provide norms against which the progress of parish youth ministries toward implementing a comprehensive youth ministry can be measured; and
- Manage safe environment and risk effectively in order to protect young people and to minimize the liability of parishes and the Diocese.

First published in 2000, updated in 2006 and most recently in 2010, the publication of this handbook represents an essential blending of policies, procedures and paradigms. Many parishes/youth ministry leaders already employ the strategies noted here. At the very least this guide should affirm the good work that is being done.

This handbook is intended to be a resource for the work you do with young people. It is meant to be a living document with the full intent of periodic revisions to meet the needs of a changing world and always to respond with the deepest care for our youth.



Mindsets of Ministry

“mindset” {noun} – a set of beliefs or a way of thinking that determines ones behavior, outlook and mental attitude.

Now, possibly more than ever before, those of us in youth ministry are asked to wear many hats. And often, with each hat, we must develop a mindset to go with it. We find ourselves being ministers to young people and at the same time a leader of adult volunteers. We know it is of primary importance to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our children, and at the same time we struggle with maintaining safeguards and still being able to be relational, relevant and responsive to their many needs. We work on parish teams that are pastoral in make-up and purpose, but sometimes appear and feel more corporate than collaborative. And while we realize that we must be healthy ourselves in order to minister to others, planning time for our own fitness and formation is often shoved to the back burner.

How do we maintain our sense of ministry in the midst of such dichotomy? . . . by realizing that we must adopt different mindsets for different situations. While we are sure there are many more possibilities, throughout this handbook, we will seek to highlight examples of five important mindsets for responsible and effective youth ministry:

- A Comprehensive Ministry Mindset – finding its origins in the USCCB document, *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*, a comprehensive mindset to ministry challenges us to look beyond specific programs or models for sharing the Gospel message. Instead, we are called to “integrate ministry with adolescents and their families into the total life and mission of the Church, recognizing that the whole community is responsible for this ministry.” (RTV, p.19)
- An Ecclesial Mindset – an ecclesial mindset is one from which we affirm that our ministry is not our own, but instead a part of a greater, worldwide and eternal Church. While our Church is lived out in individuals, families, and communities, our ministry is authorized and empowered through the roots, sustenance and direction provided by parish and diocesan leadership. We have a responsibility to this larger Church to know its teachings, honor its documents and catechize uniformly the truth and traditions it holds sacred.
- A Safe-Environment Mindset – while providing a safe place in which our young people may gather and worship is of paramount importance, we realize that there are many ways to make this happen. As myriad as are the challenges to a safe-environment, the solutions, precautions and answers are just as numerous. There is no one-right-answer to the way we keep children safe, nor should there be. We must constantly be re-viewing and re-formulating our safety plans and procedures. In the same way a crisis plan for an evening of religious education on our parish campus must look much different than one for taking youth to an out-of-state mission experience, we should not assume that the same procedures adopted for our ministry in 2007 would be adequate or applicable in 2012. We must always challenge ourselves to really “think it through,” not just look for the easy answer in a manual which can only address a limited number of situations and be current for only a limited amount of time.
- A Team Mindset – as ecclesial ministers, whether paid or volunteer, we do not serve independently. Most of us are part of a parish or ministry team which integrates its efforts into a larger vision of service. And every member of that team plays a unique and important role in spreading the Gospel message. As Paul says, “Now the body is not a single part, but many. . . God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. . . If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.” (1 Cor 12:14,18,26) So it is with ministry. All sincere and authorized ministry efforts deserve our respect and cooperation. When one is honored, all share the joy, and when one suffers, all suffer with it. Additionally, all those who serve in support roles to these ministry efforts should be treated with dignity and honored for the service they provide.
- A Personal Care Mindset – personal care, or self-care, for the ecclesial minister should encompass the whole person, physical, mental and spiritual. We cannot adequately minister to others unless we are first recognizing and addressing our own needs. The origins of ministerial burnout and/or failure can often be found in the inattention to one or more of these areas of self-care. It is important to surround ourselves with people who will not only support us, but will let us know when we are neglecting our own needs. A good tool for maintaining a personal care mindset is the *“Growing in Competency Self Assessment Tool for Youth Ministry Leaders.”* It is based on the National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers and published by the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministers. A personal care mindset must also recognize the need for a regular and fulfilling prayer life, a commitment to continued growth and development, and regular communication with a spiritual director.

Overview of Youth Ministry

- ❖ **Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries (OY&YAM)**
Mission, Vision and Values
- ❖ **Foundations of Youth Ministry**
- ❖ **Developing a Comprehensive Mindset**
- ❖ **Comprehensive Youth Ministry**



- *Comprehensive Mindset*
- *Ecclesial Mindset*
- *Safe-Environment Mindset*
- *Team Mindset*
- *Personal Care Mindset*

Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Mission Statement: To develop and strengthen a comprehensive youth ministry for junior and senior high school age youth and to challenge parishes and college campuses to welcome, support and include young adults in the life of the parish or campus. The two documents put forth by the US Bishops that drive the office: *Renewing the Vision: A Frame Work for Catholic Youth Ministry* and *Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults*.

Vision Statement: The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for the Diocese of Dallas participates in the mission of the Catholic Church by advocating for and supporting Catholic youth ministry on the national, regional, diocesan, and local level.

The OY&YAM organizes support for parish ministry through

- Leadership Formation and Training
- Resources
- Promoting Ministry with Youth from Diverse Cultures
- Consultation Services
- Networking
- Building Support
- Direct Ministry With Youth/Young Adults

In response to the Gospel, and in pursuit of our mission and vision, we affirm and act in accord with these values:

- the dignity and giftedness of each person
- the baptismal call of each person to discipleship and ministry
- the gifts and charisms of young people
- the richness of diversity
- the challenge of justice and peace
- the wisdom of shared leadership

Foundations of Youth Ministry

This is what is needed: a Church for young people, which will know how to speak to their heart and enkindle, comfort, and inspire enthusiasm in it with the joy of the Gospel and the strength of the Eucharist; a Church which will know how to invite and welcome the person who seeks a purpose for which to commit his whole existence; a Church which is not afraid to require much, after having given much; which does not fear asking from young people the effort of a noble and authentic adventure, such as that of the following of the Gospel. ~ Pope John Paul II, 1995 World Day of Prayer for Vocations)

The Bishops, in *Renewing the Vision*, remind us to see within youth the incredible potential and capacities they have now and to respond to their present and real needs. Youth ministry does not exist because youth are particularly troubled or needy. Youth are growing in ways intended by our loving God. They are encountering the joys and the challenges of life as adolescents in our time. They have wonderful gifts to offer in the midst of their growing pains. We minister to youth because we are church and we follow the pattern of Jesus: we respond to needs and empower youth to use and share their gifts.

DEFINITION OF CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY

The definition of youth ministry offered by the Bishops is formed by our love for and our commitment to young people: youth have needs we care for and gifts to share. “Youth ministry is the response of the Christian community to the needs of young people and the sharing of the unique gifts of youth with the larger community” (RTV 1).

COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

During the adolescent period of transition from childhood to adulthood, adolescents benefit from support systems that encourage and challenge them. Youth Ministry seeks to draw young people into the supportive experience of Catholic Community.

Renewing the Vision identifies eight components of youth ministry: Advocacy, Catechesis, Community Life, Evangelization, Justice and Service, Leadership Development, Pastoral Care, and Prayer and Worship. Comprehensive youth ministry provides an approach that integrates the eight components into a framework of support, while encouraging creativity in developing programs, activities, and strategies.

NOTE: For the purposes of this document an adolescent is considered to be an individual attending grades 6 through 12, approximately 11 through 18 years-of-age. Reminder: Individuals who have attained the age of 18 are no longer minors.

RELATIONSHIP WITH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries (OY&YAM) staff participates in networking, planning and advocacy on the regional and national levels. Our diocese is represented at semiannual meetings of diocesan youth ministries from Region 10, which includes Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. The diocese is also a member of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM). The staff of the OY&YAM participates in the annual meetings of the NFCYM, and contributes to committee work that guides the youth ministry agenda on a national level.

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTERS

The revised Code of Canon Law states that lay persons who devote themselves to special service in the Church are “obliged to acquire appropriate formation required to fulfill their function properly and to carry out this function conscientiously, eagerly, and diligently.” (Canon 213)

In April, 2003 the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), the National Association for Lay Ministry (NALM), and the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) jointly approved certification standards and core and specialized competencies for the ministerial roles represented by the organizations Youth Ministry Leaders, catechetical leaders, pastoral associates, and parish life coordinators. The National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers defines broad areas of ministerial competence as the norms by which an individual’s ministerial competence may be assessed; a vision statement for each standard; core competencies that delineate specific knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, values, and/or traits required to fulfill certification standards; and specialized competencies expressed distinctly within the contest of youth ministry.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERS

Individual youth ministers are encouraged to join the National Association of Catholic Youth Ministry Leaders (NACYML), a professional organization of ordained and lay ecclesial ministers dedicated to the field of Catholic Youth Ministry. NACYML is a service of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM).

Developing a Comprehensive Mindset

Comprehensive ministry with young and older adolescents is goal-directed.

The three goals articulated in [Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry](#) give ministry with adolescents focus, direction, and purpose. A goal-directed ministry refocuses attention away from programs and activities toward the primary purposes of youth ministry. It recognizes that everything in youth ministry works toward the accomplishment of these goals. Focusing on goals opens up avenues for creativity and imagination, envisioning a variety of ways to achieve the three goals of youth ministry.

Comprehensive ministry with young and older adolescents integrates diverse activities into a larger, integrated framework.

Renewing the Vision presents a framework which integrates eight ministries of the church with four essential elements or settings for ministry with adolescents—youth, family, church community, and civic community. This integration allows for the development of programs and strategies that adapt to the diversity of youth and families in our community.

Comprehensive ministry provides concrete things that the church can do to nurture adolescent faith growth and make a lasting difference in the lives of adolescents.

Renewing the Vision utilizes contemporary research, especially the [asset-building framework](#) developed by the Search Institute, to present specific faith building assets that name what the church seeks to achieve in the lives of young people. *Renewing the Vision* advocates eighteen assets as a foundation for healthy faith development in adolescents. These eighteen assets provide specific directions for effective pastoral practice with adolescents and give focus to the content of programs and activities that are offered within a comprehensive ministry.

Comprehensive ministry engages the power and resources of the intergenerational community of faith.

A comprehensive mindset for Catholic youth ministry involves:

A VISION SHIFT: a new way of thinking

A PROGRAMMING SHIFT: a new way of acting or ministering

The whole community by its way of learning together, living together, serving together, praying together, and celebrating together helps young people become disciples of Jesus Christ and members of the Catholic community. Comprehensive ministry integrates youth ministry and young people into the larger faith community and focuses energy on building intergenerational relationships between young people and the community. *Renewing the Vision* advocates a community and intergenerational focus for ministry with adolescents.

Comprehensive ministry partners with parents in developing the faith life of adolescents by empowering families to share, celebrate, and live the Catholic faith at home and in the world.

Comprehensive ministry supports families as faith communities through family-involving programs and at-home activities. To empower families to share, celebrate and live their faith at home and in the world, youth ministry designs family-friendly and family-involving ministries and programming, and provides families with a variety of home strategies and activities.

Comprehensive ministry cooperates with community leaders and organizations to promote positive adolescent development and create healthier communities for all young people.

Renewing the Vision advocates a collaborative approach between the church and community organizations.

Comprehensive ministry empowers everyone in the faith community to utilize their gifts, talents, and resources in ministry with adolescents, helping the entire community assume responsibility for ministry with adolescents.

Comprehensive ministry mobilizes all of the resources of the faith community. Every member of the community has a role to play and special skills, gifts, talents, and resources that can enrich and expand ministry with adolescents. Comprehensive ministry with adolescents also involves adult and youth leaders in a variety of specialized roles necessary for effective ministry. Many of these leaders will be involved in direct ministry with adolescents, others will provide support services, and yet others will link the ministry effort to the resources of the broader community.

This summary is from the booklet *Celebrate Youth: Renewing our Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry* ([Center for Ministry Development](#), 1998). Used with permission.

Comprehensive Youth Ministry

The comprehensive approach is not a single program or recipe for ministry. Rather, it provides a way for integrating ministry with adolescents and their families into the total life and mission of the Church, recognizing that the whole community is responsible for ministry with adolescents and their families. The comprehensive approach uses all of our resources as a faith community – people, ministries, programs, resources – in a common effort to promote the three goals of the Church’s ministry with adolescents. The goals for ministry with adolescents help us keep our vision focused on the objectives. The themes provide a continuous thread that ensures that ministry with adolescents utilizes all available resources and is all-inclusive. The components highlight specific areas of ministry for a comprehensive approach. By offering this framework we seek to provide direction to the Church’s ministry and to affirm and encourage local creativity. (RTV 19-20)

In *Renewing the Vision*, the United States Catholic Bishops offer a framework for Catholic youth ministry. This vision does not provide a program model or a prescriptive method for developing ministry. Rather, it offers a framework, a structure that has room for a variety of parishes to develop youth ministry in a variety of ways. Like the blueprints for building a home, this framework provides important elements that guide us as we create youth ministry. The framework for Catholic youth ministry includes the following five elements.

- Definition – see previous section: Foundations of Youth Ministry
- Goals
- Themes
- Ministry Components
- Ministry Settings

Three Goals of Catholic Youth Ministry

In *Renewing the Vision*, three goals serve as directions for ministry with youth.

Goal 1: Empowerment

To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today. (RTV 9)

We know that young people are seeking. Youth seek to find the adventure of their lifetime. They look for a way to contribute something important to the world. They look for a cause to belong to, a cause to throw their life into. As a faith community, we offer young people the challenge of life as a disciple of Jesus Christ. This effort includes...

- providing a spiritually challenging and world shaping vision for life.
- evangelizing youth, drawing youth into personal relationships with Jesus Christ.
- calling youth to discipleship.
- providing opportunities for youth to join in service, ministry and leadership.
- providing catechesis for youth.
- helping youth to explore their vocation.

Goal 2: Participation

To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work for the Catholic faith community. (RTV 11)

We know that young people are striving to be part of a community. They long to belong to others. They want to feel connected to people with whom they will feel safe. As a Church, we offer young people community. We help them to become more connected in their own families, in our parishes and in the wider community.

Renewing the Vision identifies four important faith communities for young people: the family, the parish, the Catholic school, and the youth-serving organization. We help youth be connected to a network of support in their various communities. This effort includes...

- supporting families of youth by providing resources, programs and information;
- integrating youth into the life of the parish community;
- promoting belonging in the Catholic school community;
- building participation in youth-serving organizations.

Goal 3: Growth

To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person. (RTV 15)

We know that young people are growing. This time in their life brings dramatic, physical, social, intellectual and spiritual changes. As the body of Christ, we offer youth a place to grow. We offer experiences and opportunities for youth to grow in positive ways, to learn their faith and use their gifts in service to others. As a community, we use our creativity and resources to respond to youth that are seeking, striving and growing. We foster this growth through our active engagement of youth in the life of our communities. We seek to...

- support the development of healthy, competent, caring and faith-filled youth.
- address their unique developmental, social and religious needs.
- foster positive adolescent development.
- promote Catholic identity.
- address the obstacles and challenges to healthy development.

Seven Themes of Comprehensive Youth Ministry

The themes of a comprehensive vision presented in *Renewing the Vision* provide a guide for ministry development that helps us to use all of our resources and to be inclusive and responsive in our ministry efforts.

Developmentally Appropriate

Effective ministry responds to the developmental growth of young and older adolescents by developing programs and strategies that are age-appropriate and strategically focused to contribute to the positive development of youth.

Family Friendly

Effective ministry recognizes the family as an important setting for ministry and provides links between the programs of youth ministry and the family home through the sharing of information, inclusive programs and resources.

Intergenerational

Effective ministry utilizes the intergenerational parish community by developing shared programs and by connecting youth to adults in the community.

Multicultural

Effective ministry provides for ministry to youth in the context of their culture and ethnic heritage. Effective ministry also promotes cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.

Community-wide Collaboration

Effective ministry promotes collaboration with leaders, agencies and congregations in the wider community. This collaboration includes sharing information, sponsoring programs and developing advocacy efforts.

Leadership

Effective ministry mobilizes the people of the faith community to become involved in youth ministry efforts by providing for diverse roles and commitments for adults and youth.

Flexible and Adaptable Programming

Effective ministry provides flexible and adaptable program structures and ministry responses to address the variety of youth and families in our communities.

Eight Components of Comprehensive Youth Ministry

The components describe specific areas of the mission of the Church that work together to provide ministry with adolescents.

These components provide a framework for the Catholic community to respond to the needs of young people and to involve young people in sharing their unique gifts with the larger community. (RTV 26)

The components support and enhance each other. Our ministry becomes more effective when we work to balance our ministry response across the eight ministry area. This balance is not necessarily achieved by developing separate ministry programs in each component; sometimes a single program, such as a retreat, incorporates several ministry components. We look for balance over a season or year of ministry to determine response in these components. (The following descriptions of the eight components are excerpted from pages 26-47 of *Renewing the Vision*.)

Advocacy

The ministry of advocacy engages the Church to examine its priorities and practices to determine how well young people are integrated into the life, mission, and work of the Catholic community. It places adolescents and families first by analyzing every policy and program – diocesan, parish, domestic, and international – for its impact on adolescents and families. Poor, vulnerable, and at-risk adolescents have first claim on our common efforts.

The ministry of advocacy fights economic and social forces which threaten adolescents and family life, such as poverty, joblessness, lack of access to affordable health care, lack of decent housing, and discrimination. The ministry of advocacy supports policies and programs that support and empower adolescents and their families and work to overcome poverty, provide decent jobs, and promote equal opportunity. In all advocacy efforts we must remember to focus on adolescents and families with the greatest need. This is the “option for the poor” in action. (*Putting Children and Families First*).

Catechesis

The ministry of catechesis helps adolescents *develop* a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and the Christian community, *increase* their knowledge of the core content of the Catholic faith. The ministry of catechesis also helps young people *enrich* and *expand* their understanding of the Scriptures and the sacred Tradition and their application to life today, and *live* more faithfully as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily lives, especially through a life of prayer, justice and loving service. Genuine faith is a total response of the whole person – mind, heart, and will. The ministry of catechesis fosters growth in the Catholic faith in all three dimensions – trusting (heart), believing (mind), and doing (will).

Community Life

The ministry of community life *builds* an environment of love, support, appreciation for diversity, and judicious acceptance which models Catholic principles; *develops* meaningful relationships; and *nurtures* Catholic faith. The content of our message will be heard only when it is lived in our relationships and community life. To teach compassion, generosity, tolerance, peace, forgiveness, acceptance, and love as gospel values and to identify ourselves as Christians requires us to live these values in our interactions with young people and in our community life. ...The ministry of Community Life is not only *what* we do (activity), but *who* we are (identity) and *how* we interact (relationships).

Evangelization

The ministry of evangelization shares the good news of the reign of God and invites young people to hear about the Word Made Flesh. Drawing from Jesus’ example, evangelization involves the community’s pronouncement and living witness that the reign of God has become realized in and through Jesus. The starting point for the ministry of Evangelization “is our recognition of the presence of God already in young people, their experiences, their families, and their culture. ...Evangelization, therefore, enables young people to uncover and name the experience of God already active and present in their lives. This provides an openness to the gift of the Good News of Jesus Christ” (*Challenge of Catholic youth Evangelization* 7-8)...The ministry of Evangelization incorporates several essential elements: *witness, outreach, proclamation, invitation, conversion, and discipleship*.

Justice and Service

The ministry of justice and service *nurtures* in young people a social consciousness and a commitment to a life of justice and service rooted in their faith in Jesus Christ, in the Scriptures, and in Catholic social teaching; *empowers* young people to work for justice by concrete efforts to address the causes of human suffering, to serve those in need, to pursue peace, and to defend the life, dignity, and rights of all people; *infuses* the concepts of justice, peace, and human dignity into all ministry efforts.

Leadership Development

The ministry of leadership development *calls forth, affirms, and empowers* the diverse gifts, talents, and abilities of adults and young people in our faith communities for comprehensive ministry with adolescents. Leadership roles in adolescent ministry are key. Leaders must be trained and encouraged.

This approach involves a wide diversity of adult *and* youth leaders in a variety of roles. Many will be involved in direct ministry with adolescents, other will provide support serves, and yet others will link the ministry effort to the resources of the broader community.

Pastoral Care

The ministry of pastoral care is a compassionate presence in imitation of Jesus' care of people, especially those who are hurting and in need. The ministry of pastoral care involves *promoting* positive adolescent and family development through a variety of positive (preventive) strategies; *caring* for adolescents and families in crisis through support, counseling, and referral to appropriate community agencies; *providing guidance* as young people face life decisions and make moral choices; and *challenging* systems that are obstacles to positive development (*advocacy*). Pastoral care is most fundamentally a relationship – a ministry of compassionate presence. This was Jesus' caring stance toward all people, especially those who were hurting or need. Pastoral care enables healing and growth to take place within individuals and their relationships. It nurtures growth toward wholeness.

Prayer and Worship

The ministry of prayer and worship *celebrates* and *deepens* young people's relationship with Jesus Christ through the bestowal of grace, communal prayer and liturgical experiences; it awakens their awareness of the spirit at work in their lives; it *incorporates* young people more fully into the sacramental life of the Church, especially Eucharist; it *nurtures* the personal prayer of young people; and it *fosters* family rituals and prayer.

Ministry Settings for Comprehensive Youth Ministry

To open up opportunities, we look to all of our resources. Four settings for youth ministry create possibilities and inspire our shared creativity.

Youth

We most commonly associate this first setting with youth ministry: ministry to and with youth. This includes the variety of ways that we gather young people for shared ministry. Youth group meetings, social and sporting events, youth retreats, youth service events and special youth prayer services are examples of gathered ministries in the youth setting. Sometimes we provide specialized programs for small groups of young people. For example, in one parish, within a few weeks time, several youth experienced the loss of one of their parents due to death or divorce. The youth ministry team responded by inviting these people to a program designed specifically to help them begin the grieving process through prayer. These young people also experienced the support from peers and adults in the community. Often times we do not gather youth together to minister to them. We provide them with resources. Many parishes develop a card that fits in a young person's wallet or purse. This card includes hot-line support telephone numbers for their area. Other parishes organize teams of adults and youth to be present at high school football games, concerts, plays and other events where young people are present.

Family

Ministry in the family setting includes the variety of ways that we support families as they share faith together in the home. This includes programs designed to help parents communicate with their adolescents. Resources that help families to pray and share together are also part of this setting. An important process in the family setting is building bridges between youth programs and the home. With

strategies as simple as developing information packets for parents when youth attend a program, parents will know what their children are experiencing; they are better prepared to support these efforts.

Parish

The parish setting includes the many ways that youth experience ministry through the life of the parish itself. How do we include the gifts of youth and respond to their needs through our parish liturgies? What can we do to help youth join the central prayer of faith? Some communities prepare liturgies that include youth in the liturgical ministries and youth examples in the prayers and homilies. The parish's community life becomes a place to minister to youth when we pay attention to their needs and their gifts. For example, when planning a parish mission or parish-wide service event, parishes consider its young members. In this way, parishes link youth to the variety of service, ministry and leadership roles in the community.

Wider Community

Ministry to youth in the wider community connects youth and families to programs and resources beyond our parish. Examples are participation in inter-parish, inter-church and diocesan events, and ways that we connect youth and families to programs, resources and events in the civic community. Connecting youth to service in hospitals, soup kitchens and homeless shelters is a wonderful way for youth to develop their gifts. We take advantage of our shared strength when we come together with other people and agencies in the wider community as advocates for youth.

Youth

- ❖ **Developmental Changes and Needs of Adolescents**
- ❖ **40 Developmental Assets for Positive Adolescent Growth**
- ❖ **Stages of Faith Development**
- ❖ **Faith Assets**
- ❖ **Church Documents and Adolescents**
(A Sampling from Key Documents Referenced in this Handbook)



- *Comprehensive Mindset*
- *Ecclesial Mindset*
- *Safe-Environment Mindset*
- *Team Mindset*
- *Personal Care Mindset*

Developmental Changes/Needs of Adolescents

Young adolescents experience tremendous growth and change, which can create confusion for them as well as the adults around them. Understanding the natural traits and characteristics of the age can guide us in effective program development.

It is helpful for adults ministering with youth to be aware of the developmental characteristics of young people at various stages in their life. Of course, the following descriptions are “broad brush” pictures of young people. It is also important to remember that development does not occur uniformly within ages or even within individuals.

The Changes of Early Adolescence

Physical Development

- ◆ developing secondary sex characteristics and the capacity to reproduce
- ◆ being sensitive about physical changes and confused about their emerging sexuality
- ◆ incorporating their bodily changes into their own self image as male or female

Intellectual Development

- ◆ beginning to move from concrete thinking (what is) to abstract thinking, “formal operations,” (what might be true if...)
- ◆ questioning and testing adults' statements and evaluating adults' values
- ◆ being painfully self-conscious and critical, idealistic, argumentative, self-centered
- ◆ expanding interests; intense, short term enthusiasm

Identity Development

- ◆ requiring time to reflect upon the new reactions they receive from others and to build a consistent self-image from the different mirrors in which they see themselves
- ◆ discovering who they are as unique persons with abilities, interests and goals
- ◆ seeking limited independence and autonomy from parents and adults

Moral Development

- ◆ engaging in more complex decision-making process
- ◆ resolving moral dilemmas in terms of the expectations of someone or something other than themselves, which can be (a) family, friends or other significant persons or (b) what the law or the system of good order calls for in a given situation

Interpersonal Development

- ◆ relying on parents and families in setting values and giving affection
- ◆ identifying more strongly with the peer group for belonging and friendships
- ◆ entering a broader social world of middle school, peer groups, and activity groups
- ◆ developing the ability to consider the feelings and needs of others in a relationship
- ◆ learning how to relate to the opposite sex (what to say and how to behave)

Faith Development

- ◆ deriving their faith from parents and family
- ◆ developing their faith and identity, establishing a set of religious beliefs, attitudes and values, through the experiences of participation and belonging in a caring faith community where they are valued

The Changes of Older Adolescence

Intellectual Development

- ◆ developing the ability to engage in reflective thinking (“what do I think?” “why do I think that?”), making it possible to develop a personal identity, personal value system, and personal faith
- ◆ thinking about and planning for the future

Identity Development

- ◆ beginning the process of establishing a personal identity, which includes an acceptance of one's sexuality, decision-making regarding the future, and a commitment to a personally-held system of values and religious beliefs
- ◆ shifting from the authority of family to self-chosen authority (oneself), often by establishing an identity that is shaped by significant others (peers and adults)
- ◆ experiencing a period of questioning, reevaluation, and experimentation
- ◆ developing increasing autonomy in making personal decisions, assuming responsibility for oneself, and regulating one's own behavior

Moral Development

- ◆ exercising moral judgments in matters of much greater complexity as they seek to establish a more personal form of moral reasoning
- ◆ reevaluating the moral values received from family, church, and significant others
- ◆ searching for a moral code which preserves their personal integrity and provides the basis for developing an internalized moral value system that can guide their behavior

Interpersonal Development

- ◆ moving toward greater personal intimacy and adult sexuality
- ◆ developing the capability for more mutual, trusting, deep, and enduring personal friendships with members of the same sex and opposite sex that provide acceptance, love, affirmation, and the opportunity to honestly share their deepest selves
- ◆ expanding their social perspective to encompass the larger world

Faith Development

- ◆ exploring and questioning the faith handed down by family and church as they search for a style of faith and belief which is more personal to themselves
- ◆ beginning the process of taking responsibility for one's own faith life, commitments, lifestyle, beliefs and attitudes
- ◆ exploring a personal relationship with God who knows, accepts and confirms them, and with Jesus Christ through his teaching, example, and presence in their lives

Developmental Needs of Young Adolescents

▶ **Physical Activity**

Young adolescents experience very rapid and uneven physical development. They have a tremendous amount of energy, so they require a great deal of physical activity and time for having fun, as well as time for relaxation and rest.

▶ **Self Definition**

Young adolescents are at a uniquely vulnerable time in their lives. They require time to reflect upon the new reactions they receive from others and to construct a consistent self-image from the many different mirrors in which they view themselves.

▶ **Competence and Achievement**

Young adolescents need to find out what they are good at doing. They can be painfully self-conscious and self-critical and are vulnerable to bouts of low self-esteem, so they require many varied opportunities to be successful and have their accomplishments recognized by others.

▶ **Positive Social Interaction with Adults and Peers**

Young adolescents identify with their peer groups' values and desperately want to belong, so they require opportunities to form positive peer relationships. Although they may not often admit it, they have a similar need for caring relationships with adults who like and respect them and who will serve as role models and advisors.

▶ **Meaningful Participation**

Young adolescents are intensely curious about the world around them, so they require exposure to situations in which they can use their skills to solve real-life problems. They need to participate in the activities that shape their lives.

▶ **Creative Expression**

Young adolescents need opportunities to express to the external world who they are on the inside, be that in music, writing, sports, art, cooking, fashion, or making up games for younger children.

▶ **Structure and Clear Limits**

Clear expectations are crucial to unsure, self-critical young people. Explicit boundaries help define the areas in which they may legitimately seek freedom to explore. In their search for independence and autonomy, young adolescents often feel immune to risks and dangers, so they require structure and guidance in setting clear limits that involve them in the process of decision making.

▶ **Personal Religious Experience**

Young adolescents are beginning the process of identity formation, and struggling with life questions that challenge their thinking and beliefs from childhood. As they struggle with establishing a sense of autonomy they begin to make a distinction between faith in God and religious practices of their family and church. They need opportunities to question and explore their beliefs as they seek to discover what they value, trust, and will adopt as their framework for living.

[Developmental Needs adapted from: *A Portrait of Young Adolescents in the 1990s*. Peter Scales.]

Developmental Needs of Older Adolescents

Exploration and Experimentation

- ◆ opportunities to experiment with a wide array of behaviors, roles, attitudes, relationships, ideas, and activities as they develop their own identity and faith identity
- ◆ opportunities to explore who they are and who they can become
- ◆ opportunities for youth of ethnic cultures to achieve a positive orientation toward their own culture and the dominant culture of the area in which they live; to affirm their ethnicity through observation of ceremonies, retention of native language, and reinforcement of specific attitudes, beliefs, and practices

Adult Sexuality

- ◆ opportunities to understand their sexual growth and integrate their sexuality into their own personality in a holistic way
- ◆ opportunities to develop healthy values and attitudes regarding their own sexuality

Interpersonal Relationships

- ◆ opportunities to form positive relationships and experiences with peers in a comfortable and secure environment and to develop friendship-making and friendship-maintaining skills
- ◆ opportunities to learn how to develop a relationship with parents that is reflective of their growing autonomy and utilizes new patterns of communicating

Adult Mentors

- ◆ opportunities to develop relationships with adult Christians who will affirm their journey and struggles, explore sensitive issues with them, listen to their stories and questions, share their own faith journey, and ask questions that encourage critical thinking and reflection

Meaningful Roles in the Community and Society

- ◆ participation as full members and leaders in the community, society and church
- ◆ opportunities to explore, discuss, and act on local and global justice issues; to develop an active responsibility for what happens in their community and world, and to be involved in meaningful community service
- ◆ involvement in the decisions, planning, and implementation of programs that serve them

Preparing for the Future

- ◆ opportunities to acquire the competencies necessary for adult roles, such as goal setting, problem solving, time management, and decision making
- ◆ opportunities to explore life options and plan their futures (education, career) and to help them acquire the skills, knowledge and experience for their chosen fields; to link more closely the worlds of school and work

Personal Value System and Decision-Making Skills

- ◆ opportunities to discuss conflicting values and formulate their own value system
- ◆ opportunities to gain knowledge and experience in making decisions and to apply Christian moral values in making moral judgments

Personal Faith

- ◆ opportunities to explore and question the faith they have been given by their family and the faith community and to develop their own faith identity
- ◆ opportunities to explore what it means to be and live as a person of faith today
- ◆ opportunities to develop a more personal relationship with Jesus Christ

40 Developmental Assets for Positive Adolescent Growth

(From the Search Institute)

The following forty developmental assets have been identified through research by the Search Institute as forming a foundation for healthy development in children and adolescents. The following information is excerpted from Search Institute research (Search Institute, 1996).

Asset Building

- Asset development begins at birth and needs to be sustained through childhood and adolescence. Each stage of development requires persistent attention to meeting young people's development needs.
- Asset building depends primarily on individuals – parents, grandparents, teachers, neighbors, and many others – building positive relationships with children and teenagers.
- Building assets also requires a highly consistent community, in which children and teenagers are exposed to clear messages about what is important.
- Family can and should be the most powerful generator of developmental assets.
- The assets are more likely to blossom if they are nurtured simultaneously by families, schools, youth organizations, neighborhoods, religious institutions, health care providers, and in the informal settings in which adults and youth interact.
- Because asset development necessitates relational, consistent, and redundant communities, all residents have a role to play.

Below is the link to the Developmental Assets Lists for a variety of age group and languages:

www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets/lists

Stages of Faith Development

Adapted from "Will Our Children Have Faith," John Westerhoff

EXPERIENCED FAITH (pre-school & childhood)

This is foundational faith. The child copies the faith of others and by observation and interaction begins to develop a faith of his own.

"This is what 'we' do. This is how 'we' act." It is a time of imitation...a child prays the Lord's Prayer without understanding the meaning of all the words.

AFFILIATIVE FAITH (early adolescent years, 6th-10th grade)

Here faith is characterized by a strong sense of belonging to a group and it has a strong affective aspect (feelings/heart). Also there is a sense of authority that the community's way of understanding faith will influence values and actions.

"This is what 'we' believe and do. This is 'our' group/church. It is a time of belonging to a group...still a time which centers on the imitation of what the group does.

SEARCHING FAITH (late adolescence, 11th grade & up – early adulthood)

Now faith is characterized by doubting and questioning. There may be some experimentation with other religions or ways of expressing faith, and there is a growing need to commit to one or several causes.

"Is this what 'I' believe?" This is a time of asking questions...not blindly accepting what others have said. This stage of faith is adding the 'head' to the 'heart' of the earlier states.

OWNED FAITH (adulthood)

This stage is reached when the person comes to peace with his/her faith and wants to be characterized by it. This person will try to witness for his/her faith.

"This is what 'I' believe." This stage only comes through the searching stage. This is the strong, personal faith that one witnesses to and one is willing to die for.

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Adolescents must question and even doubt their faith if they are to own it. The context in which this process should take place is the community of faith (the church). Enculturation (non-formal relational experiences) rather than instruction (formal teaching settings) is often the best means of nurturing faith.

# Faith Assets

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*From Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*

The Church's ministry with adolescents seeks.....

1. To guide young people in the call to holiness by developing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ by meeting him in the Scriptures and in the life and teachings of the Catholic community, and in their own prayer lives
2. To empower young people with the knowledge and skills for active participation in the life and ministries of the Church, including a comprehensive and substantive catechesis based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church
3. To nurture in young people positive, Catholic values of love, honesty, courage, peace and nonviolence, fidelity, chastity, generosity, tolerance, respect for all life from conception to natural death, care and compassion, service to those in need, equality, social justice, integrity, responsibility, and community
4. To help young people apply their Catholic faith to daily life, nurture in young people a lifelong commitment to the Catholic faith, guiding them in developing a personal faith and skills for continuing their growth as Catholics
5. To empower young people to live the moral and theological virtues and apply these virtues in making moral decisions
6. To develop the biblical and doctrinal literacy of young people and a deeper appreciation for the importance of the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church in the Christian life
7. To foster the development of a personal spirituality and prayer life in young people
8. To nurture in young people an understanding of and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Eucharist
9. To help young people recognize that the Catholic faith calls them to work for justice and to defend human dignity
10. To empower young people to serve those in need, to develop skills that foster social changes to secure justice and equality for every human being, and to live a life of Christian service modeled on Jesus' life
11. To empower young people to become healers and reconcilers when conflicts arise, to pursue peace, and to become a peaceful person
12. To promote an understanding of and respect for people who are different from the young people – different cultures, different languages, different faiths, different ages – and develop the attitudes and skills for overcoming racial and ethnic prejudices as individuals and members of society

13. To develop young people's critical thinking skills that empower them people to analyze contemporary life and culture in light of the Good News of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church
14. To promote Catholic sexual values and attitudes and the importance of valuing chastity and sexual restraint
15. To promote positive self-image in young people, including an appreciation of one's ethnic culture, a sense of self-esteem, a sense of purpose in life, a positive view of one's personal future, and an acceptance of one's self as lovable and loved by God and others
16. To develop the life skills of adolescents including entering into and maintaining meaningful friendships, planning and decision-making skills, life planning skills, appreciation and understanding of a variety of cultures, and peaceful conflict resolution skills
17. To help young people recognize the movement of the Holy Spirit in their lives and discern their particular Christian vocation in the world – in the workplace, in marriage or single life, in the priesthood or consecrated life, or in the permanent diaconate
18. To cultivate the gifts and talents of young people, and empower them to utilize these gifts and talents in leadership and ministry in the Church and community including peer ministry and intergenerational skills

From *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*  
©1997, United States Catholic Conference, Inc., Washington D.C.

# Church Documents and Adolescents

## (A Sampling from Key Documents Referenced in this Handbook)

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- ❖ "The **goal of catechesis** is to put people in touch, in communion, indeed in intimacy with Jesus Christ." *General Directory of Catechesis*, 80. In other words, the goal is fostering a *relationship* with Jesus. Adolescents learn how to form and maintain healthy relationships from the example of the caring adults in their lives.
- ❖ "Because the **example of adults** is so important to [adolescents], their participation in the Mass, the sacraments, and other rituals alongside adults incorporates them further into the life of the Church." *National Directory of Catechesis*, 48D
- ❖ "Community life is nurtured when the atmosphere is welcoming, comfortable, safe and predictable - one in which all **adolescents** know that their presence is **welcomed**, their energy is **appreciated** and their contributions **valued**." *USCCB*
- ❖ "Catechesis with adolescents involves group participation in an environment that is characterized by **warmth, trust, acceptance, and care**, so that young people can **hear and respond to God's call**." *National Directory of Catechesis*, 48D
- ❖ "If parishes are to be worthy of the loyalty and active participation of youth, they will need to become "**youth-friendly**" **communities** in which youth have a conspicuous presence in parish life. ...These are parish communities that provide young people with **opportunities for intergenerational relationships** - developing relationships with adults who serve as role models and mentors." *Renewing the Vision*, pg. 13

# Youth Ministry Leader

- ❖ **Becoming a Catholic Youth Ministry Leader**
- ❖ **The Parish Coordinator of Youth Ministry**
- ❖ **National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers**
- ❖ **The Youth Ministry Professional**
  - Development and Formation**
  - Pathways to CYML (Coordinator Youth Ministry Leader)**
  - Personal Appearance of Youth Ministry Leaders**
  - Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders**
  - Assessments**
  - Resources Supported or Referenced**



- *Comprehensive Mindset*
- *Ecclesial Mindset*
- *Safe-Environment Mindset*
- *Team Mindset*
- *Personal Care Mindset*

# Becoming a Catholic Youth Ministry Leader

*From the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)*

## **Are you called to be a Catholic coordinator of youth ministry?**

It is really wonderful that you are thinking about pursuing a career in youth ministry. Lay ecclesial ministry is a phenomenon that is growing in the church today. So what does a coordinator of youth ministry do? Well perhaps the first question is “who” should a Catholic coordinator of youth ministry be?

## **Who is a Catholic coordinator of youth ministry?**

The first thing necessary is a real sense of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. Before Catholic/Christian coordinators of youth ministry do anything, they must be serious about their relationship with God in Jesus Christ. That means an active prayer life, familiarity with scripture, especially the gospels, a real connection to church life including the sacraments, its moral teaching and the realization of their own need for lifelong conversion and formation.

Coordinators of youth ministry must love young people too! They should have a real desire to serve young people by helping them experience God's love for them and the communities desire to invite them into the life and mission of the church. Coordinators of youth ministry are evangelizers who live and preach the Gospel with joy and conviction. They serve as mentors, guides, examples, teachers, companions, and friends in the gospel sense of that word. They know how to set and respect boundaries, have a good sense of self, and are not afraid to speak the challenging words young people and, for that matter, adults sometimes need to hear.

They are also passionate about justice and peace as well as fostering church teaching on respecting life at all its stages and circumstances. They realize that it is the parish or the school that is the *real* youth minister. The whole community *does* youth ministry—not just one person.

## **What do coordinators of youth ministry do?**

Well, in many respects it is a job that never ends since coordinators of youth ministry never stop caring for young people. We are not talking about 24-7 availability. It does mean, however, that we are always ready to reach out to young people and their families, especially their parents with the care and concern of Christ. We do that through:

- Direct programming—implementing the goals and components of the 1997 Bishops’ document *Renewing the Vision*, for example, working with a core team of youth and adults to organize programs like retreats, youth group, peer ministry, outings, opportunities for pastoral care, gathered and non-gathered events, etc.
- Seasonal programming—involving youth in the liturgical life of the parish and its celebrations, for example, youth leading the Stations of the Cross during Lent and youth working with other members of the parish to organize parish outreach or a Christmas social.
- Leadership development—recruiting youth and adult volunteers, and training them for effective ministry, looking for opportunities and other people to enrich the lives and the faith of young people.
- Sacramental and/or catechetical programs—facilitating the faith development of youth in the areas of catechesis and preparation for the celebration of the sacraments.

- Administration—coordinating an efficient office, working in tandem with the pastor and parish staff, especially the director of religious education and/or the principal of the school and staying in contact with the diocesan office of youth ministry.

### **What sort of education and training is necessary?**

The coordinator of youth ministry is a professional. They have a bachelor's degree. They have sought opportunities to serve as a volunteer or intern in parish youth ministry programs. Certification and standards are important to them. They have a background in religious studies or theology and are open to examining the tenets of Catholic youth ministry. The coordinator knows and understands the bishops' documents on youth ministry especially the 1997 USCCB document *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*. They are open to ongoing education, never stop learning and take advantage of professional journals and organizations. On occasion the mature coordinator of youth ministry realizes that they are in over their head on "this one" and seeks the help, support and advice of others in the field.

Finally, the coordinator of youth ministry is a humble servant, one who while wanting to make a living and enjoy life is a living reminder of the person and presence of Christ. Youth ministry is a real adventure. It is a joy, a challenge, a cross and a mission. Talk with coordinators of youth ministry, find out what they do, ask them questions about real life situations. Take the time to pray and reflect about this ministry and the ways that God is calling you to share your gifts with others. You could be called to a noble adventure as a coordinator of youth ministry in the Catholic Church.

# The Parish Coordinator of Youth Ministry

The Lay Ecclesial Youth Ministry Leader is the person who organizes, animates, and coordinates the people, programming, and resources within the parish, school, and/or community-based settings to provide a comprehensive ministry effort with adolescents (6<sup>th</sup>/ 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade → depending upon your parish structure). The Youth Ministry Leader must be qualified and well trained, as well as have an excellent reputation. The Youth Ministry leader is primarily responsible for facilitating planning, administering programs, developing a leadership system for adults and youth leaders (recruiting, training, and support), and serving as an advocate and link for young people to the faith community and wider community. (*Renewing the Vision*)

These individuals (who may work full or part-time as a salaried employee or as a volunteer) may conduct ministry under a variety of titles including but not limited to:

1. Director/Coordinator of Youth Ministry
2. Assistant Director/Coordinator of Youth Ministry
3. Director/Coordinator of High School Faith Formation
4. Director/Coordinator of Junior High/Middle School Faith Formation
5. Coordinator of Confirmation Preparation
6. Parish Youth Minister

Some campus ministers, pastoral associates, parish life coordinators, and catechetical leaders may also share responsibility for youth ministry and as such may be considered lay ecclesial ministers serving as youth ministry leaders.

(*From National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers*)

## **The Youth Ministry Leader should be:**

1. An active Catholic in good standing with the Church.
2. An active and visible member of a parish community.
3. A person who is knowledgeable in regards to Catholic teaching and morality.
4. A person of deep faith and prayer.
5. A person of good character, reputation and record.
6. A person called to ministry with an understanding of vocation.
7. A person with working knowledge of the “Vision” of Comprehensive Youth Ministry as outlined in the document “Renewing the Vision, a Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry.”
8. A person with a commitment to continuing professional and ministerial formation.
9. A person who is skilled in human resource management and is willing to enable youth and adults to manage resources in order to achieve an effective integration of all dimensions of youth ministry.
10. A person who understands and is willing to apply the principles and foundations of youth ministry.
11. A person able to provide formation adapted to meet specific individual needs so that the spiritual growth and community involvement of the young person is both encouraged and enriched according to his/her abilities. (*Reference: Pastoral Statement of U.S. Bishops on People with Disabilities (1978) and NCCB Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities (1995).*)
12. A person who possesses effective leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills.
13. A person who is creative, self-motivated, and full of the joy of the Lord.

14. A person who is willing to deal with the demanding expectations of youth ministry (long weekends, late nights, etc.)
15. A person who holds or is working toward Diocesan credentialing as the Coordinator Youth Ministry Leader/CYML.
16. A person who is willing to study, understand and apply Catholic theology as the core of his/her ministry.
17. In compliance with the Safe Environment Program of the Diocese of Dallas, which means the completion of screening procedures and training required.

*(Adapted from the National Directory for Catechesis)*

#### **Position Specification Requirements:**

1. BA in Youth Ministry, Theology, Religious Studies, Pastoral Studies or related field.
2. Completion of National Certificate in Youth Ministry (completed prior to employment is preferred/must be in process once hired if not completed)
3. A commitment to continuing professional education.
4. A theological perspective consistent with *Renewing the Vision* (NCCB, 1997), *General Directory of Catechesis* (Congregation for Clergy, 1997), *The Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis* (NFCYM, 1986).
5. Must have demonstrated good character, reputation and background record (No convictions or felonies, no history of violent or deviate behavior, etc.)

#### **Preventative Strategies - Self-Care**

- The minister should recognize and maintain the boundaries of his/her professional commitment.
- The minister should not try to directly assist anyone whose needs extend beyond his/her level of competence.

#### **Responsibilities**

Each parish and each Coordinator of Youth Ministry are unique. It is not possible to develop a job description that applies to all situations. Each parish should assess the needs of their own parish when deciding the job description for a youth minister and or coordinator. *(SEE SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS PROVIDED IN APPENDIX A)*

#### **Evaluation**

The effectiveness of the Coordinator of Youth Ministry's leadership should be evaluated every year by those to whom he/she is responsible. The evaluation should be done in light of the job description that the Coordinator of Youth Ministry agreed to when accepting the position. It is also a means of determining how the Coordinator of Youth Ministry can be challenged to grow as a person and as a minister.

# NATIONAL CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTERS

The revised Code of Canon Law states that lay persons who devote themselves to special service in the Church are “obliged to acquire appropriate formation required to fulfill their function properly and to carry out this function conscientiously, eagerly, and diligently.” (Canon 231) In April, 2003 the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), the National Association for Lay Ministry (NALM), and the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) jointly approved certification standards and core and specialized competencies for the ministerial roles represented by the organizations—Youth Ministry Leaders, catechetical leaders, pastoral associates, and parish life coordinators. The National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers defines broad areas of ministerial competence as the norms by which an individual’s ministerial competence may be assessed; a vision statement for each standard; core competencies that delineate specific knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, values, and/or traits required to fulfill certification standards; and specialized competencies expressed distinctly within the context of youth ministry.

*Reference: Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord - A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005*

- The NFCYM COMPETENCY BASED STANDARDS FOR THE COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY STATES: [Competency-Based Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers](#)

## A Summary of the National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers and the Specialized Competencies for Youth Ministry Leaders

### Core Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers

These standards are for all lay ecclesial ministers, including coordinators of youth ministry/youth ministry leaders.

- 1. Personal and Spiritual Maturity:** A lay ecclesial minister demonstrates personal and spiritual maturity in ministry with the people of God.
- 2. Lay Ecclesial Ministry Identity:** A lay ecclesial minister identifies the call to formal and public ministry as a vocation rooted in baptism.
- 3. Roman Catholic Theology:** A lay ecclesial minister integrates knowledge of Roman Catholic faith within ministry.
- 4. Pastoral Praxis:** A lay ecclesial minister engages in pastoral activity that promotes evangelization, faith formation, community, and pastoral care with sensitivity to diverse situations.
- 5. Professional Practice:** A lay ecclesial minister provides effective leadership, administration, and service, in the spirit of collaboration.

## Specialized Competencies for the Youth Ministry Leader

There are specialized competencies for the youth ministry leader which fall under Core Certification Standard Four: Pastoral Praxis. The youth ministry leader demonstrates competency in the following areas. The youth ministry leader shall:

- 4.7 YML Demonstrate an understanding of the history, vision, goals, themes, and components of Catholic youth ministry as outlined in the U.S. bishops' pastoral plan and related church documents.
- 4.8 YML Utilize theories, models, processes and methods of Catholic youth ministry.
- 4.9 YML Demonstrate an understanding of adolescent developmental needs within the contexts of youth and popular cultures.
- 4.10 YML Model for and collaborate with the faith community in implementing the components of Catholic youth ministry by:
  - 4.10.1 Utilizing the aims, principles, processes, and methods of adolescent catechesis in implementing adolescent faith formation.
  - 4.10.2 Facilitating the development of community among youth, families, church and society.
  - 4.10.3 Inviting young people into intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and empowering them to live and witness as disciples in today's world.
  - 4.10.4 Engaging youth in the social mission of the church in accord with Catholic social teaching.
  - 4.10.5 Enabling healing, growth and healthy development of youth in their relationships.
  - 4.10.6 Enabling young people to celebrate and deepen their relationship with the Triune God through individual and communal prayer and participation in the liturgical life of the church.
  - 4.10.7 Engaging the church and broader community in voicing and addressing the rights and needs of youth.
  - 4.10.8 Affirming and calling forth the gifts of youth and adult leaders and providing opportunities for their ongoing spiritual and leadership development.

**NOTE: Since all coordinators of youth ministry are catechetical leaders, they need to also pay attention to the specialized competencies for parish catechetical leaders. Please contact our office to obtain a copy of the *National Certification Standards Assessment Tool* for your use.**

# THE YOUTH MINISTRY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/FORMATION

*Lay persons who devote themselves permanently or temporarily to some special service of the church are obliged to acquire appropriate formation required to fulfill their function properly and to carry out this function conscientiously, eagerly, and diligently. (Canon 231)*

The vocation of the Lay Ecclesial Youth Ministry Leader is the response to God's great gift of being able to minister with youth. With this gift comes great responsibility including professional development and continuing formation. To that end, formation and training are top priorities of our office. To provide the most effective ministry with youth, the youth minister needs to be competent in many areas including theology and methodology, as well as the mindsets of safe environment and comprehensive youth ministry. We have outlined the pathways to credentialing in the following pages of this section.

Whether full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, the formation of individuals who work with youth, in particular early and older adolescents, is a critical component in the development of successful parish programs and safe places for young people to gather and feel welcomed. As a youth ministry leader, you bring your own individual "charisms" (gifts and talents) to your parish community. The formation of the youth ministry leader begins at Baptism. In discovering your "Vocational Call" you must realize that a commitment to further formation and education is as important as the essential qualities you bring to the ministry.

Effective Youth Ministry:

- "Develops a leadership system that invites, trains, supports, and nourishes adult and adolescent leaders and provides for the coordination of leaders throughout a comprehensive youth ministry."
- It also "develops and nurtures adult leaders of lively faith and maturity with solid theological understandings, relational and ministry skills, and organizational ability appropriate to their particular role in ministry with adolescents." (*Renewing the Vision*)

Since these needed skills, knowledge and abilities can be learned, those preparing to be ministers to young people are to experience formation and training in order to increase their competence in their role.

It is helpful to distinguish three stages of youth ministry formation:

- **Orientation** is provided for all those in ministry to youth, new and experienced, volunteer and professional, to prepare them to begin a particular season or program in ministry. They learn how the parish, school or institution functions (goals, mission statement, procedures), build community, pray together and are encouraged to seek further skills development.
- **Initial Formation** begins with an assessment of the minister's needs and provides the basics of the ministry. This ensures that a person has the minimum knowledge and skills necessary to function competently as a minister to young people.

- **Ongoing Formation** occurs consistently and systematically throughout the year, providing regular opportunities for personal and spiritual growth, as well as the further development of skills and knowledge in youth ministry.

Those in ministry to young people do all they can to become more effective and collaborative ministers through their participation in youth ministry formation opportunities throughout the entire period of time that they carry out their ministry.

*A comprehensive youth ministry program, whether it is based in a single parish or represents the cooperative efforts of several parishes, includes the dimension of structured or formal catechesis. Coordinators of youth ministry, therefore, should have theological formation as well as competence and experience in catechesis. (NDC pg. 226)*

## Documentation of Formation

In accordance with the directives of Bishop Farrell and the Diocesan Catechetical Plan, the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries continues to collaborate with the Office of Catechetical Services in the training and formation for all those involved in catechesis with children and youth.

In accordance with the Catechetical Plan, all Professional Youth Ministry Leaders must complete a “Youth Ministry Formation Plan” that reflects and documents their formation efforts. This form will be kept on file in the Office of Youth Ministry. Please connect with our office for an explanation of the process and for approval of formation efforts.

*This is the first phase of a multi-faceted plan in which all ministries served by offices in the Pastoral Center will be asking that those in leadership and those volunteer ministers who evangelize and catechize in the name of the Bishop in parishes, to be formed in the areas of Christian Identity/Ministry, Sacred Scripture, Theology, Personal and Spiritual Maturity, and Catechetical Methodology/Skills. The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries will be the first Ministry Office to join with the Department of Catechetical Services in requiring their professional and volunteer ministers to receive a Certificate in Catechesis. (Continuing Catechetical Formation Handbook)*

If you are new to our Diocese, you can begin documentation of your formation by reviewing the “Pathways to CYML” information provided for you in this section of the Handbook. Additionally you will find information on the National Certificate in Youth Ministry and course/date offerings for the current year which is named in the “Pathways” information. You will need to complete a “Coordinator of Youth Ministry Application” upon hire.

Please contact the Office of Catechetical Services for more information regarding the Continuing Catechetical Formation Handbook:

[http://www.cathdal.org/pages/Catechetical\\_Services](http://www.cathdal.org/pages/Catechetical_Services)

<http://www.cathdal.org/files/CatecheticalFormation1-60.pdf>

Please contact the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for information concerning Youth Ministry and your professional training and formation (those specific items named above) and the Youth Ministry Methodology and Skills courses.

# Pathways to CYML

## ***Guidelines for the Coordinator Youth Ministry Leader to Complete the Continuing Catechetical Formation Certificate***

The Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries has outlined the suggested plan for Youth Ministry Leaders to complete the Continuing Catechetical Formation Certificate process as outlined by the Office of Catechetical Services. We have outlined 3 path options for Youth Ministry Leaders:



Details can be found below for each of the paths.

It is important to note that these paths only outline the requirements for a Catechist Certificate. Requirements for the Coordinator Level Certificate will include a National Certificate in Youth Ministry, so the Standard Path is the recommended path.

***We do know that sometimes the pathways we take toward a goal are not as clear and straight as those defined in this outline. Please know that your specific situation may require adjusting the pathway to fit your particular formation plan. We are here to work with you and help ensure that YOUR pathway is the best one for you. Feel free to contact us if we can help you to determine your own path.***



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## National Certificate in Youth Ministry Studies



The Certificate in Youth Ministry Studies is a ministry training program for those in ministry with youth in both parish and school settings. It equips leaders with the practical tools and techniques needed for creative and comprehensive ministry with youth. Courses may be taken for Certificate credit or applied to graduate studies with the University Of Dallas School Of Ministry.

### National Certificate in Youth Ministry Studies

<http://catholicyouthministryofdallas.org/index.cfm?load=page&page=152>

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## Catechetical Path



Your role in youth ministry might concentrate more on one particular area of ministry and thus lead you more into another area of concentration (Catechetical Leadership Formation Program, for example) rather than the National Certificate in Youth Ministry. These Youth Ministry Leaders should follow the requirements as set forth by the Department of Catechetical Services including specific courses assigned in each category.

This path should be supplemented with **Youth Ministry Methodology & Skills** course offerings. For more information on these, please contact the Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries.

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## University Degree Path



Youth Ministry Leaders may choose to apply a university degree in theology or pastoral ministry toward your Catechetical Certificate. Please see the Continuing Catechetical Formation Handbook for more information on this pathway.

# PERSONAL APPEARANCE

A professional appearance is an asset to the employee, his or her associates and the Diocese of Dallas. Due to the high profile this role has with the youth, parents and adult parishioners. Youth Ministry Leaders are expected to follow appropriate professional standards in attire according to the occasion. Being well-groomed and dressing modestly and neatly is expected at all times.

## **APPROPRIATE ATTIRE**

There are events outside of day to day office time where youth ministry personnel will be in a casual/sports wear. Again, good judgment should be used.

### **For Special Liturgical Celebrations, (Confirmation, Baccalaureates, etc):**

Men: Suits, ties and dress socks and dress shoes/boots

Women: Professional suits, dresses, and separates: blouses, pants, skirts with appropriate shoes

### **For Speaking Engagements with adults (Parent Meetings, Addressing Parish at Mass, etc):**

Men: Suits and ties or slacks, dress shirt, ties and dress socks and dress shoes/boots

Women: Appropriate Suits, dress, and separates: blouses, pants, skirts with appropriate shoes

### **Daily Office Work, Meetings, Mass:**

Men: Dress shirts or collar shirts and slacks (Dockers or chino type) with appropriate shoes

Women: Dress and separates: blouses, pants, skirts with appropriate shoes

### **Youth Events and Trips:**

Casual and Sports Wear

Men & Women: Jeans, shorts, T-shirts (in appropriate condition) Tennis shoes, sandals

### **What is Never Appropriate:**

Clothing which displays inappropriate offensive material (symbols, pictures, words) of either a sexual nature and or with implied innuendos or sarcastic undertones which could be offensive. Clothing, hats, etc that advertises alcohol, tobacco products or illegal drugs. Youth Ministry Leaders should make sure that all clothing adequately and modestly covers their body and does not inhibit normal activity (short shorts or skirts, low cut tops or pants).

## **HYGIENE**

Because personal hygiene can affect both internal morale as well as the public's impression of the Diocese of Dallas, all employees are required to maintain good personal hygiene while in the work environment.

# Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry has developed the following code of ethics for youth ministry leaders. The Diocese of Dallas has adopted this code of ethics for all youth ministry leaders. This code of ethics is intended for youth ministry leaders regardless of employment status within the church. While this code may be used in conjunction with existing diocesan policies, protocols or codes, it is not intended to supersede them.

## Professional Ethical Obligations

### 1. Ministerial Role

- a. Youth ministry leaders work collaboratively with the pastor (and/or other supervisors) and associates in ministry.
- b. Youth ministry leaders faithfully represent the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
- c. Youth ministry leaders are competent and receive education and training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
- d. Youth ministry leaders respect the diversity of spiritualities in the faith community and will not make their personal form of spirituality normative.

### 2. Inclusion

- a. Youth ministry leaders recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
- b. Youth ministry leaders serve all people without regard to gender, creed, national origin, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or political beliefs.
- c. Youth ministry leaders ensure that all persons have access to the resources, services, and opportunities they require with particular regard for persons with special needs or disabilities.

### 3. Accountability

- a. Youth ministry leaders are accountable to the pastor or other duly appointed representative, under the authority of the (arch)diocesan (arch)bishop.
- b. Youth ministry leaders are called to serve the faith community, carrying out their ministerial functions "...conscientiously, zealously, and diligently" (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
- c. Youth ministry leaders exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding the fiscal matters placed in their trust.
- d. Youth ministry leaders, upon suspecting or learning of abuse of a minor, must notify the civil authorities, as well as church leadership responsible for this topic, in accordance with civil and ecclesial law.

### 4. Confidentiality

- a. Youth ministry leaders respect confidentiality, yet are not held to confidentiality in the same way as ordained ministers and licensed, certified counselors.
- b. Youth ministry leaders adhere to civil and ecclesial law concerning the reporting of neglect, abuse or when physical harm could come to the person or to a third party.

- c. Youth ministry leaders support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of their children.

### **5. Conduct**

- a. Youth ministry leaders know that they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
- b. Youth ministry leaders maintain appropriate professional boundaries (e.g., physical, sexual, spiritual, relational, and emotional). Romantic, dating, or sexual relationships between a youth ministry leader and any youth is inappropriate and unethical.
- c. Youth ministry leaders shall exhibit the highest ethical standards and personal integrity reflective of the Gospel and will avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
- d. Youth ministry leaders may not use alcohol while supervising youth; may never use illicit substances; and, may never provide alcohol or illicit substances to youth.

### **6. Referrals and Intervention**

- a. Youth ministry leaders know the signs of neglect and physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.
- b. Youth ministry leaders know their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals.

### **7. Parish/Diocesan Policies**

- a. Youth ministry leaders know of and comply with all applicable parish, organizational and/or diocesan policies with special attention to sexual misconduct, safe environment, risk management, safety, transportation, parental permission, and medical emergency policies.

I have read and understand the above code of ethics and commit to uphold this code in my ministry.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **References**

Coriden, J., Green, T. & Heinstschel, D, Editors, (1985). The Code of Canon Law. A text and Commentary. The Canon Law Society of America. New York: Paulist Press.  
Gula, Richard, (1996), Ethics in Pastoral Ministry. New York: Paulist Press.  
National Association for Lay Ministry Standards Code of Ethics. Downloaded from the Internet on October 16, 2002 at [www.nalm.org/standards.html](http://www.nalm.org/standards.html).  
National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry's Organizational Code of Conduct. March 2000.  
NALM, NCCL, and NFCYM, (September 29, 2002). Common Competency Project Core Certification Standards and Competencies. Draft 3.

This code of ethics pertains to lay ecclesial ministers serving as youth ministry leaders. These individuals may conduct ministry under a variety of titles, including but not limited to coordinator of youth ministry, director of youth ministry, parish youth minister, and/or campus minister. Some pastoral associates, parish coordinators, and catechetical leaders may also share responsibility for youth ministry and as such may be considered "lay ecclesial ministers serving as youth ministry leaders."

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# Assessments

An assessment is a tool to determine how each person or program can be challenged to grow. The assessment provides an opportunity to recognize the gifts a person or program brings to the Parish. The effectiveness of youth ministry calls for periodic assessments.

The following item is a sample of an assessment tool for youth ministry leaders:

<http://www.nfcym.org/profdev/resources/selfassessmentYML.pdf>

[Self-Assessment for the Coordinator of Youth Ministry](#) – a copy of this “Growing in Competency” is also available in the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

## ***Resources Supported or Referenced***

East, Thomas. Leadership for Catholic Youth Ministry – A Comprehensive Resource. New London, CT: Center for Ministry Development, 2009

Gula, Richard. Ethics in Pastoral Ministry. New York: Paulist Press, 1996.

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NFCYM, National Association For Lay Ministry, National Conference for Catechetical Leadership, National Association of Pastoral Musicians. National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers. Washington, DC, Silver Spring, MD: National Association for Lay Ministry, the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry and the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, 2006

Shaughnessy SCN, J.D., Ph. D., Mary Angela. Religious Education, Parish and Youth Ministry - Legal Issues for Catechetical and Youth Leaders. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association, 2009.

Shaughnessy SCN, J.D., Ph. D., Mary Angela. Religious Education, Youth and Campus Ministry - Legal Issues for Catechists, Ministers and Volunteers. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association, 2006.

United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, General Directory for Catechesis. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1991.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. National Directory for Catechesis. Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Renewing the Vision. Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1997

# Parish Youth Ministry

## ❖ Preparing for Youth Ministry

## ❖ Youth Ministry Volunteers

**Steps for Recruiting, Screening, Supporting,  
Forming and Evaluating Volunteers**

**Diocesan Training and Formation**

**Role of Teens in Parish Catechetical Programs**

**Working with Volunteers**

## ❖ Assessments

**Assessing Effectiveness in Ministry**

**Assessing Our Ministry Efforts**

**Assessment Tool: Integration of Youth  
within Parish Life**

**Volunteer Assessments**



- *Comprehensive Mindset*
- *Ecclesial Mindset*
- *Safe-Environment Mindset*
- *Team Mindset*
- *Personal Care Mindset*

# Preparing for Youth Ministry

## Using the Comprehensive Youth Ministry Grid

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*(Celebrate Youth)*

One of the easiest ways to get a snapshot of your current ministry and identify areas for growth is to complete the Youth Ministry Grid. Use the following process to identify your current programs and potential resources.

### ***Step One – Identifying Current Programs***

The first step will be to identify programs and activities that **respond to, or are directed at, or involve teenagers**. They can focus on young adolescent ministry or older adolescent ministry or both. Complete the Youth Ministry Grid the first time by writing in current programs or activities in the appropriate categories (boxes). (You may want to copy the worksheet onto newsprint and then fill-in the appropriate boxes.) Write “**current**” at the top of the first Grid worksheet. Be sure to think of small-group and individualized programming, as well as the gathered programming in each of the four ministry settings and for each ministry component.

After you have completed your work, assess the strengths of your current youth ministry and identify areas of growth.

### ***Step Two – Identifying Potential Resources***

The second step of this exercise is designed to uncover programs and activities of the parish that offer the **potential** for incorporating a youth component or for collaboration and partnership. This exercise is intended to uncover resources and program opportunities that could be used in a comprehensive youth ministry. Oftentimes a slight adjustment or the addition of a youth component will make a family or church community program youth-inclusive. In other cases, there are resources in the community (other churches, youth organizations, and schools) that could be used in your programming (e.g., co-sponsoring a program, using a community program for your youth, using video resources or guest speakers). Complete the Youth Ministry Grid a second time and write “**potential**” at the top of the second Grid worksheet.

After you have completed your work, determine how you can better use your potential resources to strengthen your current ministry and address areas of growth you identified in Step One.

# The Youth Ministry Grid

*Developing Comprehensive Youth Ministry*

|                               | Adolescents |                              | Families |                              | Parish   |                              | Wider Community |                              |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------|------------------------------|----------|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
|                               | Gathered    | Small Group & Individualized | Gathered | Small Group & Individualized | Gathered | Small Group & Individualized | Gathered        | Small Group & Individualized |
| <b>Advocacy</b>               |             |                              |          |                              |          |                              |                 |                              |
| <b>Catechesis</b>             |             |                              |          |                              |          |                              |                 |                              |
| <b>Community Life</b>         |             |                              |          |                              |          |                              |                 |                              |
| <b>Evangelization</b>         |             |                              |          |                              |          |                              |                 |                              |
| <b>Justice and Service</b>    |             |                              |          |                              |          |                              |                 |                              |
| <b>Leadership Development</b> |             |                              |          |                              |          |                              |                 |                              |
| <b>Pastoral Care</b>          |             |                              |          |                              |          |                              |                 |                              |
| <b>Prayer and Worship</b>     |             |                              |          |                              |          |                              |                 |                              |

# Assessing Ministry Responsiveness

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(Celebrate Youth)

To determine the responsiveness of your current ministries and programs, review your ministry profile and the examples listed under each ministry. Then rate each ministry by using an A for excellent—real strength, B for good, C for adequate—room for growth, or D for poor—needs lots of improvement. Each of these items below are designed to be examples of programs or strategies for each ministry component to help you to categorize your current efforts.

## **Catechesis**

**Your Rating** \_\_\_\_\_

### Gathered

- Religious education programs focused on youth faith and life issues
- Family enrichment programs focused around the needs of families with adolescents
- Sacramental preparation programs which address the need for young people to be actively engaged in the mission of the church

### Small-Group

- Bible study groups
- Study groups organized around catechetical themes relevant to youth
- Small mentoring groups designed to give youth a chance to pause and reflect with a group of their peers and an adult faith mentor

### Individualized

- Resources (audio, video and print materials) for self-study on faith and life issues
- Faith formation articles and activities available through newsletters, on-line resources, etc.

## **Community Life**

**Your Rating** \_\_\_\_\_

### Gathered

- Youth involved in parish festivals and celebrations
- Social activities offered for youth
- Workshops which teach practical life skills

### Small-Group

- Support groups for youth organized around life situations (working, athletics, the arts)
- Welcome home functions for youth during holidays and summer
- Trips, meals and activities for small groups of youth

### Individualized

- Newsletter by and for youth
- Youth Ministry website

**Evangelization****Your Rating** \_\_\_\_\_Gathered

- Programs specifically designed for alienated or non-involved Catholics
- Welcome back to church programs and get-acquainted dinners for youth
- Connecting youth to parish after Confirmation

Small-Group

- Programs for youth on the life and message of Jesus and the challenges of discipleship
- Youth focused groups in renewal programs like *Renew*
- Meals or gatherings of youth to share their expectations and hopes

Individualized

- Personal contact with youth by phone, a visit, bulletin notices, e-mail, etc.
- Presence of parish staff or youth ministry volunteers at places where youth gather
- Registration or welcome packet which invites youth to share their gifts

**Justice and Service****Your Rating** \_\_\_\_\_Gathered

- Education sessions for youth on justice issues
- Service projects involving youth in serving those in need
- Celebrations of civic and ethnic holidays which focus on justice

Small-Group

- Study-advocacy groups to lobby for justice
- Connecting youth with service organizations (e.g. Habitat for Humanity)
- Fund-raising to support organizations which help the poor and work for social change

Individualized

- Director of short and long-term service opportunities
- Ideas for supporting justice and social change organizations
- Information on alternative vacations and immersion programs for youth

**Leadership****Your Rating** \_\_\_\_\_Gathered

- Youth involvement in parish committees and ministries
- Leadership and peer ministry training for youth
- Time and talent surveys which help youth discern their gifts for ministry and leadership

Small-Group

- Support groups available for youth serving in leadership positions
- Leadership training for the leadership core group of youth
- Workshops available on specific skills for leadership

Individualized

- Youth personally invited into leadership
- Techniques for discernment of gifts for youth interested in leadership
- Directory of leadership opportunities directed to youth

## **Pastoral Care**

**Your Rating** \_\_\_\_\_

### Gathered

- Workshops and courses for young people on life skills
- Programs for parents and adolescents on important family life skills: communication, decision-making, problem-solving, etc.
- Sexuality education programs with a Catholic perspective

### Small-Group

- Parent education in home settings using video programs and trained facilitators
- Support groups for young people and families during times of loss, sudden change, unexpected crises, problems and family or personal transitions
- Training peer ministers to reach out to young people who are hurting

### Individualized

- Laminated cards for youth with emergency phone numbers for help and counseling
- Resource center with print, audio, and video resources for family life enrichment, adolescent and family issues and problems, life skills, etc.
- Booklets or newsletters with family enrichment activities and resources for in-home use
- Mentors to assist young people in making vocational, career, and educational decisions

## ***Prayer and Worship***

**Your Rating** \_\_\_\_\_

### Gathered

- Sunday liturgies characterized by hospitality, music which appeals to youth, homilies which relate to the life issues of youth, and appreciation for youth gifts and needs
- Rituals for the whole faith community which celebrate youth rites of passage
- A variety of prayer services throughout the year designed to involve and attract youth
- Workshops, courses, or retreats on learning how to pray and growing spiritually

### Small-Group

- Occasional liturgies for youth in more intimate settings
- Youth involvement in liturgical roles and liturgy preparation
- Family celebrations of the Church year and family rites of passage
- Spiritual reflection groups, prayer groups, and small group retreats

### Individualized

- Reflections on the daily Scripture readings during Lent, Advent, Easter-season
- Spiritual direction for youth; spiritual reflection resources for youth
- Audio, video and print materials for nurturing the prayer life of youth

# Evaluating the Youth Ministry Programming Mix

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(Celebrate Youth)

Use the following questions to evaluate the overall programming mix of your youth ministry using the characteristics from *Renewing the Vision*.

## ***Balance of Ministry Components***

- Is your ministry mix too oriented toward one or two components of comprehensive youth ministry?
- How can you add components without dramatically increasing the amount of programming?

## ***Diversity of Program Settings***

- Does your ministry overemphasize youth programming and neglect family, parish, and community?
- How can you transform some of your youth programming into family or parish programming (e.g. turning a youth meeting into a parent-teen meeting or turning a youth social into a parish-wide event)?
- How can you better utilize the programs and resources in the church community and civic community within your youth ministry?
- Have you utilized the resources of the parish and civic communities well?
- Can you meet some of your needs through better collaboration with other churches and organizations or through better use of resources?

## ***Variety of Approaches***

- Does your youth ministry overuse gathered programming and underutilize small group or individualized approaches?
- Can you transform some gathered programs into small group programs?
- Can you develop more one-to-one programming, such as mentoring, peer ministry?
- Can you use new learning technologies (the Internet, video and audio cassettes) and communication approaches (newsletter) to reach youth people who cannot participate in programs?

## ***Variety of Scheduling and Setting Options***

- Have you incorporated a *variety* of program schedules into your programming mix?
- Have you incorporated a *variety* of program environments into your programming mix?
- Are you offering young people the freedom to select the programs that best address their needs and interests?

# Developing More Responsive Youth Programming

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*(Celebrate Youth)*

There are a variety of ways to respond to the needs of youth and their families. These are three responses that can help you move toward a more comprehensive youth ministry.

1. Strengthening current ministry efforts
2. Re-designing ministry programming
3. Designing new ministry programming

The **Ministry Response Worksheet** will help you to determine which youth priority needs could be effectively addressed by re-designing or adjusting current programming, existing resources, or opportunities you are not using. Examples of this approach include incorporating youth into the current social outreach ministry in the parish or preparing youth responsive Sunday liturgies. It could also mean transforming a gathered program into a small group or individualized program or incorporating a small group or individualized into a gathered program. Using this process will help you to consider existing programs and resources as you plan for your ministry response.

There should be one issue, need, or program per worksheet. The questions on the **Ministry Response Worksheet** are designed to help you discern what kinds of responses they have available for each of these areas of need. Be aware that you may have multiple responses to each need. Use extra forms if necessary.

After you have determined your response, utilize the worksheets that follow:

**Strengthen Existing Programming** helps you to plan ways to enhance your current program;

**Developing Responsive Programming** guides you through the process for re-designing existing programs or resources to better respond to youth by adjusting content, method, publicity, scheduling, or transforming a gathered program with a small group or individualized activity; and

**Making Use of Existing Resources** helps you to identify the programs and resources in your parish or wider community that you can utilize in your ministry.

# Ministry Response Worksheet

Need or Issue or Concern

- **Do we have a current response?**

Yes

**No**

What is it?

Do we want to maintain it? Improve it? Discontinue it? If so, how?

- **Are there existing resources that already respond to this need to which we should connect?**

Yes No

What are they?

How do we connect? (Do we just sign up or should we advise this group or organization that we would like to take advantage of their resource? Should we partner with them to create a version for our youth?)

- **Are there existing programs or strategies to which we could add a youth perspective?**

Yes No

What are they?

What changes would it take to add a youth perspective?

**Do we need to develop a new program or new strategy to respond?**

Yes No

What is it?

# Strengthen Existing Programming

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Need or interest area that this program addresses:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of program or strategy: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Key contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

How can we strengthen this program?

- Better publicity
- Change leadership (add youth leaders or adult leaders, etc.)
- Schedule differently
- Change method of invitation
- Other:

What steps are required to facilitate this change?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Responsible: \_\_\_\_\_

# Developing Responsive Programming

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Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Youth need addressed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Look** at the aim of the program or activity as currently planned or implemented.

**Observe** the activities or program components and **Assess** their current relationship or impact on youth using as many of the following reflection questions that apply.

- Does the program content address the developmental and faith needs of youth? Does it reflect their most important life concerns and interests?
- Does the program account for the different lifestyles represented by the youth in your community, e.g., working, involved with school extra-curricular activities?
- Does the program or activity acknowledge that youth are gifted and capable and involve them in the planning and leadership of the program or activity?
- Does the program improve the capacity for youth to master the developmental issues appropriate to their stage of life?
- Does the activity have a process that helps youth deal with the change and growth the program may encourage?
- How does this program improve the relationship between the parish and youth?
- Does the program help youth connect with other youth in peer groupings or intergenerational groupings to share their faith, celebrate their faith, and live their faith?
- Can you strengthen your program by....
  - transforming some programs into home-based or small group programs?
  - developing more one-to-one programming such as mentoring and peer ministry?
  - using individualized approaches such as video programs, audio cassettes, print resources, newsletters, e-mail, or an Internet home page to reach youth?
- Does the scheduling reflect the busy and often complex calendar of today's youth?
- Does it reflect more short-term than long-term commitments on the part of youth?
- Does the program involve youth in visible leadership roles?
- Do you advertise in a way that is attractive to youth and reaches them where they are?

3. Based on your assessment make a list of **Action Recommendations** for improving your program and activity.

Action Recommendations:

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1. **Choose** one (or more) action recommendations for re-designing your program.

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2. **Revise** the activities or program components to include your action recommendations.

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# Making Use of Existing Resources

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Need or interest area that this resource addresses: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of program or strategy: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Key contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

How are we planning to use this resource? (Pick one.)

- Take advantage of a program they offer.
- Partner with them to sponsor a program that they do.
- Take an existing program and add a youth perspective to it.

What steps are required to make use of this resource?

- Do we need to contact them in advance? Are there fees?
- How does this fit into the schedule? (one time event, multiple weeks)
- What changes are necessary to add a youth perspective?
- Can we make this program available to families?
- Is this something we can simply make available to our youth?
- Are other adults involved? What kind of leadership do we need?

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Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Responsible: \_\_\_\_\_

# Growing Youth Ministry!

## Ideas Across the Ministry Components

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(Celebrate Youth)

After assessing your current efforts, consider the following ideas to expand your ministry across the components.

### Advocacy

- Develop a youth newsletter, written and formatted by youth, for youth. Include an adult and parent insert to send to the entire parish. Provide information about the opportunities for ministry with youth and job descriptions for leadership needed in the programs and strategies.
- Develop a youth hearing to explore the needs, issues, and interests of youth in your community. Invite youth and adults to attend and reflect together on those issues.
- Begin a letter-writing campaign to government, media and other officials supporting specific legislative initiatives promoting the healthy development of young people and their families.
- Involve young people in parish pastoral councils and committees.
- Sponsor a forum of community leaders that reflects on the asset-building strategies developed by the Search Institute.
- Sponsor and involve youth in a voter registration drive.

### Catechesis

- Sponsor educational programs on faith themes for adolescents as articulated in *Renewing the Vision*. Utilize a variety of settings and formats (weekly, monthly speaker series, weekend retreats, overnight lock-ins, summer and vacation programs).
- Develop catechetical programming on the same faith theme in three different formats to respond to the diversity of youth schedules: a gathered program sponsored on a fixed date (mini-course, monthly program, or weekend), a small group program in homes sponsored on variety of days and times, and an individualized one-on-one study program.
- Invite high school students to be catechists, sharing faith in the childhood and junior high religious education programs of the parish.
- Send an anniversary card to remember the baptism of each adolescent. Provide one or two reflection questions for parents to help them remember this significant moment as a family.
- Organize Bible study groups designed to help youth re-discover the importance and relevance of scripture in their lives.
- Provide self-directed learning for youth by using *Youth Updates* which are published by St. Anthony Messenger Press. Distribute the updates and develop a monthly “read-at-home” program with gathered discussions and follow-up.
- Create faith-sharing, interest-topic peer groups for youth involved in different activities or situations, such as: band, athletics, artists, college-bound students, or youth involved in theatre. Provide faith formation materials and adult guides for each group.

## **Community Life**

- Build community by sponsoring a variety of social activities, sports and recreation programs, etc.
- Invite older adolescents to sponsor a Halloween party for younger parishioners.
- Prepare “study-snack” packs for youth during finals week. Involve parish organizations and adult leaders in organizing and delivering the packs.
- Sponsor a pot-luck for families of adolescents so that parents can meet other parents.
- Provide parish T-shirts to adults who regularly attend school youth programs (athletic and band events, plays, art shows, etc.).
- Sponsor fund-raisers for different youth activities. Involve as many youth and adults as possible. Consider fundraiser in which youth and adults will work together in groups, such as spaghetti dinners, car washes, or festivals.
- Send birthday cards to every young person in your parish.

## **Evangelization**

- Sponsor retreats for teens on topics such as the challenge of discipleship, and the life and message of Jesus.
- Host a “homecoming” celebration for teens who have not been actively participating in your faith community.
- Plan a youth component for parish renewal programs such as a parish mission or the *Renew* program.
- Divide the teens in your parish into groups of eight. Assign each group two adult mentors. Instruct the adults to find ways to connect with those teens of the course of they year (phone calls, e-mail, personal notes, get-togethers, meeting at church, etc)
- “Breakfast with Father;” Sponsor a pancake breakfast for small groups of youth at the rectory. Provide the young people with the opportunity to share their dreams and hopes.
- Develop a post-confirmation role in the parish and its ministries for each youth.
- Develop a parish home page on the internet with areas of special interest for young people.

## **Justice and Service**

- Develop education programs for young people to explore important justice issues that affect their lives and their world.
- Sponsor a Thanksgiving scavenger hunt to collect food for food pantries or families in need in your community.
- Develop a youth-service group for young people interested in community service.
- Develop relationships with service organizations in your areas that involve youth and their families in service. Consider Habitat for Humanity, local food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters.
- Develop an adopt-a-grandparent program. Invite and prepare teens to visit with an elderly person on a regular basis.
- Organize a group of young people to participate in summer weeklong service program.
- Identify adults in the parish who are already involved in justice and service work in the community and find ways to connect young people with these adults. Adults already engaged in justice and service work can serve as mentors for young people and involve young people in the work they are already doing.

### **Leadership Development**

- Develop a peer ministry leadership group.
- Invite youth to serve on parish councils and committees. Prepare the adults on those committees to work with young people.
- Develop a link with the scouting units (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls) in your area.
- Sponsor and give scholarships to the young people in your parish to attend leadership development programs.
- Have a special sign-up table at your parish ministry fair with listings of youth leadership positions that match with adolescent's gifts and energy.
- Sponsor a day of reflection for youth called to leadership in the community (student councils, leadership in clubs, scouting, etc.)
- For Martin Luther King Jr. Day plan a program of prayer and reflection for youth leaders on the issues of leadership and service.

### **Pastoral Care**

- Develop programs designed to aid youth in the formation of planning, decision-making, communication and conflict resolution skills.
- Sponsor a self-esteem awareness workshop.
- Develop a list of recommended counselors in the community who would be helpful to youth and families in need of counseling.
- Sponsor a breakfast study club that brings young people together to study with peers and tutors.
- Sponsor a book club for youth, similar to Oprah's book club. Have young people write reviews of their favorite books. Provide incentives for reading for pleasure.
- Develop a network of adult mentors who will connect with, support, and be available to youth.
- Develop peer discussion groups to support adolescents experiencing divorce, separation, death of a parent, etc.

### **Prayer and Worship**

- Invite youth to participate as liturgical ministers (lectors, eucharistic ministers, greeters).
- Develop a youth choir or invite youth to join the parish choir.
- Celebrate rituals and blessings at liturgy or other times that mark the special moments in teen's lives such as getting your driver's license, homecoming, prom, graduation, etc.
- Invite adolescents to become prayer partners for young parishioners preparing for first communion.
- Invite youth to become involved in preparing the parish liturgy environment. Through this involvement, youth can be part of the planning for and decorating of the church for different liturgical seasons.
- Sponsor a retreat for adolescents on personal prayer. Provide a "How to Pray" guide for each youth.
- Develop a guide for celebrating Advent and Lent at home.
- Involve youth in preparing and leading prayer services and liturgical experiences such as a "Living Stations of the Cross."

# Characteristics of Effective Youth Programs

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1. A focused and articulated vision.
2. A broad spectrum of services and opportunities tailored to the needs and interests of adolescents.
3. Services and opportunities that recognize, value, and respond to the diverse backgrounds and experience that exist among adolescents.
4. Understanding youth in the context of the family.
5. A supportive, flexible atmosphere for staff and volunteers.
6. Collaboration with other community programs and outreach to families, schools, and other community partners in youth development.
7. A supportive atmosphere for young people and caring relationships between staff/volunteers and young people.
8. Youth workers who are committed and act as vigorous advocates for and with youth.
9. Collective as well as individual efforts to extend the program reach to underserved populations.
10. A feeling among young people that the staff/volunteers can be trusted, care about them, and respect them.
11. A commitment to empowering young people which enhances their role as resources to their communities.
12. Creative problem-solving, including working to stabilize funding bases and to adapt or circumvent traditional professional and bureaucratic limitations in order to meet the needs of clients.
13. A solid organizational structure, including energetic and committed board leadership.
14. Services that are coherent, easy to use, and offer continuity.

Taken from *Making the Case: Measuring the Impact of Youth Development Programs*; by Nancy Leffert, et al. (Minneapolis: Search Institute, 1996).

# (SAMPLE) Youth Ministry Budget

The following **sample** budget adapted from *Training Adults for Youth Ministry*, by Robert J. McCarthy and Lynn Tooma, Winona, MN; Saint Mary's Press, 1990, pg. 111) Used with permission.

|                                                          | Income   | Actual |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|
|                                                          | Expenses | Budget |
| <b>1. Youth Ministry Administration</b>                  |          |        |
| 1.1 Youth Ministry Staff                                 | _____    | _____  |
| FICA                                                     | _____    | _____  |
| Medical Insurance                                        | _____    | _____  |
| Life Insurance                                           | _____    | _____  |
| Retirement                                               | _____    | _____  |
| Professional Development                                 | _____    | _____  |
| 1.2 Postage                                              | _____    | _____  |
| 1.3 Telephone                                            | _____    | _____  |
| 1.4 Office supplies                                      | _____    | _____  |
| 1.5 Machine rental and repair                            | _____    | _____  |
| 1.6 Travel                                               | _____    | _____  |
| <b>2. Youth Ministry Support and Training for Adults</b> |          |        |
| 2.1 Registration for workshops                           | _____    | _____  |
| 2.2 Registration (Youth Ministry Retreats)               | _____    | _____  |
| 2.3 Adult formation offerings                            | _____    | _____  |
| 2.4 Parish Support                                       | _____    | _____  |
| 2.5 NCCYM                                                | _____    | _____  |
| 2.6 Professional books and periodicals                   | _____    | _____  |

**3. Youth Ministry Training for Youth**

- 3.1 Training youth leaders (registration) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.2 Parish leadership training events \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.3 Books and periodicals \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.4 NCYC and regional youth conferences \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Youth Ministry Program**

- 4.1 Athletics \_\_\_\_\_
  - Registration \_\_\_\_\_
  - Uniforms \_\_\_\_\_
  - Referee fees \_\_\_\_\_
  - Equipment \_\_\_\_\_
  - End-of-year cookout \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.2 Retreat \_\_\_\_\_
  - Registration fees \_\_\_\_\_
  - Facility \_\_\_\_\_
  - Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
  - Supplies \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.3 Youth Events and Gatherings \_\_\_\_\_
  - Speaker Fees \_\_\_\_\_
  - Social and recreational activities \_\_\_\_\_
  - Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
  - Tickets and fees for adult supervisors \_\_\_\_\_
  - Hospitality \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.4 Service and Justice \_\_\_\_\_

|                                 |       |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Speaker fees                    | _____ | _____ |
| Movie rental and other          | _____ | _____ |
| Educational resources           | _____ | _____ |
| Social justice programs         | _____ | _____ |
| Equipment for specific programs | _____ | _____ |
| Publicity                       | _____ | _____ |
| 4.5 Adolescent Catechesis       | _____ | _____ |
| Resources                       | _____ | _____ |
| Supplies                        | _____ | _____ |
| Hospitality                     | _____ | _____ |
| Speaker fees                    | _____ | _____ |
| Videos                          | _____ | _____ |
| 4.6 Peer Ministry               | _____ | _____ |
| 4.7 Fund-raisers                | _____ | _____ |
| Car wash                        | _____ | _____ |
| Spaghetti dinner                | _____ | _____ |
| Doughnut sale                   | _____ | _____ |
| Dance                           | _____ | _____ |
| Other                           | _____ | _____ |
| Youth Liturgies                 | _____ | _____ |
| 4.8 Other                       | _____ | _____ |

**5. Youth Ministry Meetings and Conferences**

|                                |       |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 5.1 NCYC                       | _____ | _____ |
| 5.2 NCCYM                      | _____ | _____ |
| 5.3 Regional Youth Conferences | _____ | _____ |
| 5.4 Youth Day                  | _____ | _____ |
| 5.5 Parent Meetings            | _____ | _____ |

|                          |       |       |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| 5.6 Youth Group Meetings | _____ | _____ |
| Hospitality              | _____ | _____ |
| Supplies                 | _____ | _____ |

**6. Youth Ministry Program and Promotional Costs**

|                                   |       |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 6.1 Buttons, T-shirts, hats, etc. | _____ | _____ |
| 6.2 Film and development          | _____ | _____ |
| 6.3 Advertisements                | _____ | _____ |
| 6.4 Miscellaneous                 | _____ | _____ |
| 6.5 Birthday cards                | _____ | _____ |
| 6.6 Mass cards                    | _____ | _____ |
| 6.7 Emergency pizza fund          | _____ | _____ |
| 6.8 Business cards                | _____ | _____ |
| 6.9 Newsletter (youth items)      | _____ | _____ |

**TOTALS** \_\_\_\_\_

# Budgeting for Youth Ministry

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*By Kevin Dougherty*

Below are a few things to consider when building a Youth Ministry budget.

## Resource Library

Are there resource books you would like to buy and have in your library for this? Buy at least a few per year so a library is built up over years. Put some money in your budget for extra bibles for people who don't have one. Even if you sell them to the participants you'll need some money in budget for the initial expense.

## Supplies

Did you think of postage, printer paper, blanks for business cards, name tags, pens & pencils, photo print paper, mailing labels?

## Seasonal Parties

Will you have a 'back to school' get together in the fall for college students? Will you have a 'welcome back' party in the spring? How about a Christmas party or special Lenten spiritual event? You would need budget money for these as you may not want to charge admission.

## Retreat

How about a retreat, campout, or all-night event?

You should budget for a few speakers so that you could bring them in as needed during the year. Don't forget, in addition to stipends, you may need money for the speaker's transportation and a meal.

Put some money into budget for gift cards and thank you cards for key volunteers during the year.

Budget some money for photography ... you may need some budget money for film developing, printing or making copies, and digital media storage.

Budget some money for food or snacks for 'planning meetings' with volunteers.

Include a line in your budget for 'equipment'. This could range anywhere from a karaoke machine to some camping equipment to a megaphone or camera, etc. This way you can pick up an item or two of new equipment each year.

Always build a budget looking a few years down the line. If you know you will want some 'equipment' items eventually, begin budgeting for them by buying a few per year or ask the business manager to hold a certain amount in the budget each year for you so after three years you will have enough to buy what you want. This can't be done without planning ahead and involving your business manager in the discussion.

Also, build in some money for scholarships so that if someone really can't afford to go to event, you might be able to scholarship them.

Yes, there is a lot to think about, and some of these items you may not even be considering as a part of your current ministry. If so, just drop them out. But don't forget that when establishing a budget, especially for the first time, you are setting a model for the future. So be kind to future ministers by at least including budget lines in there even if you put zero dollars in the line for this year.

Finally, don't 'pad' your budget unnecessarily, but also don't hesitate to ask for what you think you might be able to use to do quality ministry. The worst they can do is to tell you no to some of the items, but then you have the ability to build you ministry based on the budget they approved and justify what you are or are not doing. Also, you'll know what you need to raise in donations for items you still feel are critical. And being able to document everything will put you way ahead of the curve when you planning your budget for the next year.

# YOUTH MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS

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## **Steps for Recruiting, Screening, Supporting, Forming, and Evaluating Volunteers**

Recruiting and maintaining adult volunteers involves planning. The Youth Ministry Leader, therefore, must have a vision of those qualities necessary for fulfilling the responsibilities required of an adult volunteer. We recommend providing a job description to the volunteer that outlines their role. The Youth Ministry Leader should also have a written statement of the support a prospective volunteer can expect from the Youth Ministry Leader in order to enhance his/her ministry.

### **QUALITIES to look for in an adult volunteer:**

1. Reasonably knowledgeable, and believes in and supports the teachings of the Catholic Church
2. Comfortable relating to young people, genuinely likes and respects teens, and understands their developmental levels
3. Willing to serve, able to make a commitment and follow through
4. Has a sense of humor (it helps!)
5. Is trustworthy; must be of good character, reputation, background, and record
6. Maintains appropriate, professional boundaries with youth
7. Continues their lifelong formation in the Catholic faith.

### **PROCESS for recruitment and screening for an adult volunteer:**

The Youth Ministry Leader must connect with the prospective volunteer prior to their involvement. The following should be covered with the prospective volunteer:

1. The "Mission Statement" and/or the goals and objectives of the program
2. A copy of the job description and volunteer expectations.

The Youth Ministry Leader should ask the prospective volunteer to reflect prayerfully for a few days, then call and ask for a response. During this process, the Youth Ministry Leader must ensure the following has been done:

- a. Connect with the Parish Safe Environment Director/Coordinator to review that all the necessary documents are in order and necessary background checks have been completed.
- b. After determining that the volunteer would be a good prospect for working with youth in ministry, the volunteer should be made aware of the Parish Emergency Procedures, Child Abuse Reporting Procedures, Transportation Policies, and receive required safe environment orientation and training.
- c. The Youth Ministry Leader should then meet with the volunteer to discuss any remaining Youth Ministry Guidelines and Expectations as they pertain to the volunteer's role.

## **SUPPORT for the adult volunteer:**

The Youth Ministry Leader...

1. Conducts an orientation to outline the specifics of the program and the volunteer's responsibilities.
2. Provides a schedule to the volunteer that communicates their commitment based on their role.
3. Provides ongoing support, training and formation for the volunteer.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Youth Ministry Leaders should be aware of all forms, codes of conducts and formation and training that apply to their adult volunteer's involvement.

## **ASSESSMENT OF VOLUNTEERS**

An assessment review is a means to determine how each person can be challenged to grow as a person and as a youth ministry volunteer. The discussion provides the Youth Ministry Leader with the opportunity to recognize the gifts and talents a volunteer brings to the Parish youth ministry program. The review should take place between the volunteer and the Youth Ministry Leader in a positive and friendly atmosphere.

Sample Self-Assessment is found in the end of this section.

Sample Assessment by Youth Ministry Leader of the Volunteer is found in the end of this section.

# Diocesan Volunteer Training and Formation

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As Youth Ministry Leaders work on their own professional formation and training, we must not lose sight of the training and formation for our adult volunteers. The Office of Catechetical Services of the Diocese of Dallas has a standard program for training and certifying volunteers. The Catechetical Services department offers courses across the Diocese to help people work toward their Continuing Catechetical Formation Certificate. A current listing is available on the Catechetical Services website. You can also contact your Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL) to access that information as well as reviewing the Continuing Catechetical Formation Handbook.

[http://www.cathdal.org/pages/Catechetical\\_Services](http://www.cathdal.org/pages/Catechetical_Services)

For Youth Ministry volunteers, we provide specific course offerings for **Youth Ministry Methodology & Skills**. Please contact the Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries for more information on these courses.

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## Role of Teens in Parish Catechetical Programs (Youth Volunteers as Catechist Assistants or Classroom Aides)

It is a given that high school youth are still in their formative years in learning and practicing their faith. Therefore it is inappropriate to give them as primary catechists within the parish catechetical program. The Catechist Assistant or Classroom Aide is a support person who is paired with the primary Catechist to help him/her perform the duties of catechesis. At the request of the Catechist, this person may help with activities, supplies, class management, attendance records, set-up and clean-up, etc.

Teens and Young Adults (under 21) that are given responsibilities to assist with youth programming such as teachers or teacher's aides:

- Need Safe Environment Training
- Cannot be used as a 2<sup>nd</sup> adult in the classroom
- While they can be used in the role of "Catechist in Training" with an adult mentor, they should never be the main catechist or bear the responsibility of leadership in a classroom

*(The above policy on Teens and Young Adults has been crafted with the collaboration of the Safe Environment Office of the Diocese of Dallas.)*

# Working with Volunteers

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*Adapted from "Working with Volunteers" by Mary Lee Becker in Developing Youth Ministry binder from CYMS*

When assessing your approach to volunteer leadership, consider the following six elements:

## 1. Motivation

The most effective volunteers will be those who are involved because they want to be, not out of a sense of obligation, habit, or unhealthy need to be needed. Ask volunteers why they wish to be involved to assure their motivation is appropriate.

## 2. Expectations

- *Be Clear* – identify responsibilities, expectations, and accountability clearly. Develop position descriptions which outline exactly what is expected of a volunteer including any training, preparation, planning, implementation, and follow-up.
- *Consider Commitments* – consider the outside time commitments of volunteers when developing positions. Identify the type of commitment needed for each position—one time, periodic or ongoing.
- *Specify Direct Ministry or Support Ministry* – list tasks that involve working directly with young people (direct ministry) and those that do not involve direct interaction with young people (support ministry). Distinguishing between the two types of ministry enables you to involve more people at their comfort and ability levels.
- *Anticipate Questions* – this enables you to provide information addressing their concerns before expecting a commitment.

## 3. Recruitment and Placement

- Recruitment and placement of volunteers in ministry means matching the program needs with the volunteer's interests, skills, and time. This involves both clearly defining the needs, and identifying the volunteers who can meet the needs. Once this has been done, the process of placement including a screening and training process begins. Adequate screening and training will help avoid the uncomfortable situation of having to "fire" a volunteer. If there is a concern about a particular individual's readiness, suggest a probationary period followed by an assessment.

## 4. Training

When recruiting, assure volunteers that training will be provided when necessary. It is helpful to make a distinction between orientation, training, and team formation.

- *Orientation* provides an overview of the entire program and how individual roles function in relation to the larger organization. Develop a volunteer manual which outlines the mission and goals of the ministry, the leadership structure, and general policy and procedures. The manual may include names and phone numbers for key contact people.
- *Training* focuses on knowledge or skills needed for specific tasks. Develop a training program by first identifying the understanding and skills necessary to fulfill the duties of each position. Then consider different training formats to meet the diverse needs and

schedules of volunteers such as gathered format for group training, individualized learning options, and an “apprenticeship” model partnering veteran volunteers with new volunteers.

- *Formation* involves the spiritual and relational aspect of leadership development with time for faith sharing, community building, and sharing experiences with the youth. The focus is on deepening one’s identity as a person of faith in ministry, developing positive working relationships, and creating a sense of shared ownership and responsibility for the ministry. It may also provide ongoing reflection on the mission and goals of the program.

## **5. Support**

- Supporting volunteers involves the two elements of affirmation and assistance. Affirming volunteers includes acknowledging their commitment and appreciating their efforts. Assistance involves providing resources and tools that will enable volunteers to effectively meet their responsibilities.

## **6. Evaluation**

- Volunteers need feedback regarding their performance including both informal feedback and structured evaluation. Formal evaluation involves clarifying criteria for assessment (based on job description), gathering information regarding performance, and providing feedback based on the assessment. When providing feedback to a volunteer, identify personal accomplishments, areas of strength, and areas needing further development. The intention is for feedback to be specific and positive. Outline specifically what was done well, and any suggestions for the future.
- The evaluation process is two-fold. Volunteers should provide feedback regarding their involvement in the leadership system. This should include their experience of recruitment, training, and support, as well as their feelings regarding the expectations involved and resources provided. As them to identify what was helpful, and make recommendations for improvement.
- The purpose of evaluations is to develop and benefit both individuals and the program. An evaluation process should be approached and experienced as an opportunity to learn, celebrate and grow as leaders.

## **Conclusion**

- Developing an effective leadership system involves planning, recruiting, training, supporting, and evaluating. It is based on the belief that youth ministry is most effective when created and coordinated by adult and youth leaders within the community. Volunteers will be invested in what they help create, and involved when they are needed, valued, and appreciated.

# Training Your Youth Ministry Team

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When an accident or an act of misconduct puts the spotlight on your ministry, investigators will check the appropriateness of the staff you have chosen to employ and team members who assist you. They will also check the training you provided to your staff/team members to prepare them to do their jobs. With regard to the safety aspect of your training program, you should consider providing at least the following training.

**Orientation session:** Volunteers need a two- to ten-hour basic training and orientation to the ministry. They need to know how the organization works and their role in it.

**Safe Environment Training:** All staff members and volunteers who work with youth and/or vulnerable adults in the diocese of Dallas are required to participate in annual safe environment training experiences provided by the diocese or parish.

**First aid training:** A certain number of the staff need to complete a certified first aid training course. The remaining staff can take a simplified version of the first aid course to learn the basics. Enough staff should complete first aid training that every event can have a trained, certified staff person in attendance.

**Identifying child and sexual abuse:** All staff members need a training class to teach them how to recognize the signs of abuse and how to report it within your organization so that a mandated reporter can inform the proper authorities. Instructors can be found at a local college or within a local child service or protection agency.

**Suicide prevention training:** Teenage suicide is on the rise, so find a social worker who can help train you and your staff to respond to suicide threats made by teenagers.

**Crisis intervention training:** If staff members build relationships with kids, they will witness crisis. The crucial part of this training is helping staff members learn how to recognize when they are in a situation in which they are over their heads and how to get professional help.

**Pregnancy, drug abuse, and AIDS training:** These conditions touch more and more young people every year, so staff members need to be aware of what to do when they encounter them. Some volunteers can pursue additional training to specialize in these social problems.

**Activity training:** Training also covers the specific activities and events, such as canoeing, biking, or backpacking, sponsored by your youth ministry.

Maintain records of all your staff meetings and training sessions. Keep a file for each staff/team member, including his or her application, references, any notes from supervision meetings, and a record of the training the staff member has completed.

# Staff Behavior Guidelines

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If we ask our staff members to follow a high standard of behavior, we are responsible to provide them with clear and specific guidelines by which they will be judged. They should read and sign this document before they start working in the ministry. All staff members should re-sign this sheet every year to remind them of their commitment. **Use the following sample to create a form that fits your situation:**

Name of staff/volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_

This staff behavior guidelines document is to be read and signed by all staff annually.

1. Any verbal or nonverbal sexual behavior with any young person is inappropriate
2. Dating or going out with any high school student is forbidden.
3. Discretion must be used in dealing with all students, especially regarding physical contact. Innocent behavior can be misinterpreted. A hug around the shoulders is not sexual abuse, but a full body hug, stroking, massaging, or an affectionate kiss raises questions. No over display of affection should be made.
4. Sexual gestures or overtures a student makes to a staff member should be reported to the youth leader so that discussion can be held with the student.
5. "Buddy systems" should be used by staff whenever possible, but especially when working with students of the opposite sex.
6. One-to-one counseling with a student should always occur in a public place—never alone in a car or a private place.
7. Driving alone with a student should be avoided at all times, especially when working with troubled teens.
8. If it is necessary to ride or drive alone with a teen, special care should be taken with a student of the opposite sex.
  - Don't sit close to one another in the car.
  - Do not come into physical contact with each other.
  - Do not stop the car to talk.
  - If you must stop, turn on the inside light of the car.
  - Avoid physical contact (hugs and kisses) when saying goodbye.
  - Be aware of the time you depart and arrive. Mark those times in your diary or record.
9. Romantic or sexual attraction for a student by an adult leader should be brought up and discussed with the ministry team leader.
10. Any knowledge or suspicion of any youth ministry staff having an inappropriate relationship with a student must be reported promptly to the youth ministry leader. If the person in question is the leader, the report should be made to the supervisor of that person.

I certify that I have read and agree to abide by the standards and that the statements above.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Assessments

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An assessment is a tool to determine how each person or program can be challenged to grow. The assessment provides an opportunity to recognize the gifts a person or program brings to the Parish. The effectiveness of youth ministry calls for periodic assessments of programs and youth workers. In this section you will find assessment materials for parish youth ministry efforts and youth ministry volunteers.

The following items are samples of assessment tools and can be found in **Appendix B**

- Assessing Effectiveness in Ministry
- Assessing Our Ministry Efforts
- Assessment Tool: Integration of Youth within Parish Life
- Self-Assessment for an Adult Volunteer
- Assessment for an Adult Volunteer

# Assessing Effectiveness in Ministry

## Beyond Counting Attendance to Accounting for Ministry Efforts

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*“You will never fail if learning is a goal!”*

### Overall approach to documenting and assessing ministry efforts:

1. Identify the “indicators” or criteria for measurement (quantitative and qualitative)
2. Document the indicators/criteria
3. Assess the responses and patterns
4. Provide reports and recommendations

### Possible sources of input to consider in assessing impact of ministry efforts:

- Youth
- Families
- Ministry Leaders
- Other (parish, those served, etc.)

### Areas to Assess

- Understanding of Vision and Support for Youth Ministry within the Parish Community
- Leadership Development: diversity and depth (adults, young adults and youth)
- Ministry Development: diversity and depth (RTV: comprehensive, multicultural)
- Personal learning and faith growth
- Attendance, Attitude and Participation
- Other

### Elements to consider: (within and beyond programs)

#### Faith Formation: Catholic Identity

Are young people able to understand and articulate key aspects of their faith?  
Do young people grasp the foundations of Catholic identity?  
Can young people make the connections between faith and life...and life and faith?  
What is their level of knowing, believing, and living their faith?

#### Participation and Involvement

To what level are young people...  
...engaged in the programs they attend?  
...active in their faith life beyond organized youth programs (personal, family, parish, other)?  
...participating in the mission and life of the parish community and Catholic church?

#### Attitude and Motivation: Shifting from “have to” toward “want to”

To what level are young people involved of their own initiative and interest?  
What is their attitude regarding their experience and involvement?

#### Interactions

What values/beliefs do young people demonstrate in their interactions at church activities?  
To what level do young people model values of hospitality, acceptance, compassion, forgiveness, responsibility, understanding and respect toward others?  
How has their involvement impacted relationships in their life: family, friends, others

#### Other

## Strategies and Tools for Assessment

### Assessing learning

- Pre and Post Assessment: document understanding at beginning and end of learning process,  
or designated period of time (seasonal, etc.) – correlate to identified objectives
- Individual Assessment – index cards, survey (email or hard copy), learning journal, conversation, etc.
- Group Assessment (task and relationship)
  - as a group identify initial questions for learning, list or describe learnings and outcomes at the conclusion (“task” aspect: how well did we accomplish our goal?)
  - assess interactions among members (“relational” aspect: how well did we interact together?)

### Examples of sentence completion:

Assessing pre/post learning:

What I know about \_\_\_\_\_ is...

To me, \_\_\_\_\_ means....

I think \_\_\_\_\_ is important/not important because.....

I'll know I'm practicing \_\_\_\_\_ when...

What I will remember about \_\_\_\_\_ is....

I now understand.....

Because of what I learned, I hope to.....

Identifying focus of interest:

A question I have about \_\_\_\_\_ is...

Something I'm curious about \_\_\_\_\_ is...

Something I'd like to know about \_\_\_\_\_ is...

Something I find confusing about \_\_\_\_\_ is...

Assessing a group leader or mentor with feedback from participants:

\_\_\_\_\_ supports and encourages me by...

\_\_\_\_\_ helps me learn by....

\_\_\_\_\_ models for me the values of...

\_\_\_\_\_ challenges me by...

What I appreciate about \_\_\_\_\_ is....

I would find it helpful if \_\_\_\_\_ would...

I think \_\_\_\_\_ greatest strength is....

I think \_\_\_\_\_ greatest challenge is...

Some things I've learned from \_\_\_\_\_ are...

### **Assessing Attendance**

Document attendance and assess:

- Overall numbers, patterns and trends
- Level of participation of individuals: frequent, occasional, focus-based, special event only
- Correlate "planned" attendance and actual response (i.e. 10 attending a program designed for 12-15 is good, whereas 10 attending a program designed for 100 is not so good!)

### **Assessing Ministry Development**

- Identify areas of ministry and document growth of "offerings" over period of time (1-3 years)
- Document response to offerings – "success" of effort

### **Assessing Leadership Development**

- Track develop of leadership structure and system
- Document number, diversity and consistency of leaders involved over time
- Document training and support offered

# Assessing Our Ministry Efforts

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**Formed in Faith:** multiple dimensions of faith formation from a Catholic perspective

|                     |                     |                                                         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Inform              | Form                | Transform                                               |
| Information         | Integration         | Application                                             |
| Learn               | Believe             | Live                                                    |
| Knowledge/Cognitive | Meaning/Affective   | Action/Behavioral                                       |
| What I know         | Who I am            | How I act                                               |
| What does it mean?  | Why does it matter? | How will it make a difference in my life and the world? |
| Head ~ Think        | Heart ~ Feel        | Hands ~ Do                                              |

**Presence and Participation:** relational and motivational aspects of ministry

|                    | --                   | 0                    | +                     |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Attitude</b>    | Negative/distracted  | Benign/disengaged    | Positive/enthusiastic |
| <b>Actions</b>     | Resistant/disruptive | Willing if requested | Self-initiated        |
| <b>Involvement</b> | "Have to"            | "Go along-get along" | "Want to"             |

**Characteristics of a Mature Christian Faith:** personal identity ~ spirituality

Characteristics of committed Christian youth as defined by national research studies:  
*Five Crises of Youth and Effective Christian Education.*

Youth with a mature Christian faith:

1. Seek Spiritual Growth, Both Alone and With Others
2. Believe God is Present in the World
3. Act Out of a Commitment of Faith
4. Are Active With God's People
5. Possess a Positive, Hopeful Spirit
6. Live Out a Life of Service
7. Live a Christian Moral Life

# Assessment Tool:

## Integration of Youth within Parish Life

**Parishes with dynamic youth ministry support youth ministry and include youth throughout the life of the parish. Use this assessment tool to identify areas of strength and areas to grow for your parish. For you and your parish's personal use – this is a good tool to affirm your strengths and look at where one can grow – and spark some thoughts of how to get there.**

**For each statement circle one of these options:**

*This needs growth* – This indicates that this statement does not currently describe your parish and that this area needs to grow.

*We try to do this* – This indicates that you are making efforts to make this statement true about your parish but there is more work to be do.

*We do this well* – This indicates that this statement describes your parish at this time.

- 
- Members of our parish know and value youth in our community.

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

- Our parish community understands youth ministry.

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

- Youth are involved throughout parish life.

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

- Youth are involved in leadership and decision making in our parish.

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

- Our parish encourages and affirms youth's involvements in parish life.

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

- Our parish staff and leadership are familiar with our youth ministry.

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

- Our parish staff and leadership are familiar with our youth ministry

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

- Our parish staff members collaborate with each other.

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

- Youth ministry leaders involve the pastor in youth ministry and keep him informed about youth ministry efforts.

*This needs growth*

*We try to do this*

*We do this well*

***For you and your parish's personal use – this is a good tool to affirm your strengths and look at where one can grow – and spark some thoughts of how to get there.***

What do you notice about your strengths as a parish community in your relationship with youth?

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What are your areas for growth?

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What is your parish's starting point for knowing and including youth more fully within your parish community?

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# SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR AN ADULT VOLUNTEER

(SAMPLE)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PARISH \_\_\_\_\_

## General Responsibilities (1 = weak, 5 = strong)

1. I cooperate with the Youth Coordinator in implementing the goals and objectives of the parish youth program.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
2. I am punctual and prepared for each meeting.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
3. I notify the Youth Coordinator when there is a need to be absent.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
4. I follow the Youth Coordinator's rules of disciplines.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
5. I spend time talking and sharing faith with youth.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
6. I attend special activities and concerts at the schools when possible.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
7. I make a special effort to acknowledge special times in the teens' lives.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
8. I meet and spend quality time with new teens.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
9. I attend volunteer training, retreats and in-services as asked by the Youth Coordinator.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
10. I work with and not against parish staff and other adult volunteers.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
11. I am sensitive to the various family structures.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
12. I assist and help supervise set up and clean up.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
13. I enjoy being with the teens.  
0      1      2      3      4      5

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# ASSESSMENT FOR AN ADULT VOLUNTEER

(SAMPLE)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PARISH \_\_\_\_\_

## General Responsibilities (1 = weak, 5 = strong)

1. Cooperates with the Youth Coordinator in implementing the goals and objectives of the parish youth program.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
2. Is punctual and prepared for each meeting.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
3. Notifies the Youth Coordinator when there is a need to be absent.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
4. Follows the Youth Coordinator's rules of disciplines.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
5. Spends time talking and sharing faith with youth.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
6. Attends special activities and concerts at the schools when possible.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
7. Makes a special effort to acknowledge special times in the teens' lives.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
8. Meets and spends quality time with new teens.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
9. Attends volunteer training, retreats and in-services as asked by the Youth Coordinator.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
10. Works with and not against parish staff and other adult volunteers.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
11. Is sensitive to the various family structures.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
12. Assists and helps supervise set up and clean up.  
0      1      2      3      4      5
13. Enjoys being with the teens.  
0      1      2      3      4      5

# Safety and Liability

- ❖ Guidelines
- ❖ On-Site Parish Youth Ministry
- ❖ Off-Site Parish Youth Ministry
- ❖ Supervision and Supervisors
- ❖ Healthy Play and Recreation
- ❖ Youth Events and Crisis Plans
- ❖ Non-Parish Based Organizations, Speakers and/or Clergy From Outside the Diocese
- ❖ How Safe Is Your Youth Ministry?
- ❖ Copyright Law
- ❖ Retention



- *Comprehensive Mindset*
- *Ecclesial Mindset*
- *Safe-Environment Mindset*
- *Team Mindset*
- *Personal Care Mindset*

# GUIDELINES

As adult leaders who work with young people in a variety of parish and diocesan settings, it is important that we be aware of our responsibility for the safety of the young people involved in our programs. Important aspects of our responsibility include clear communication with young people and parents, appropriate supervision for all activities, and proper maintenance of our facilities to reduce the possibility of accidental injury. These safety and liability guidelines are offered to assist you in these efforts.

As adults involved in ministry, in addition to our concern for the spiritual and personal formation of young people, we must also be concerned for the safety of the young people and other adults involved in our parish and diocesan programs. The efforts used to minimize possible injuries to those who are in our care or on Church property are defined as “*risk management*.” While we can never eliminate the possibility of injuries, we must take all appropriate steps to reduce their occurrence for the benefit of individuals in our diocese and parish communities. The familiarity with and use of these guidelines can help insure a safer environment for all.

The law considers us responsible for the safety of those in our programs under two legal theories. Under the principle of “*tort liability*” all the participants in our programs are considered “invitees” for whom we owe certain duties. If we fail in those duties due to negligence or improper conduct we may be held liable for the consequences. Issues we need to consider under this legal theory are:

- All the issues concerned with clear communication of activity details with parents or legal guardians
- Clear communication of behavioral expectations of participants and the consequences of misbehavior
- Safe transportation
- The possibility of mistreatment or abuse of youth while in our programs.

Under the principle of “*premise liability*” we are considered responsible for the safety of anyone who comes onto property which we are in possession or control of. If someone is injured while on our premises due to the unsafe condition of the property we may be held liable. Issues we need to consider under premise liability are:

- The proper installation and maintenance of buildings and equipment
- The proper maintenance of the grounds, driveways, parking lots, sidewalks and steps
- Emergency safety equipment and procedures such as exit lights, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and fire and tornado drills.

For a party to be held liable, negligence must be proven. There are four elements which must be present for legal negligence to be found: ***duty, violation of duty, proximate cause, and injury.***

The person charged with negligence must have had a ***duty***. In youth ministry, the person charged must have had a duty to the young person at that time. A youth ministry leader attending a public school football game where some of the teens he/she works with at church does not constitute a duty.

Negligence cannot exist if **a violation of duty** is not present. The courts understand that accidents and spontaneous actions can occur. If a teenager spontaneously hits another teenager while you are carrying out your duty there is no violation. If, however, a teenager began throwing objects at another and you did nothing to stop this behavior then you would be in violation of duty. Another example of violation of duty would be leaving a room full of teens without adult supervision to go make non-emergency phone calls when your presence could have prevented the injury.

The violation of duty must be the **proximate cause** of the injury. Here, the concept of foreseeability is important. Would proper supervision have prevented the injury? Would a reasonable person have foreseen that there is a likelihood of injury? Proximate cause is a complex legal concept. Youth ministry programs can pose special dangers when young people are not sitting safely in desks at church. For this reason, it is wise for youth ministry leaders to have on-going conversations about foreseeable dangers in regard to youth ministry events (on and off-site) and determining what proper supervision requires to minimize injury.

The final element necessary for a finding of negligence is **injury**. In order to bring suit in a court of law, an individual has to have sustained an injury for which the court can award a remedy. Therefore, you left a group of 20 sixth graders for twenty minutes but there was no injury there could be no negligence (at least in a legal sense), though it certainly could constitute poor judgment. The best defense against negligence for any youth ministry program is a reasonable attempt to provide for the safety of all through the development of appropriate rules and regulations. The best defense for adult leaders is to implement the rules and regulations.

The following guidelines are meant to be taken very seriously whether by paid or volunteer staff, full-time or part-time. By doing so we show our true care and concern for young people, their families, our parishes, and ultimately the diocese.

These guidelines are not meant to overwhelm. Many of us might say that we did not get into ministry to do this, but planning for the safety and well-being of our young people is in itself an act of caring. These guidelines, if learned and utilized, can become second nature. We invite you to refer to appropriate parts of the guidelines as you plan programs and events. As you gain experience you will find that you will automatically include these safety and liability guidelines in all that you do.

These guidelines are divided into several parts. The first part deals with activities occurring on parish premises. The second part deals with issues surrounding activities occurring off the premises.

# **ON-SITE PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY**

“On-site parish youth ministry” refers to ministry with youth that takes place on parish property. This includes religious education classes, youth group activities, sports events, and any events in which young people are involved on your premises.

The safety and well-being of young people attending the various programs at the parish are the responsibility of the youth minister and other adult leaders responsible for the activities.

## **Permission/Medical Release Forms**

Permission and Release forms are a responsible part of ministry with young people. They offer a basic communication vehicle between the parish and the parent/legal guardian. They also provide valuable information in case of a medical emergency. An Annual Youth Enrollment Form (see Forms Section) should be on file for every young person who is an active member of your parish program, including the religious education program. These should be kept on file and renewed each year.

We all agree that distributing and collecting permission forms is always a difficult job. Finding creative ways to do this will help make it easier. Helping parents understand that their child is not registered for a program until a permission, medical release and/or travel release form is completed is imperative. The beginning of the yearly program is a good time, when parents are registering youth. Annual Youth Enrollment Form (see Forms Section) can be included with promotional materials that are mailed. These forms should be readily accessible any time you gather youth on your campus.

We strongly recommend that a Diocesan Travel Release and Permission Form (see Forms section) be utilized for all off-site events and activities. Additionally, this form must be notarized for all out of state trips.

Diocesan Permission and Release forms may be adapted for local parish use as long as the essential information required remains intact. It is always important to double check all forms that you receive to make sure they are completely filled out in PEN (not pencil) and that they are signed by the parent or legal guardian. An emergency situation is not the time to realize that a form is incomplete.

## **Attendance**

It is important to keep accurate records of attendance for regular parish youth programs in case there is ever a question whether a particular youth was on the premises for a certain activity. Since many youth are able to drive themselves to the parish, or ride with someone else, there is always the possibility that they may leave home but not get to the activity.

In addition, a responsible adult supervisor should make a quick check of the parking lot and other accessible parish facilities a few minutes after an activity has begun. Sometimes youth will come onto the parish premises but not come to the activity. If youth are found, they should be invited to come to the activity or leave the premises.

Parishes should consider contacting parents of young people absent from an activity. Not only does this turn up any discrepancy about attendance, it also serves as a reminder that youth are welcome and wanted at events.

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

The youth minister is responsible for young people from the moment they enter the parish premises until their departure. A clear policy stating the arrival and dismissal time for young people should be developed and communicated to young people and parents. Usually, fifteen minutes before a program and fifteen to thirty minutes after a program offer ample arrival and departure time.

Youth or groups of youth should never be left on the premises alone. The youth minister or the adult responsible for the program is to remain with the youth until all youth have left the parish premises. Ideally two adults should be on the premises in case of emergencies and to avoid any appearance of misconduct.

Sometimes it is necessary for a young person to leave a program early. At such times it is appropriate to require a note or telephone call from the parent or guardian requesting early dismissal. .

### **Medical Injuries and Emergencies**

Every parish should have a stocked, easily accessible first aid kit.

An Incident Report Form (see Forms Section) is to be filed in accordance with site procedures in the event of an injury or an emergency. Do not admit any liability or negligence, or make any promises of payment or insurance coverage to the parties involved. Politely refer them to the parish business manager with their questions. If the area where the incident occurred could cause injury to others, close it until it can be repaired.

### **Building and Grounds**

The youth minister should be aware of potential hazards regarding equipment, buildings and grounds. While this is primarily the responsibility of the parish maintenance staff, the constant vigilance of everyone using the parish plant for activities will help prevent all potential safety hazards. All adult leaders should know the location of the fire alarms and fire extinguishers and be familiar with all exit routes.

In the event that damage to property occurs, the youth minister or adult in charge should fill out the appropriate forms and file in accordance with site procedures. Incident Reports (see Form Section) should be completed for on-site events/activities as well as off-site events/activities.

# **OFF-SITE PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY**

Any program which takes young people away from the parish premises is considered “off-site parish youth ministry.” In providing a comprehensive youth ministry to youth of the parish, young people are frequently involved in the following experiences and activities that occur off parish premises. These activities are important components of a comprehensive youth ministry program but have their own set of safety issues which must be given the proper attention. The following are a few examples:

1. Retreats/lock-ins (day, evening or overnight)
2. Special conferences or workshops out of town
3. Diocesan events
4. Service projects or field trips
5. Out of town trips to amusement parks, etc.
6. Recreational/sports activities
7. Camping trips or other outdoor activities

## **Permission/Medical Information Forms**

You should have a signed Annual Youth Enrollment Form (see Forms Section) for every youth and adult participating in your parish youth ministry. A copy of this form should be kept on file and renewed each year. It is recommended that a copy of all forms with medical information be kept on each individual’s person in a credential pouch or “water wallet”.

Even though this form provides a release and liability waiver in a blanket fashion, you still must get written permission from parents/legal guardians for each specific event. The easiest way to do this is when you send out the event information form (date, time, where to meet, what to bring, etc) include a permission slip which must be signed and returned in order for each youth to attend the event. The form should provide parents with the important details about the trip as well as providing you with important information. We strongly recommend that a diocesan *Travel Release and Permission Form* (see Forms) be utilized for all off-site events and activities. Additionally, this form must be notarized for all out of state trips.

## **Site Selection**

In selecting a site for an activity, it is important to do so with an eye for safety considerations, as well as cost and availability. Buildings, equipment and grounds should be hazard free and properly maintained and emergency medical facilities and law enforcement agencies should be within reasonable distances.

## **Private Homes**

If you use private homes for off-site activities, the homeowners should be aware of the increased liability risk they incur. They should check with their homeowner’s insurance agent to see if they are protected for church group activities. Some policies cover such activities while others require additional coverage.

## **Transportation**

Because you need to get your youth to the off-site ministry event or experience, transportation will always be an issue. Use the following guidelines:

1. Are all drivers 21 or over?
2. Are all vehicles in good working condition?
3. Have the driving records been checked?
4. Are all vehicles insured and if the vehicle is non-owned, does the driver have permission to utilize the vehicle?
5. Do the vehicles have a current state inspection?
6. Does the driver have a current driver's license?
7. Are the proper number of students assigned to each individual vehicle, depending upon its capacity (number of seat belts)?
8. Have the drivers been advised on the route of travel and what to do in the event that they become lost? A clear map or clearly written directions should be the standard.
9. Are all drivers advised to travel as a group or in pairs?

All drivers should be questioned verbally as to their driving record and their vehicle should be inspected. This will take the mechanical argument away from any plaintiff attorney in the event of an accident involving injury. A diocesan Volunteer Driver Form (see Forms Section) is required for all volunteer drivers for youth ministry events. This form should be filled out and signed once a year and kept on file.

## **Medical Injuries and Emergencies**

All of the guidelines previously cited apply. A well stocked first aid kit and the permission/medical release forms should travel with you at all times. Copies of all forms should be left at the parish office. Here is a sampling of first aid kit contents:

|                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Incident Report Forms   | Gauze               |
| Band-Aids-VariouS Sizes | Pads and Tampons    |
| Alcohol Prep Packages   | Sunscreen           |
| Neosporin               | Aloe Gel            |
| Rubber Gloves           | A Bottle Of Water   |
| Peroxide                | Granola Bar         |
| Scissors                | Adhesive Tape       |
| Tweezers                | Eye Drops           |
| Sharpie Marker          | Thermometer Strips  |
| Pencils                 | Dental Floss        |
| Flashlight              | Ace Wrap Bandage    |
| Batteries               | Antibacterial Wipes |
| Pen                     |                     |
| Safety Pins             |                     |
| Post-It Notes           |                     |
| Rubber Bands            |                     |
| Carmex                  |                     |

Please refer to the youth's medical release for parental permission before dispensing any over-the-counter medications. It is a good idea to have on hand some hard candy (for when someone has a tickle, but does not need medicine). Some suggestions of over-the-counter medicines that you may want to have on hand are:

- Non-aspirin pain reliever (Ibuprofen / Tylenol)
- Throat Lozenges / Cough Drops
- Decongestant
- Antacid (Pepto or Tums)
- Antihistamine (Benadryl cream and capsules)

All medications and treatments dispensed should be noted in a first aid log as well as on the participants' event specific permission form. (Noting medication/treatment dispensed, date, time, amount, and by whom)

### **Bus Boxes**

When traveling with youth, it is always a good idea to be prepared for the unexpected. Here are some ideas of what to bring along with you, when you take your youth on an outing.

- Roll of paper towels
- Handi-wipes
- Box of tissue
- Large trash bags
- Small can liner bags
- Hard candies – for coughers on overnight or long trip
- Large ziplock bag with: pencils, pens, index cards, masking tape, rubber bands
- 1 gal. jug of water
- Small Dixie cups
- Duct tape

### **Outdoor Activities**

Youth ministry frequently involves young people in outdoor activities. These activities offer young people opportunities to form healthy friendships, experience Christian community, experience the beauty of God's creation in nature, and enable stronger intergenerational relationships to develop. Recreational opportunities are designed for youth enjoyment with the inclusion of all participants.

While the normal recommendation for most activities is one adult to every ten youth for high school teenagers and one to seven for junior high youth (with a minimum of two at anytime), if you are taking a group camping, hiking, to the lake or beach, or some other outdoor activity the ratio of youth to adults should increase to at least one adult for every five youth to compensate for the greater need for supervision and possible emergencies. Adult to youth ratios should always be evaluated and adjusted based on expected level of risk.

### **Camp Facilities**

When choosing a campsite for camping, retreat or some kind of outdoor adventure, it is a good practice to see the camp first hand during the planning stage. What shape is the camp in, how hospitable is the camp staff? How difficult will it be to get quick medical attention if necessary? Is the camp accredited and by whom? The most widely recognized accreditation is with the American Camping Association

(ACA). This organization maintains a strict set of safety standards for staffing, buildings, programs, and services for all types of camps, religious and secular alike.

### **Water Activities**

Water activities require special precautions. A certified lifeguard must be present when swimming at a public pool. Other swimming activities such as a private pool, a lake, or the beach should be properly supervised according to the risk. Youth people must use appropriate certified life preservers when using any kind of water craft and must be instructed on the proper use of the craft before using it. Motorized craft must be driven by those age 25 or older who have been properly instructed in the use of the craft.

# **USING CHARTER BUS COMPANIES FOR TRANSPORTATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

In many youth ministry settings, it is often necessary and even preferable to use chartered bus transportation rather than personal vehicles. Buses provide safe and secure transportation to off-campus events and allows for community building along the way. Additionally, your adult chaperones are better able to concentrate on their tasks of insuring a safe-environment and building relationships with the young people. Here are a few things to check out BEFORE signing a contract with a charter bus company:

- If you are new to this type of transportation or are considering companies that you have not used before, it is always best to check first with the Diocesan Risk Manager or the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. They should be able to point you to companies which have already been approved for use by our parishes and ministries.
- Remember, cost should be one of the last things you consider when choosing a company. Safety and professionalism should be at the top of your list and, most often, you will get what you pay for.
- Be sure to check out the company's current safety record even if you have used them before. In addition to their own website and information, they should always be willing to point you to their Transportation Carrier Safety Snapshot from the United States Department of Transportation.
- All charter bus companies should be able to provide you with a written certificate of insurance which should list the church as an 'also insured' and be kept on file at your parish. Your business manager should be able to provide you with minimum limits of liability which are required.
- There is a 'contract addendum' required by the Diocese of Dallas which must be added to each standard charter bus agreement and signed by the charter company's agent. Current wording for this addendum may be obtained by contacting the Diocesan Risk Manager or the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.
- Don't forget that Diocesan Safe Environment policies are still your responsibility. You should require that the company provide you with a written verification of criminal background check for all drivers who will be with your group.
- If you plan to show movies on the trip, ask your bus company if they have a site license for videos to be played on their buses. Remember, even if your parish has a CVLI site license, it only covers videos shown in your facilities, not in a charter bus. If they do not have a license, urge them to obtain one or plan ahead and contact the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation or the individual studio yourself.
- Make sure that you have a list of all passengers for each bus. Make sure that a medical permission form for each participant is on the bus on which they are riding. Do not let participants switch buses during the ride without changing all lists and moving their forms.
- Make sure you have adequate adult coverage on each bus and that both the young people and the adult chaperones know what conduct is and isn't appropriate. All safety rules should be strictly enforced and driver distractions and property damage should not be tolerated.
- Trash bags should be readily available and proper etiquette dictates that all trash should be removed from the bus upon disembarking. Please inform the driver of any spills and have adults double-check to make sure all personal items are removed.
- Before resuming the trip, take the time to insure that all participants are back on the proper bus after any stops. Checklists, head counts, and the buddy system are all ways to help insure you never leave a young person behind.

- Have a crisis plan in case of an accident or breakdown. Think this through ahead of time. Have adults familiar with your plan on each bus. Make sure they have charged mobile phones and a list of contact numbers for other adults.
- Finally, after the trip, let the company know how your drivers did. They should be recognized for their safety and professionalism. On the other hand, the company should be very concerned if there were any problems. In the case of an unsafe driver, you might be saving the next group from a tragedy!

# **SUPERVISION AND SUPERVISORS**

Any activity involving young people needs to have appropriate adult supervision. We have been entrusted with the children of the families in our parishes and we must take care not to violate that trust. This means providing reasonable and prudent supervision that is equal to or exceeds the supervision reasonable parents would give their own children. As always, all paid staff and volunteers must adhere to the [Diocesan Safe Environment Program](#).

## **Behavioral Guidelines**

Each parish should have clear and consistent behavioral guidelines which specify the expected behavior of both adults and young people at all activities. These guidelines should be written and publicized in the promotional material for activities and programs. Guidelines should be orally reviewed with the participants at the beginning of every program or activity. New participants should also be briefed as they enter into the program.

Minimal guidelines should include:

1. All youth and adults are expected to fully participate in all activities unless otherwise excused. Anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs should not be allowed to participate. Alcohol should not be served at any youth event where young people under the age of 21 are present. This includes all on-site and off-site youth ministry activities.
2. Everyone is expected to respect all other participants in the program or activity. No physical or verbal harassment and no possession of weapons of any kind may be tolerated.
3. All participants are expected to be building community with the entire group. There should be no exclusive coupling during an activity (no kissing, necking, or other intimate or inappropriate sexual activity).
4. Anyone found in violation of these guidelines is subject to immediate dismissal from the activity and may be prohibited from attending future activities. If necessary, a parent or guardian will be called to pick youth up from the activity.

Guidelines may also need to be included for specific activities, as well as curfews and boundaries. A sample Youth Code of Conduct and Adult Code of Conduct may be found in the Forms Section.

The consequences for violation of the behavioral guidelines must be clearly stated and fairly and consistently enforced. Violation of guidelines, especially those involving illegal or immoral activity, should be reported to parents.

## **Adult Leadership**

The adult involved in youth ministry is to demonstrate by example the values which reflect Gospel love and compassion.

All adult leaders should be persons of maturity possessing a sensitivity to adolescents. Adult leaders are expected to demonstrate a consistent behavior which respects his/her own dignity as well as the dignity of the youth. Respect for the individual, for the premises and for the law are integral to adult leaders. Any adult wishing to be involved in youth ministry who demonstrates less than a responsible leadership style should not be involved with youth. All leaders need to be screened, cleared and in compliance with the [Safe Environment Program of the Diocese of Dallas](#).

In youth ministry, it is essential that the adult:

1. Behaves in a fashion appropriate for the activity
2. Never touches in an immodest fashion any youth
3. Refrains from any sexual, sexist, or racist comments
4. Refrains from obscene language
5. Follows the appropriate behavioral guidelines set for the young people, such as refraining from alcohol

The Youth Minister Leader is responsible for the selection, training and supervision of the other adults involved in various roles in any youth activity. The Youth Ministry Leader should invite other adults into youth ministry roles only when the above attitudes and behaviors have been demonstrated.

The Youth Ministry Leader is to clearly formulate the responsibilities for the adults of each activity. The specific roles of catechist, program leader, sponsor or chaperone need to be understood. The Youth Ministry Leader should be quick to point out to any adult a breach of the expected behaviors and responsibilities. Any adult not strictly following the expected behaviors and responsibilities must not be permitted to continue as an adult leader.

The diocese has a significant responsibility to ensure that positive steps are taken to identify those persons that may have had prior personal experiences in the sexual misconduct area. Every adult who has regular contact with young people (both employees and volunteers) should be screened, cleared and trained in compliance with the [Safe Environment Program of the Diocese of Dallas](#). This ongoing compliance must be made a condition of employment or, for volunteers, a condition for working with youth.

### ***Adult/Youth Ratio***

It is important to consider the adult to youth ratio at every youth ministry event whether it is held on your parish grounds or elsewhere.

The official diocesan recommendation is that you must evaluate this ratio for each event based on the level of 'risk' for that event; however there must ALWAYS be a *minimum* of two cleared and trained adults at any gathering.

For instance, if you are on church grounds and in a secure area of the building where no one will be accessing the area except for cleared volunteers who will be working with you, the risk will be lower than if you were in a public access area with non-cleared adults coming and going constantly through or near your area. Other things to consider for on-campus events might be:

- Will you be splitting the group into smaller groups which might be meeting separately for a period of time in different areas?
- Are restrooms accessible only to your group or are they open to the public at the same time you are meeting?
- Will you be moving the group outside for part of the time to a playground or volleyball area?
- Do you need to be able to monitor the parking lot for teens who will be driving their own vehicles?
- Will there be a set time for beginning and ending the activity or will it be a come-and-go type of event?

All of these things would affect how many cleared adults you might need to cover different areas, groups or times.

For off-campus events, the risk would generally be considered higher and therefore a higher adult to youth ratio would be necessary. (A ratio of 2 adults to 5 youth is considered 'higher' than a ratio of 2 adults to 10 youth.) Some things to consider would be:

- What type of transportation will be used to get to the event? (personal vehicles, charter bus or other means?)
- A weekend hike in the wilderness might actually require a lower ratio than handing out bag lunches to homeless people in an inner-city setting.
- What is the possibility that a young person might get sick or injured and need to be transported away from the group to a medical facility? Is your ratio enough that adults could be used to transport the youth and still have enough to cover the rest of the group?
- In general, overnight activities involve higher risk than day-camp events.

Additionally, we recommend that adult chaperones be at least 21 years of age. Your leadership team may include trained and cleared young adults between the ages of 18 and 21, but it is not recommended that they be counted in your adult to youth ratio. Instead, young adults 18-21 may be considered 'chaperones-in-training' and given adult tasks and responsibilities that are within their capabilities based on their levels of maturity and experience. If you have any question about this, it is always prudent to include your pastor and/or safe environment director in the discussion and decision making process.

Always remember, the goal is to provide a 'safe environment' for all the young people whenever they are in your care. Look at the times and areas where there might be a risk to that and make sure you have enough adult coverage to minimize that risk, with a minimum of two cleared adults with any young people at any time.

### **Overnight Accommodations**

In general, there should never be mixed gender gatherings in sleeping areas. Whether you are camping in tents, using a retreat house, or hotel rooms, boys should never be in the girls sleeping area and vice versa. It is also wise to restrict any social gatherings to appropriate common areas.

While adults have supervision responsibilities, they should also observe restrictions about being in the sleeping areas of the opposite gender. With the exception of large dormitory sleeping accommodations (at camps or pilgrimages), adults and youth should never room or tent together.

### **Pastoral Care**

The youth minister and other adult leaders often find themselves in the role of counselors for youth. Many of the situations that are surfaced are simply the normal struggles of adolescent growth, but at times you may be confronted with crisis issues which may be life threatening to the young person. The way in which you respond and what you say may have potential legal implications of which you should be aware.

First, we are not professional counselors. Our role is limited to compassionate listening and spiritual counsel. Anyone needing professional help should be referred to the appropriate professional. It is

important that the young people we work with understand the nature and scope of our role and the assistance we have to offer.

Whenever you meet with a young person in a “one on one” situation, it is important to do so in a place where you are not too isolated and where you are visible to others. Leave the door to your office open a bit. Make sure someone sees and knows when the young person arrives and leaves. This policy protects our young people and will help protect you from any false perceptions or accusations of sexual misconduct while with a young person.

In the event that a young person is left at an activity (on-site or off-site) and an adult is to provide a ride home, it is appropriate that someone else be aware of the situation (pastor, youth minister, PCL, etc.). Let the other person know when the young person is leaving and when he or she arrives home. The parent/guardian should also be contacted.

Be aware of the warning signs for alcoholism and drug dependency, eating disorders, depression and suicide. Refer youth to a trained counselor if you are counseling someone dealing with one of these crisis issues or if you are asked to intervene in a situation where one of these is occurring. (Consult the ***Youth In Crisis*** section of this handbook for warning signs.)

### **Confidentiality**

Young people must be sure that anything that they share with an adult will be held in confidence. They do need to understand that there are key times when that what is told in confidence must be shared with the proper people. Some exceptions include:

- The risk of danger to the youth or another person that is reasonably foreseeable by the adult; e.g., suicide threats, death threats, illegal acts.
- The story shared is one of child abuse. All child abuse cases must be reported.

### **Child Abuse or Misconduct**

Please go to ***Diocesan Safe Environment Program*** for information about reporting procedures.

In conclusion, these safety and liability guidelines are meant to assist adults in the parish who work with young people. They should be shared and discussed with all adults in the parish who are involved in any way with young people.

# Healthy Play and Recreation

*The following reflection and worksheet was prepared by Fr. Joe Hannappel of the Diocese of Grand Island. We thank him for sharing these with us.*

The way we play should complement and reflect the goals, objectives, and values of the rest of our programming. In other words, if our programming is attempting to unify the group, our play needs to be unifying. So, if our play creates winners and losers, or embarrasses people who aren't very bright or very athletic, or is funny only at the expense of a small group, then the result will not be a unified group, but a divided group.

Sometimes, at retreats and programs, we're asked to do something that seems simple and harmless, but once we do it, we are laughed at because of the real "punch line" or meaning of what we've just said or done. Sometimes on "trust walks," people "forget" to tell us about a tree branch or a puddle — or people "tell us" about the one that isn't really there!

These experiences do not create a unified, trusting community. They divide the group and cause suspicion and anxiety — even if the "team" is preaching trust and unity. In fact, a team that preaches trust and unity, yet practices deceit and division creates an emotional conflict in the participants who feel pressured to "trust" an untrustworthy group. It is exactly this situation we wish to avoid. It helps us to stay true to the Gospel if we have some concrete guidelines to help us evaluate our activities.

## **Questions to Consider when Evaluating an Activity**

- |     |    |                                                                                                                                       |
|-----|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yes | No | 1) Does it belittle or embarrass any person or persons?                                                                               |
| Yes | No | 2) Does it give an undue advantage to the very bright, the very athletic, or very highly skilled, so that the group might be divided? |
| Yes | No | 3) Is it, or can it be, sexually suggestive?                                                                                          |
| Yes | No | 4) Is there sexually stimulating body contact?                                                                                        |
| Yes | No | 5) Are many people "left out" for too long of a time?                                                                                 |
| Yes | No | 6) Is it degrading to some person or a group of people?                                                                               |
| Yes | No | 7) Can someone easily or possibly get hurt?                                                                                           |
| Yes | No | 8) Does it seem to create an "inner circle" of "elite" folks who are "in the know" or who "win"?                                      |
| Yes | No | 9) Does it ask the group to trust in a situation that is untrustworthy?                                                               |
| Yes | No | 10) Does it waste food or show lack of respect for the environment?                                                                   |

## **Dangerous games and situations**

Everyone wants to have fun but follow these safety principles for safe fun:

- \* Avoid games that might result in headfirst collisions with other people or natural objects. The risk of a broken neck and paralysis is enormous.
- \* Avoid games that incite reckless or overaggressive behavior.
- \* Avoid games that are hard to supervise. If you can't stop an activity quickly, you don't have enough control.
- \* Avoid pile on games.

## **Sport games and physical challenge activities**

Minimize risk by using the following guidelines:

- \* Don't play on an athletic field or in an area without first inspecting it for hazards and dangerous debris.
- \* Don't mix big and small, weak and strong kids in contact sports. Smaller kids can easily get crunched.
- \* Don't make everyone in your group play the game. The reluctant participant is often the first one hurt.
- \* Don't incite or encourage aggressive or rough play.
- \* Don't let the athletic or challenge equipment be used without supervision.
- \* Don't hesitate to step in and stop a situation that is getting too rowdy, rough or uncontrolled.

# Youth Events and Crisis Plans

by Kevin Dougherty

A crisis plan is a plan for what to do in case of a crisis. It needs to be event and group specific. And since they are specific to the type of trip, age of participants, lodging, transportation, etc., each crisis plan may look different.

Essentially, when I plan one of our youth trips, I try to think through every possible emergency situation and know what I would do in each case. Then I also let my other leaders know the plan(s) and what part they would be expected to play in handling the crisis. Finally, I make sure all participants know when to use emergency contact information and who to call.

Here are some things I would think about in developing a plan:

- Do you have a medical permission form for all participants that will allow you to obtain medical help while away from your campus? This should include important medical history items, insurance information, medications currently taken and/or allowed and any medical allergies. It should also have emergency contact information for getting in touch with parents. Preferably these should be visibly carried by each person (In a pouch around the neck or something similar) so medical personnel or chaperones can access it readily. I carry a full set of these forms with me at all times and leave a full set back at the parish with my emergency contact.
- Do you have a first aid kit or at least know where first aid may be obtained rapidly in the hotel or at the event center?
- Do you know who emergency contacts are at the event center? How to reach them quickly? When to (and when not to) call 9-1-1? At many of our conferences we are instructed that we will get quicker response by using the convention center emergency phones than by calling 9-1-1. This is good information to know.
- Do all participants know the names and mobile phone numbers of your main leaders. This information should also go in each person's neck pouch along with hotel name, address and phone number.
- You should have a plan in case of a major emergency – fire, act of terrorism, natural disaster, etc. All participants should know where the group meeting place will be if there is a disaster at the hotel. Where will you meet if there is a disaster at the event center? All participants should know to call in to the leader's mobile phone as soon as possible if they are not able to make it to the meeting place right away.
- Do you have a plan of response in case of a death, serious injury or disaster in the group? Your pastor and his emergency response team should be in this plan so that he can physically go to the parents or next-of-kin to notify and update them. You should also include contact information for Annette Gonzales-Taylor, our communications director, and Barbara Landregan, our safe environment director in this plan. Also, someone on this team should be in charge of being the "first contact back home" in case of any emergency. This will allow the leader at the scene to have just one person to make a call to, then they can continue to care for the group itself. This person should have all emergency contact numbers with them at all times that the group is gone and also be constantly available 24/7 by phone while the group is away.

I know this may sound like a lot at first, but it is a very necessary part of maintaining a safe environment for your group. I hope this helps you to organize your thoughts in developing your plan. Once you do it for one trip, it's usually fairly easy to adjust event-specifically for the next one.

# NON-PARISH BASED GROUPS CLERGY FROM OUTSIDE OF OUR DIOCESE SPEAKERS

**Non-parish based groups** ministering to the young people of the Diocese of Dallas are required to register with the Diocesan Pastoral Center. Before bringing in an outside group (and/or individual) to facilitate a youth retreat, please check with the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries to see that the group (or individual) has been cleared to work with your young people.

All **clergy** from outside of our diocese must be on file with the Diocese of Dallas Chancellor's Office before being allowed to minister within Dallas. Your pastor knows the required protocol for bringing in ordained clergy from outside this diocese.

All **presenters/speakers** (individuals, musicians, groups, etc.) that come from outside the Diocese of Dallas and are invited to speak on issues of Catholic doctrine, tradition, ritual, etc. must present a current letter of suitability or affidavit from their bishop or superior. That document should be sent to the Safe Environment Office, along with the topic they will address, prior to the event. In the case of lay presenters, the individual should present a letter of suitability from his/her pastor or other superior. These documents will be maintained on file and in the speakers' database at the Diocesan Pastoral Center.

If the clergy, outside group or individual is not currently registered, the process can take up to six months, so please plan early.

# How Safe Is Your Youth Ministry?

## Volunteer Leaders

| Yes | No | Sometimes |                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----|----|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Have my volunteer leaders gone through a screening and training process that includes written application, reference forms, background checks, interviews and annual training? |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Have my volunteer leaders been screened for any prior criminal sexual, or physical abuse accusations or violations?                                                            |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Have my volunteer leaders been trained for the job I have asked them to do?                                                                                                    |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Have I trained volunteers in general safety procedures, and do I discuss specific safety procedures with them prior to an activity or event?                                   |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Do my volunteers understand and practice our prescribed standard of "safe conduct" with students to avoid any suspicion of sexual misconduct?                                  |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Do my volunteers know their specific jobs at the events they attend?                                                                                                           |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Do I have an appropriate adult-youth ratio at every event?                                                                                                                     |

## Student Information

| Yes | No | Sometimes |                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----|----|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Do I have a Annual Youth Enrollment Form signed by parent(s) for each participating young person?                                                                |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Do I have current phone numbers so I can contact parents in case of emergency?                                                                                   |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Are parents fully informed (in writing) about the activities in which their children will be involved?                                                           |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | If I have to take any student to the hospital, am I prepared to answer questions I will be asked about personal information, medical information, and insurance? |

## First Aid and Emergency Response

| Yes | No | Sometimes |                                                                                    |
|-----|----|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Are members of my youth ministry team trained in a certified first aid course?     |
| 0   | 0  | 0         | Is a person trained in first aid present at all of our youth activities and trips? |

|   |   |   |                                                                                                                                                   |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| θ | θ | θ | Is our first aid kit adequately stocked and available at all of our youth activities and trips?                                                   |
| θ | θ | θ | Do I carry with me phone numbers of people who should be contacted in the case of an emergency (ambulance, police, ministry supervisor, parents)? |

## Drivers and Vehicles

| Yes | No | Sometimes |                                                                                                                       |
|-----|----|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do we have a <i>current</i> Volunteer Driver Form on file for all drivers?                                            |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do we have a written policy regarding driving standards and who is allowed to drive for all the activities and trips? |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do we only use drivers who are qualified and responsible?                                                             |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do we prohibit students from driving other students to our activities?                                                |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do we require the use of seat belts at all times?                                                                     |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do we regularly check for safety the vehicles we use, including fluids, brakes, tires, and the like?                  |

## Planning and Preparedness

| Yes | No | Sometimes |                                                                                                                                    |
|-----|----|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do we have a clear written set of basic safety rules for the activities of our youth ministry?                                     |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do we have sufficient insurance coverage for both leaders and kids in our youth ministry?                                          |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | While preparing for an event, do I inspect the physical facilities or location and look for any safety hazards?                    |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | To prepare for an event, do I walk through the proposed activities to anticipate what risks are involved?                          |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | Do I think through a worst-case scenario to identify potential problems and to plan responses to these problems?                   |
| θ   | θ  | θ         | When an activity seems dangerous, do I have the wisdom and courage to stop it regardless of the reaction of the students involved? |

**Analysis:** Each “no” or “sometimes” answer needs your attention. Review these questions and answers with your supervisors and your volunteer staff. Then decide together what you can do to improve the protection you provide for the students in your youth ministry.

## Copyrights and Video Licensing

“It is illegal and immoral to reproduce copyrighted texts and music by any means without written permission of the copyright owner. The fact that these duplicated materials are not for sale but for private use does not alter the legal or moral situation of copying without permission.” (Music in Catholic Worship #78, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1982)

This would also include any technologies that have been developed since that time such as audio and video recordings, videotapes, laser discs, cd’s and dvd’s, computer disks and software, etc.

The Diocese recognizes that unlawful copying and use of copyrighted materials contributes to higher costs for materials, lessens the incentives for development of quality educational materials, and fosters an attitude of disrespect for law which is in conflict with the educational goals of the Diocese of Dallas.

It is the intent of the Diocese of Dallas to comply with the provisions of the Copyright Act of 1976 and all subsequent amendments to copyright law.

There are several good sources to go to for answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ’s). The questions on the following pages are adapted from:

Church Music Publishers Association – Guide to copyright law

<http://cmpamusic.org/html/main.isx?sub=13>

Copyright misconceptions about showing movies at youth group

<http://www.studentministry.org/copyright-misconceptions-about-showing-movies-at-youth-group/>

Motion Picture Licensing Corporation – FAQ’s

<http://www.mplc.org/page/faqs>

For further study and more information, a library of factsheets may be accessed at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

A complete version of the U.S. Copyright Law (October 2009) may be accessed online at <http://www.copyright.gov/title17/circ92.pdf>.

## Some FAQ's on Copyright Law

### GUIDELINES FOR USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL

#### What does “copyright” mean?

Our nation’s founding fathers determined that it was in the public interest that the creative works of a person’s mind and spirit should belong, for a limited time, to the creator. The protection of these works is called “copyright.” The United States Copyright Law grants to any copyright owner the exclusive rights to original material for a specific period of time or term. The copyright owner is the only one who has the right to reproduce their work. If any other party wants to reproduce the material in some manner, permission must be obtained from the copyright owner. Copyrighted creative works are often referred to as “intellectual property.” That is exactly how they should be treated – as the property of the copyright owner.

#### What are the exclusive rights of copyright owners?

To reproduce the copyrighted work in any form, including but not limited to: printed copies, digital files, recordings, tapes, CD’s, videos, motion pictures, or any duplicating process now known or which later comes into being.

To make arrangements and adaptations of the copyrighted work.

To distribute and/or sell printed or recorded copies of the work.

To synchronize the copyrighted work with visual images, video or film.

To perform the copyrighted work.

To display the copyrighted work.

To license others to do any of the above.

#### Who owns the legal right to make copies?

The copyright owner. This may be the original creators (author or composer), a publisher, or an assigned agent.

#### How do I find out who the copyright owner is?

The copyright owner’s name is listed in the copyright notice. Copyright notices should appear on all reproductions of copyrighted works. The copyright notice will usually contain the word “copyright” or the symbol © followed by the year of first publication and the name of the copyright owner.

#### Must I get permission to ...

- Make photocopies of copyrighted materials?
- Print bulletins, songbooks or songsheets containing copyrighted works for use in church services, bible studies, or home prayer groups as long as they are not sold?
- Show movies or videos during after-school programs or at youth group meetings?
- Make a transparency, a slide or an electronic file of a copyrighted work for projection?
- Make a photocopy of a copyrighted work for an accompanist or soloist?

The answer is YES, you must request permission by securing licenses from the copyright owner prior to making any of the copies or duplications described above.

**What if I'm faced with special situation?**

The magic word is **ASK**. You may or may not receive permission, but when you use someone else's property you must have the property owner's consent.

**What about photocopies or tapes that are now in our church?**

To protect yourself and your organization, you should destroy any unauthorized photocopies, tapes, etc., and replace them with legal editions. Possession of illegal copies puts you in the position of being a potential copyright infringer.

**Is it permissible to perform copyrighted religious works in the church?**

Yes, the "religious services exemption" in the copyright law permits the performance of copyrighted religious works from legal editions in the course of service at places of worship or at religious assemblies. However, performance licenses must be obtained from the copyright owner for any musical performance outside of a specific "worship service" including concerts and special musical programs. Additionally, it is not ethical or permissible to buy one set of sheet music and then make thirty copies for choir members who will perform it.

**What about items that are out of print?**

Most publishers are agreeable, under special circumstances, to reprinting of out-of-print items; but again, permission must be secured from the copyright owner prior to any duplication.

**What is public domain?**

If a work is in the public domain (PD), the copyright protection has expired and it is dedicated to the public for use as it sees fit with no permission being required from anyone. The absence of a copyright notice is one indication that a work may be PD.

**What is fair use?**

Fair use is not generally available to churches. It is a doctrine developed by the courts that permits portions of copyrighted works to be reproduced legally for purposes of criticism, comment, news reporting, classroom teaching, scholarship and research.

**Is it permissible to make duplicates of the tape that accompanies a musical or printed work for "learning" or "rehearsal" purposes?**

No, as good as an idea as this is, and as helpful as it would be to teach the music to members of the choir, it is against the law without permission. Write or call the publisher of the music. They will usually work with you concerning your request.

**What about photocopiers who don't "get caught"?**

Frankly, we cannot imagine what kind of school, church or professional would derive satisfaction from doing something illegal. They force the price of legal editions higher. They risk embarrassment from professional colleagues who understand the laws. They risk fines and jail sentences if taken to court.

## **GUIDELINES FOR USE OF VIDEO RECORDINGS**

### **The FBI warning says that I can't charge money for people to watch the movie so my event is ok.**

The FBI warning actually pertains to an individual showing a movie within their home.

### **As long I am using the movie as a church event I am within the copyright laws.**

This is a false statement because the only instance in which a movie may be screened, outside of a home, without a license, is in a non-profit educational setting with "face-to-face instruction."

### **We own the DVD, so do we still need a license to view or show it in public?**

Yes. The location requires a license regardless of who owns the audiovisual work. While you may own the actual DVD, you are only granted the right to view it in your home, not to perform it in public.

### **We don't charge admission. Do we still need a license?**

Yes. A license is required regardless of whether an admission fee is charged. However, the Umbrella License covers only those situations where admission is not charged.

### **We're a non-profit organization. Do we still need a license?**

Yes. Under the law, it doesn't matter if you're a non-profit or for-profit organization. You are required to have a public performance license to show motion pictures and other audiovisual works.

### **Is there a teaching exemption for educational purposes?**

There is a "face-to-face teaching exemption" that applies only to full-time non-profit educational institutions and only if the teacher is present in the room, the showing takes place in a classroom setting and the movie is used as an essential part of the current curriculum being taught. Some people are of the opinion that youth ministries and religious education programs of parishes with parochial schools would be able to claim this exemption assuming the above criteria are met. This is still legally unclear. Outside of a private or public school application, it remains ethically and legally advisable to always obtain a license.

### **We are only showing a one or two minute scene. Do we still need a license?**

Yes, some people think that they do not need a public performance video license because they are only using a short scene, they are not getting paid for it, or because they are giving the studio free advertising. Those assertions are all incorrect.

### **What is a CVLI license for showing videos?**

**A parish may purchase an 'umbrella' license to show movies in its facilities. The license offered by Christian Video Licensing International (CVLI) was created to serve the video licensing needs of Christian faith-based communities with a simple, affordable license. Through an agreement with studios and producers, the CVLI Church Video License provides legal coverage for churches and for other ministry organizations to show DVDs and videocassettes of motion pictures. Coverage includes playing just a few seconds of a movie all the way up to showing the full-length feature. The Church Video License is one of the most cost effective and convenient ways for churches and other ministry organizations to protect themselves from the possibility of being fined for illegal use of DVDs and videocassettes. CVLI currently covers over 60,000 churches, camps, Christian schools and childcare centers across North America.**

**My church has the CVLI license, so we can show movies at any church event that we do.**

This license only pertains to a church showing movies “in its facility(ies.)” This means that if you have a current CVLI license, you may show most legally obtained movies in your church property.

**What do you mean by “most” movies?**

The CVLI license only covers those movies produced and/or distributed by CVLI affiliated motion picture companies only. Currently, CVLI has licensing agreements with over 400 producers including most major studios.

**What if I don’t want the expense of an annual umbrella license?**

You may be able to contact the motion picture company and get written permission to show the movie. As the copyright holder, if it is the copyright holder, it can waive its rights and grant a church or ministry permission to show the movie. If you want to do this, do it well in advance, the process is slow.

**Since I’m not charging a fee, I am showing the movie inside of my church, and I have the CVLI license, I can advertise my event in any fashion that I want.**

The CVLI licensing terms state, “No specific titles, or any characters from such titles, or producers’ names will be advertised or publicized to the general public unless authorized by certain producers.”

**We rent out our facility to other groups. Can we be held liable for copyright infringement by them?**

Yes, the facility owner can be held vicariously liable or considered a ‘contributory infringer.’ However, the CVLI license applies to the ‘facility’ and ‘location,’ not just the organization itself.

**What about showing movies on charter bus trips?**

The CVLI license is a “site” license issued for use at your facility. Unless the bus is owned by the church, a site license would not cover showing a movie there. Check with your bus company to see if they may already have a site license for their buses. If not, plan ahead and contact the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation ([mplc.com](http://mplc.com)) or the individual studio for permission and licensing.

**The Diocese of Dallas strongly upholds the copyright laws of the United States and of other countries. All employees and volunteers within the Diocese of Dallas must adhere to these laws. Plainly stated, the making of unauthorized copies of all copyrighted material is illegal. However, in many cases, permission can be obtained. You must contact the copyright owner or licensing agent prior to use or duplication.**

# **Retention of Files, Forms, Documents and other Records**

You should know that all records created or preserved by an employee of the Diocese of Dallas in the course of employment or in the transaction of parish or diocesan business are solely the property of the parish or diocese.

No records shall be removed, destroyed, transferred, stored, converted into another media, or otherwise disposed of except in compliance with diocesan policies.

Retention periods in this policy are absolute except when legally halted by official notice. They are not minimum guidelines and there are no exceptions.

Records generated, and/or stored electronically, including emails, are subject to these policies in the same manner as printed documents.

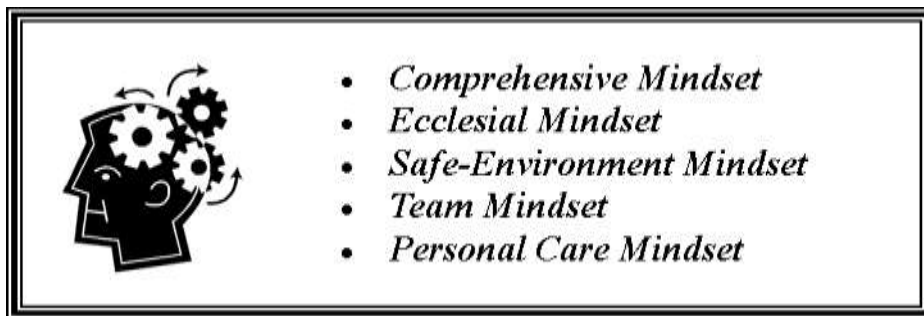
Files, forms, documents and other records relating to youth ministry include, but are not limited to:

| Diocesan Document Management and Record Retention                                             |                    |                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Type of Record                                                                                | Medium             | Retention Time  |
| Records originating in the organization that document policy, procedure, rules or regulations | Paper / electronic | Permanent       |
| Records that document routine activities                                                      | Paper / electronic | 2 years         |
| Legal Correspondence                                                                          | Paper / electronic | Permanent       |
| Office Files (general)                                                                        | Paper / electronic | Biennial Review |
| Incident Reports (accident/injury)                                                            | Paper / electronic | 7 years         |
| Medical / Permission Forms                                                                    | Paper              | 7 years         |

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. If you have questions or need more information, see your parish Business Manager or refer to the Diocesan Records Retention Policy.

# Forms

- ❖ **Diocesan Annual Youth Enrollment Form**
- ❖ **Diocesan Youth Travel Release and Permission Form**
- ❖ **Diocesan Adult Travel Release and Medical Form**
- ❖ **Diocesan YM Event Code of Conduct - Youth**
- ❖ **Diocesan YM Event Code of Conduct - Adult**
- ❖ **Incident Information Report**
- ❖ **Adult Chaperone Safe Environment Clearance Verification**
- ❖ **Diocese of Dallas Background Check Verification Form**
- ❖ **Region 10 RCYC Youth Code of Conduct**
- ❖ **Region 10 RCYC Adult Code of Conduct**
- ❖ **Volunteer Adult Driver Form**
- ❖ **Be Smart Drive Safe**
- ❖ **Additional Resources**



# Forms

## Recommended and/or Samples

- **Diocesan Annual Youth Enrollment Form**

This form is recommended to be filled out for all youth annually. It contains information on youth and parents as well as a medical release for any on-site emergencies. It also contains blanket annual Audio Video Release. It should be a standard practice to get this form completed for any new youth coming into the program throughout the year.

- **Diocesan Youth Travel Release and Permission Form**

This form contains information on the specific event and mode of travel. It also contains a medical release which may be kept on a youth's person throughout the event. It is recommended to be used for all off-site events and activities.

- **Diocesan Adult Travel Release and Medical Form**

This form contains event specific information and liability release for adults. It also contains a medical consent to treat in the case of an incapacitating emergency. It is recommended to be used for all off-site events and activities.

- **Diocesan YM Event Code of Conduct - Youth**

- **Diocesan YM Event Code of Conduct - Adult**

These recommended forms contain general code of conduct information on the front and space for event-specific code of conduct bullets on the back.

- **Incident Information Report**

This form is recommended for documenting any incidents including, but not necessarily limited to those which require disciplinary action such as vandalism or illegal activities, as well as any accidents or injuries which may occur.

- **Adult Chaperone Safe Environment Clearance Verification**

This form is used to verify S/E clearance for any adults attending events. It is usually asked for when the event is organized and sponsored by an entity other than the local parish.

- **Diocese of Dallas Background Check Verification Form**

This form may be used to verify the background check of any adult not already cleared through the Diocese of Dallas Safe Environment program who will be attending a youth event. This may include chaperones from non-parish based groups, speakers and presenters, musicians and band members, and exhibitors.

- **Region 10 RCYC Youth Code of Conduct**

- **Region 10 RCYC Adult Code of Conduct**

These sample forms may be used to get ideas for event specific bullets to go on the back of the Diocesan Code of Conduct forms.

- **Volunteer Driver Form**

This form, currently in development by our Office of Risk Management, is recommended to be filled out annually by all volunteers who may be driving their own private vehicle to, from or for an off-site youth ministry event. It is especially important for those who will be transporting children, youth or vulnerable adults.

- **Be Smart Drive Safe**

This informational form contains instructions for accessing and completing the online “Be Smart Drive Safe” Defensive Driving Course recommended for all individuals who drive for the Church.

# **Diocesan Annual Youth Enrollment Form**

**New Form for 2011  
Updated 3/29/2011**

**Go to <http://catholicyouthministryofdallas.org>  
Click on “Forms”**

**This form is available in both .pdf and .docx versions**

# **Diocesan Youth Travel Release and Permission Form**

**New Form for 2011  
Updated 3/29/2011**

**Go to <http://catholicyouthministryofdallas.org>  
Click on “Forms”**

**This form is available in both .pdf and .docx versions**

# **Diocesan Adult Travel Release and Medical Form**

**New Form for 2011**

Go to <http://catholicyouthministryofdallas.org>

**Click on “Forms”**

**This form is available in both .pdf and .docx versions**

OFFICE OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES  
DIOCESE OF DALLAS

DIOCESAN YOUTH MINISTRY EVENT  
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Welcome to Diocesan Youth Ministry. The event you are attending may have several purposes but the most important is to bring Catholic youth together from across our Diocese to play, pray, learn and grow and get excited about being Catholic and an important part of our Church. Remember you are representatives of a respected Catholic youth organization. We expect you will represent your parish and diocese well during this event. Recall that you are a witness for your church to the press and dignitaries who will attend the event and we ask you to project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity, and respect to everyone and to the property around you. We are confident you will display the maturity, responsible leadership and character, which have become the trademark qualities of Catholic youth ministry. Thank you!

**Introduction**

Parish group leaders are responsible for the actions of the members of their group. Each parish accepts full responsibility for any damage or theft caused by members of their group while attending the diocesan event. Adult chaperones in each parish group are to help enforce the Code of Conduct and to set an example for their youth. All diocesan adult leaders and chaperones have been background checked, cleared and trained in compliance with the safe environment policies of the Diocese of Dallas. As such they have been given the authority to maintain safety and adherence to this Code of Conduct. Please give them your respect and cooperation.

**General Rules**

1. Respect each person whether youth, adult, child, in our group or not a part of our group. This is the cornerstone of our faith and a civil society. Respect includes verbal exchanges, physical and psychological exchanges as well. Inappropriate displays of affection as well as any abuse of another person will not be tolerated.
2. Participants must attend all event activities. Name badges, if provided and appropriate must be worn at all time during the event.
3. All participants must refrain from drinking, and the use of illegal drugs. The use of tobacco products by minors is prohibited and is strongly discouraged for all other participants. The purchase, possession, or consumption of beer, wine, other alcoholic beverages and the possession or use of illegal drugs by any individual will not be tolerated. Failure to comply with these rules will mean immediate dismissal from the event. All participants, including those of legal drinking/smoking age are expected to comply with these rules.
4. Event sessions will start on time. Please be on time.
5. No weapon of any kind may be possessed by a conference participant.
6. Remember that vandalism to property is never allowed at any event. Such behavior can result in serious injury to persons and/or property. Offenders may be asked to leave the event and will be responsible for reimbursing the owner for damages.

*(Continued on other side)*



**OFFICE OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES  
DIOCESE OF DALLAS**

**DIOCESAN YOUTH MINISTRY EVENT  
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ADULT PARTICIPANTS**

Welcome to Diocesan Youth Ministry. The event you are attending may have several purposes but the most important is to bring Catholic youth together from across our Diocese to play, pray, learn and grow and get excited about being Catholic and an important part of our Church. Remember you are representatives of a respected Catholic youth organization. We expect you will represent your parish and diocese well during this event. Recall that you are a witness for your church to the press and dignitaries who will attend the event and we ask you to project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity, and respect to everyone and to the property around you. We are confident you will display the maturity, responsible leadership and character, which have become the trademark qualities of Catholic youth ministry. Thank you!

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*(Continued on other side)*

**Event Specific Rules and Expectations**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I agree I shall abide by all rules and regulations as outlined in this event Code of Conduct. I understand that it is my responsibility to have reviewed it and understand it prior to signing this form. To the best of my knowledge I am in compliance with all safe environment policies of the Diocese of Dallas including criminal background checks and annual training.

I fully understand the importance and the consequences of the foregoing statements and sign this event Code of Conduct form knowingly, freely, and willingly.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# INCIDENT INFORMATION REPORT

[Give original to Event Coordinator]

Event \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_

Name of incident party \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, St. \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Guardian contacted at # \_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_ Parish Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of witness(es) (if any): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Statement \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name, Address and phone number of Hospital or treatment facility: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Treatment or action taken: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If x-rays were taken, were they obtained for parental use? \_\_\_\_\_

Medication dispensed due to the accident:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Dosage: \_\_\_\_\_ By whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Dosage: \_\_\_\_\_ By whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Dosage: \_\_\_\_\_ By whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Called Parent: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ By whom \_\_\_\_\_

Comments on conversation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions given by parent for treatment of child: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name, phone # & Parish of person filing this report: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*[Use back side of this form for further comments and "follow up" information]*

## FOLLOW UP REPORT:

DATE OF FOLLOW UP \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON FILING REPORT \_\_\_\_\_ PARISH \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION \_\_\_\_\_

[A copy of this report must be given Parish Coordinator & Event Coordinator immediately upon completion]

LEGAL GUARDIAN NOTIFIED: DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF GUARDIAN SPOKEN WITH \_\_\_\_\_

IF NOT, WHY? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

STATUS OF PARTY INVOLVED IN INCIDENT \_\_\_\_\_

WAS PERSON ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL? \_\_\_\_\_

HOSPITAL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ ATTENDING PYSICIAN \_\_\_\_\_

WAS 'FOLLOW-UP' VISIT OR CALL MADE? \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

BY \_\_\_\_\_ PARISH \_\_\_\_\_

DOES THIS INCIDENT NEED TO BE REPORTED TO OUR INSURANCE? \_\_\_\_\_

DATE REPORT MADE \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:



# Diocese of Dallas Background Check Verification Form

This form should be used to verify the background check of any adult not already cleared and verified through the Diocese of Dallas Safe Environment Program who will be attending a youth event. This may include chaperones from non-parish based groups, speakers and presenters, musicians and band members, and exhibitors.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

has been criminally background checked through

Parish or Group \_\_\_\_\_

on (month/year of background check) \_\_\_\_\_

State / Locality of background check \_\_\_\_\_

Name and contact information of person who could verify background check

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person filling out this form (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

# REGION 10 CATHOLIC YOUTH CONFERENCE YOUTH CODE OF CONDUCT

We want you to enjoy your time here as well as gain valuable information to take back to your (Arch)Diocese and parishes. This is a time to celebrate, pray, worship, meet new people, exchange ideas, have fun, and to experience the community of the Catholic Church in Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas.

You are representing the Catholic Church and your (Arch)Diocese, and are asked to conduct yourself accordingly. All participants should exhibit Christian consideration, sensitivity, respect, and maturity. We respectfully ask for your cooperation, and are sure that you will have no trouble adhering to the following *Code of Conduct*.

## SPECIFIC GUIDELINES & RULES

1. Adult sponsors/chaperones will be assigned to a group of conference participants. Please check in with your chaperone on a regular basis. If you have any questions, please contact your chaperone. Please know the room number of your chaperone.
2. Adult Leaders are acting in the best interest of all participants, and will be enforcing this code of conduct. Understand that you are asked to respect and listen to adult leaders/chaperones when asked or instructed to act.
3. For your safety, you are not allowed to leave the event site for ANY reason without chaperone or (Arch)Diocesan leader.
4. Participants must carry a picture ID on them at all times.
5. Participants are expected to attend all scheduled conference activities.
6. NAME TAGS are to be worn at all times in order to be admitted to all activities.
7. Youth who cause problems will be reported to their (Arch)Diocesan Director. If necessary, parents will be notified and youth will be sent home.
8. Shirts and shoes must be worn at all times when not in your hotel room or pool areas.
9. Socializing prior to curfew should be done in the public areas of the hotel since noise levels must be kept to a minimum in the sleeping areas. This guarantees the right to privacy and to peace and quiet, for not only fellow conference attendees, but also other guests who may be staying in the hotel at the time. Please be respectful of these other persons and use rooms for sleeping, not for visiting.
10. Males and females are to remain in separate sleeping spaces at all times. No visiting is allowed in rooms by members of the opposite sex.
11. Please refrain from "joy riding" on the elevators. Please do not overcrowd elevators.
12. All participants must be in their respective hotel rooms by curfew on each night of the conference. Do not leave your rooms after curfew.
13. Throwing objects from balconies into the street or atrium areas will not be tolerated. Such behavior can result in serious injury to persons and/or property and can result in youth being sent home.
14. Please keep your hotel rooms in order. If you choose to disregard basic rules of tidiness and cleanliness, and housekeeping personnel have trouble getting into your room, they will be instructed to not service/clean your room. Occupants are responsible for any damage done to hotel rooms. Keep your door locked at all times in your hotel room, and do not leave valuables in your hotel room unattended.
15. We utilize hotels and convention center space. Participants should remain in the assigned areas of the conference at all times, unless during specified free times. During those times please be aware of assigned boundaries/perimeters. Your adult sponsor should know where you are at all times.
16. Follow water safety rules when in the swimming pools. No running or horseplay around the pool is permitted. Follow all posted guidelines in pool areas. For your safety in case you choose to swim, understand that there is no lifeguard and you are swimming at your own risk and will follow basic water safety rules when in the swimming pools.
17. NO illegal drugs, alcohol, underage smoking, firearms, explosives, or other illegal substances. The purchase, possession or consumption of beer, wine, other alcoholic beverages, or tobacco products by minors and the possession or use of illegal drugs by any individual will not be tolerated. Infraction of these rules will mean immediate dismissal from the conference. The hotel bars and lounges are OFF LIMITS to ALL participants.

18. Christ-like behavior is expected at all times. Inappropriate contact, touch, gesture, language or activity of an offensive nature is NOT ACCEPTABLE. Respect for all adult leaders, peers, and all property is expected.

*I have read and discussed this Code of Conduct with my parent/guardian and agree to abide by its' guidelines during the Region 10 Catholic Youth Conference.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**S  
A  
M  
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E**

## GUIDELINES FOR (ARCH)DIOCESAN LEADERSHIP & ADULT CHAPERONES/SPONSORS

(Arch)Diocesan Directors are responsible for the actions of youth from their respective (Arch)Dioceses. Each (Arch)Diocese will take full responsibility for any damage or theft done by members at the conference site. It is our request that all adult leaders in each delegation help enforce the code of conduct, and to set an example for youth. Due to the size and nature of this conference, nineteen and twenty year old youth group assistants will not be considered adult chaperones. Adult leaders must be at least 21 years of age and successfully completed their (Arch)Diocesan Safe Environment Programs and background check requirements.

The following guidelines have been established to help adult leaders:

1. Adult leaders' nametags will bear a colored ribbon or dot, identifying them as chaperones/sponsors.
2. Each chaperone is asked to be in charge of a group of youth following the official ratio in accordance with individual (Arch)Diocesan policies. Youth should know in advance that there will be a specific chaperone for them to check in with. Chaperones should give their room number to these youth. Chaperones should also know the room numbers of all youth assigned to them.
3. Chaperones are encouraged to go over conference guidelines with youth. ADULT LEADERS of each delegation are responsible for enforcing the *Code of Conduct* and to set an example for their youth.
4. Responsibility for discipline is shared by all adult chaperones.
5. Each (Arch)Diocesan Director or designee will pick up registration packets and hotel keys and distribute to the chaperones.
6. Adults are asked to attend all conference activities and touch base with youth on a regular basis to answer questions. Please do not leave the conference or hotel/convention center and expect other adults to be responsible for the youth assigned to you.
7. Adults are also required to wear nametags at all times. Nametags are necessary to be admitted into all activities and meals.
8. Each (Arch)Diocese is responsible for medical releases for their participants. A copy of the medical releases/permission forms must be kept in the first aid room (see program location). The room number and cell number of each (Arch)Diocesan Director or designated contact should be left in the first aid room in case of an emergency. Any illness or injuries should be reported to the (Arch)Diocesan Director or designee.
9. Adults must refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages during the conference.
10. Chaperones are requested to check rooms periodically after curfew to ensure all youth are accounted for. Any youth not accounted for should be reported to the (Arch)Diocesan Director or designee immediately.
11. Chaperones are asked to monitor areas until at least 2:00 a.m. both Saturday and Sunday mornings. If necessary, please double-check the rooms you are responsible for during the night.
12. Each (Arch)Diocesan Director or designee is responsible for the care, safety, and supervision of their delegation throughout the conference. In particular, special arrangements for meals should be made for the Friday evening arrival. It is not advised to permit youth to leave the Hotel to eat dinner upon arrival. It is suggested that late arriving (Arch)Dioceses can order pizza/select food and have it served in monitored area.
13. Depending on the structure of the conference, monitoring duties may be assigned to (Arch)Dioceses for evening social activities on Friday and Saturday. Please check with your (Arch)Diocesan Director or designee for information/ assignments.
14. At times, a (Arch)Diocesan check-in time may be scheduled. Chaperones are requested to make sure all youth are accounted for and notify their (Arch)Diocesan Director or designee.
15. Youth who cause problems should be reported to the (Arch)Diocesan Director or designee. If necessary, parents will be notified and youth will be sent home.
16. Chaperones are requested to monitor the hotel lobby/atrium, hallways, stairwells, workshop areas, game rooms, pool areas, balconies, terraces, and elevators at all times. Please familiarize yourself with the hotel/convention center space the conference is utilizing. Youth are not allowed to leave the immediate hotel/convention center area except during times specified as free times in the conference booklet. Adult chaperones should always know the location of the young people in their care.

S A M P L E

17. No visiting will be allowed in rooms by members of the opposite sex.
18. It is the hope of the Region that everyone who attends this conference and congress has an opportunity to benefit from all that it has to offer. By providing chaperones with guidelines, we hope to answer questions and avoid problems and confusion. Thank you very much for your willingness to participate in this conference and congress. We hope that you will benefit from it as much as the young people from your (Arch)Diocese.

*I have read and agree to abide by these guidelines during the Region 10 Catholic Youth Conference.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Adult Chaperone/Sponsor*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

# **Volunteer Adult Driver Form**

**Available on our website:**

**[www.catholicyouthministryofdallas.org](http://www.catholicyouthministryofdallas.org)**



# BE SMART DRIVE SAFE

One growing area of liability exposure within the Catholic Church is related to driving and transportation activities. In an effort to reduce this exposure, the Diocese of \_\_\_\_\_ asks all individuals who drive for the Church to take a defensive driving course prior to performing any driving duties. The following course takes less than 20 minutes to complete and training is free.

Thank you for helping us with our transportation needs!

## To begin the course:

- Go to [www.cmqdrivesafe.com](http://www.cmqdrivesafe.com)
- Select English or Spanish
- Enter your information in the boxes provided.

**In the last information box “*Email My Results To*”,  
please enter the following email address(es):**

---

---

- Click “Continue”
- After watching the video program, click the “Continue” button and answer the certification questions
- Click “Finish”
- Your training results will be emailed automatically. You will also receive an email confirmation that you have completed the course.

If you experience any trouble viewing the course, please contact Jenny Hulsen at OPUS. Her direct phone number is (913) 825-1618 and her email address is [jenny@opustraining.com](mailto:jenny@opustraining.com). She will be happy to assist you.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Diocesan Office of Safe Environment – Barbara Landregan, Director  
[blandregan@cathdal.org](mailto:blandregan@cathdal.org); 214-379-2812

Contact this office for questions relating to:

- Diocesan Safe Environment Policies and Procedures
- The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People
- Diocesan Speakers' Database
- Information on Criminal Background Checks
- Information on Clearing and Training Volunteers

Diocesan Office of Risk Management – John Smith, Director  
[jsmith@cathdal.org](mailto:jsmith@cathdal.org); 214-379-2814

Contact this office for questions relating to:

- Chartering Commercial Transportation and Charter Bus Contracts
- Insurance for Special Events
- Volunteer Drivers
- Accident Reports and Liability Issues

Diocesan Office of Pastoral Planning and Research – Lynn Rossol, Director  
[lrossol@cathdal.org](mailto:lrossol@cathdal.org); 214-379-2854

Contact this office for questions relating to:

- Non-parish based organizations conducting ministry within the Diocese of Dallas
- Diocesan statistics
- Parochial boundaries

Diocesan Office of the Chancellor – Mary Edlund J.C.L., Chancellor  
[medlund@cathdal.org](mailto:medlund@cathdal.org); 214-379-2819

Contact this office for questions relating to:

- Reporting of suspected child abuse by clergy, employees or volunteers
- Reporting of sexual misconduct by clergy, employees or volunteers
- Faculties and Affidavits for Clergy from Outside the Diocese of Dallas

# Guidelines for Youth Retreats

- ❖ Youth Retreats
- ❖ Guiding Principles for Youth Retreats
- ❖ Recommended Retreat Components
- ❖ Some Possible Retreat Models
- ❖ Retreat Team Leadership
- ❖ Support and Follow-Up Suggestions
- ❖ Practical Consideration in Planning
- ❖ Criteria for Review Process
- ❖ Concluding Comments
- ❖ Sample Retreat Resources – Appendix B



- *Comprehensive Mindset*
- *Ecclesial Mindset*
- *Safe-Environment Mindset*
- *Team Mindset*
- *Personal Care Mindset*

## YOUTH RETREATS

Youth retreats are a component of the Church's pastoral ministry to youth. Such retreats are part of a total ministry to youth and complement efforts to meet the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and relational needs of adolescents. The purpose of this time apart is to allow youth to reflect upon the movement of God in their lives, to provide a climate in which the young person might encounter Christ as alive among us, to experience community, and formulate their personal response to the call of discipleship received in baptism. [Acts 2:42] NAB, [CCC Prologue, Section IV: Above all – Charity]

Because the word retreat has many meanings within contemporary society, it is important to define its meaning within the pastoral setting. A youth retreat might be defined as a time when persons withdraw from their normal activities to reflect upon their lives and identify in Christ Jesus. This withdrawal, alone or with a community, provides the participant with the opportunity to deepen his/her knowledge of self, God, and others; to experience community in Christ, and to explore the shape of his/her response to Christ lived out within daily life.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR YOUTH RETREATS**

### **Theological Principles**

1. Retreats should assist youth in developing a personal relationship with God in three Persons.
2. Retreats should give youth an experience of Church as believers called to discipleship in Christ.
3. Retreats are a mode of experience through which the church exercises her pastoral ministry to youth by proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ, by fostering the formation of Christian community, by providing opportunities for participants to reflect upon their life questions in the light of the Gospel and the traditions for the Church, and by challenging retreatants to a personal response of action.
4. The doctrinal content of youth retreats must be theologically consistent with the official teaching of the Catholic Church.
5. Prayer, in its liturgical, communal, and private forms, is an essential aspect of the retreat experience opening participants to ongoing conversion and deepening of faith.
6. Retreats for youth provide enlivening liturgical experiences that are celebrated according to the liturgical norms of the diocese, are appropriate for the occasion and age of youth, and are celebrated with sufficient time to allow full participation by the assembly.

### **Developmental Principles**

1. Retreats provide the opportunity for participants to integrate their experience and thereby deepen their sense of belonging and meaning.
2. Retreat environments are characterized by acceptance, growth, and freedom, avoiding emotional manipulation.
7. Retreatants should be given the opportunity to participate in diverse experiences leading to greater self-identity, expression and esteem.
8. The psychological well being of participants is safeguarded by maintaining a good balance of recreation, reflection, structured activity, rest, and diet.
9. Peer ministry is a valuable aspect of sharing the Christian experience with youth and allows them to exercise their baptismal call to give witness and lead others to Christ.
10. Retreat activities, presentations and processes should be developmentally appropriate.
11. Retreat experiences are only one aspect of a continuing personal formation process. Parish-based preparation and follow-up after the retreat, through the parish's youth ministry efforts, are essential elements in the process.

### **Content and Process Principles**

1. Human experience is the starting point for adolescent catechesis. The personal story of youth must be joined to or seen in light of the Christ story.
2. Retreat designs and components are based upon the developmental stages of the participants in the areas of:
  - a. Psychological growth
  - b. Moral growth
  - c. Faith growth
  - d. Intellectual growth
  - e. Social growth

3. The content of youth retreats should be suitable and reflect appropriate faith themes for the age group.
4. Interactive processes and total group activities, such as small group sharing, games, and non-verbal exercises use the group dynamics appropriate for the activity, group, content, and goals of the retreat.
5. Storytelling, faith sharing, and personal witnessing are respected as valuable elements in communicating the Gospel message.
6. The process of catechetical proclamation involves a four-fold movement (also known as the Pastoral Circle):  
EXPERIENCE + MESSAGE + REFLECTION + ACTION
7. The [SEARCH Institute's asset approach](#) to giving young people what they need to succeed has identified concrete, positive experiences and qualities – developmental assets – which have a tremendous influence on young people's lives.
8. Adherence to [Diocesan Safe Environment guidelines and policies](#).

## ***RECOMMENDED RETREAT COMPONENTS***

### **Physical**

- Adequate sleep
- Adequate recreation time
- Balanced diet
- Access to outdoors/nature, if possible

### **Spiritual**

- Liturgical celebration
  - Providing Eucharistic celebration when and where possible and appropriate
  - Reconciliation service if in keeping with retreat design
- Prayer
  - Communal
  - Private
  - Reflection time
- Scripture

### **Psychological/Social/Catechetical**

- Balance of private time and group time
- Reflection time on human experience
- Community building
- Opportunities for participation and involvement
- Creative activity/expression
- Input/presentation
- Discussion and sharing

### **Supportive Components (outside the retreat experience)**

- Orientation or preparation of participants
- Follow-up process
- Evaluation by team and participants
- Team training and program design

## ***SOME POSSIBLE RETREAT MODELS***

### ***CONVERSION MODEL***

A “conversion model” retreat is one which focuses upon creating a climate through which participants might come to a personal faith commitment.

Characteristics: community building  
personal testimony  
storytelling  
personal encounter with Jesus  
witnessing

### ***FAITH FORMATION MODEL***

A “faith formation model” retreat is one which focuses upon deepening the participant’s experience of Jesus and fostering a life response of discipleship. It is built upon the assumption that participants have had some experience of encountering Christ in their lives.

Characteristics: theme based (i.e. prayer, social justice)  
explores shape of discipleship  
seeks to deepen affective, cognitive and behavioral responses

### ***CONFIRMATION MODEL***

A “Confirmation model” focuses upon immediate or remote preparedness for reception of the sacrament of Confirmation. Such retreats are usually limited to Confirmation candidates and are parish-based.

Characteristics: combines elements from other models  
focus upon recognition and acceptance of baptismal commitment  
limited in range of participants

### ***LEADERSHIP FORMATION MODEL***

A “leadership formation model” focuses upon formation for servant ministry. It combines elements of spiritual formation and practical leadership skills.

Characteristics: foster sense of peer ministry  
more task-oriented  
contains workshop processes  
faith sharing  
prayer  
skill building, goal setting, evaluation

### ***INTERGENERATIONAL MODEL***

The “intergenerational model” focuses upon the sharing of insights emerging from mixing participants across age lines.

## RETREAT TEAM LEADERSHIP

### ***Retreat Team Selection***

It is recommended that a process for retreat team selection include:

- a. Being called to ministry
- b. Having the call confirmed by the community

Desirable qualities of a team member may include: prior retreat experience, openness to work as a team member, ability to share faith, enthusiasm, sensitivity, creativity, listening skills, musical ability. (These qualities are not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive, but illustrative.)

### ***Retreat Team Training***

What role will your team play in the development of the retreat? If your team will be involved from the start, a good training process is necessary. (If you already have a retreat written, and the team will fill the areas needed, you may choose to use a condensed version of this process.)

1. SETTING THE STAGE (introduction to retreat ministry)
  - a. Use icebreakers to build community with the team.
  - b. Share personal retreat experiences.
  - c. How will this retreat connect to what is already happening in the youth ministry program?
  - d. Outline the principles and components of a retreat.
2. GETTING THE SKILLS NECESSARY (How To's)
  - a. Small group facilitation
    - i. Types of discussion questions to use – listening skills
    - ii. “trouble-shooting” skills
    - iii. role playing techniques
  - b. Writing talks/ the need for personal sharings
  - c. Planning prayer and worship experiences
  - d. Planning ice breakers and community building activities
3. RETREAT PLANNING PROCESS
  - a. Provide the team with the planning process outline.
  - b. Give the team the parameters of the retreat. What pieces are already determined? (meal times, arrival and departure times, Eucharist, etc.)
  - c. Use newsprint to brainstorm ideas, propose a schedule or format, keep track of resources or suggestions, etc.
4. EVALUATION

## **SUPPORT & FOLLOW-UP SUGGESTIONS**

Follow-up is an essential aspect of a retreat experience. It begins with the evaluation of the retreat in the participant's home setting. Here are some ideas and suggestions:

### ***Diocesan or Interparochial Retreat***

1. Pastors and/or youth ministry coordinators of represented parishes should be notified of participants from their community.
2. Follow-up letter sent to each individual reminding them of key retreat themes, suggesting ways of witnessing within their parishes, and encouraging them to share their retreat experience with others.
3. Parent letter encouraging the family to support retreatants and invite him/her to share their retreat experience when they come home.
4. Faith companionship with one other participant after the retreat.
5. If there is a follow-up gathering, that it be limited in scope and be open to participants from multiple retreats.
6. The most effective follow-up to retreat experiences is integration into the parish youth ministry and/or through the retreatant's participation in the life of the parish community.

### ***Parish-Based Retreat***

1. Follow-up letter sent to each individual reminding them of key retreat themes, suggesting ways of witnessing within their parishes, and encouraging them to share their retreat experience with others.
2. Parent letter encouraging the family to support the retreatant and invite him/her to share their retreat experience when they come home.
3. Faith companionship with one other participant after the retreat.
4. The most effective follow-up to retreat experiences is integration into the parish youth ministry and/or through the retreatant's participation in the life of the parish community.
5. Invite retreatants to become involved in peer ministry within the parish.
6. Pray for retreatants – remember them in the parish bulletin.

## PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN PLANNING A RETREAT

### **FACILITY**

Name of Facility:

Address/Telephone:

Director/Caretaker:

Is there a basic **rental fee**?

Is the rate based on the number of participants?

Is the rate based on the number of meals served/nights stayed?

Does a **contract** need to be signed?

Who is **authorized** to sign a contract?

Is a **deposit** required? Is the deposit non-refundable?

Is a **certificate of insurance** needed prior to renting the facility?

Do you have to **check-in** at a specific time with a specific person?

What are the rules/guidelines for **clean-up**?

What is the policy on **damage** to the facility by an individual or by the group?

What about **fire safety**? What is the procedure used by the facility in case of **fire**?

Can **candles** be used inside any of the buildings?

Is **smoking** permitted inside any of the buildings?

What are the **safety/evacuation** plans for other disasters (tornadoes, high water, accident, first aid, etc)?

Is the facility **handicapped accessible**?

What types of **buildings** are available for use?

Are there **dormitories** or private/semi-private rooms?

Are **linens** (towels and sheets) provided?

Is there a different housing for priests, brothers, sisters or married couples? Is there a **chapel**?

Is it carpeted? Are chairs available? What is the capacity? What types of **meeting room** space is available? Is it carpeted? Are chairs/tables available? What is the capacity?

What are the **bathroom facilities**?

Are **paper towels & toilet paper** provided?

Is there a separate facility for females and for males?

How many **sinks, toilets, and showers** are there?

Are there **electrical outlets** in the bathroom? Is there any restriction on hot water use?

What type of **kitchen facility** is available for use? Can you do your **own cooking**? What **equipment** is available to use? (Mixer, coffeemaker, dishwasher, microwave oven, steam kettle, stove/griddle/ovens)

What will you need to bring with you? (**Kitchen utensils**: examples may include pots & pans, dishes & silverware, spices, dish towels, dish soap)

What kind of **refrigerator/freezer** space is available?

What is the capacity of the **dining area**?

Is there a **recreation area**?

What **recreation equipment** or games are available?

Is a **map to the facility** available?

What are the **roads conditions** to the facility?

How long will it take to get there? Is there limited **parking**?

### **TRANSPORTATION**

How will you get your group to the retreat location?

Follow diocesan guidelines regarding transportation/drivers.

Will you reimburse your drivers for gas?

If you rent vehicles, will you divide the cost among the participants?

If you rent a bus, have at least two cleared adults ride with the participants to the retreat location.

Providing the adults with a cellular phone in case of an emergency would be recommended.  
(Not all bus drivers have cellular phones.)

If you charter a bus, have you obtained a certificate of insurance and had the diocesan risk management addendum inserted into the contract? Have you checked the company's safety record? Have you obtained verification of your driver's background clearance?

Do your drivers have a current driver's license? Adequate insurance? Seat belts for all passengers?

Your parish should have a diocesan Volunteer Driver Form completed and signed by each driver on an annual basis.

Be sure that drivers have a copy of the Annual Youth Enrollment Form or a specific travel/medical/permission form for each passenger.

## CRITERIA FOR REVIEW PROCESS

This **Criteria for Review** becomes operative when an inquiry or complaint arises and is brought to the attention of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.

Retreat programs or retreat movements are considered in violation of the diocesan norms when they meet one or more of the following criteria:\*

1. The theological content of the program/presentation demonstrates inconsistent or inappropriate theology.
2. The possibilities of, or plans for, psychological/physical casualties are not considered when a program is presented.
3. The retreat promotes alienation from the parish community by regular, long-term follow-up sessions that are not parish based.
4. The program promotes formation of an elite group.
5. The program places an overemphasis on an intense experience with relative neglect of healthy psychological and theological growth, or impinges on individual freedom and privacy.

\*Reference **Guiding Principles** section of these guidelines.

### Complaint Procedure

The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries investigates complaints and/or concerns regarding a particular retreat. A staff member works with the group/individual to achieve compliance.

If compliance is not met, the Diocesan Director notifies the person(s) in charge, along with their pastor or supervisor, that they are in violation of the diocesan retreat norms, that they have been requested to make appropriate changes, and have failed to do so. They would then be barred from operation again within the diocese.

If the issue includes a violation of the [Diocesan Safe Environment Program](#) or [The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People](#) it is referred to the Diocesan Safe Environment Office and/or the Chancellor's Office.

The person(s) in charge would have recourse through the Office of the Chancellor and due process as established by the Diocese of Dallas.

## Concluding Comments

The importance of a “sacred time apart” is reflected in the Scriptures. The Old Testament prophets were often led to the desert solitude to prepare for their prophetic task. Jesus invited his disciples to come apart for a time, a time of both refreshment and renewal. Jesus himself gave the example of withdrawing for prayer and solitude before beginning his public ministry. Throughout the Gospels, we find reference to his going apart for prayer and then returning to continue his ministry of teaching and healing. The scriptural model is clear in its portrayal of retreat as a time of preparation for renewed ministry. It was a time of rest and revitalization that energized the retreatant to return and continue the given mission. Today’s youth retreats are not solely for the rest and sense of community experienced by the participants. It is empowering for youth to live discipleship and to enable them in more fully owning their identity in Christ. It is a time of strengthening for the continuing task of living as witnesses to Christ within their schools, parishes, and families, and retreats are most effective when participants freely choose to take part.

Retreats are a vital part of any well rounded faith development program. They directly address the adolescent’s need for reflection time, a sense of belonging, and communal bonding. These benefits can prove counterproductive, if they are not complemented by programs, which continue this process after the retreat experience ends. Youth who participate in programs which provide intense bonding and sharing, or present an idealized vision of Christian life can become disillusioned, if they return to their parishes and communities and fail to find faith-nurturing programs which continue such bonding and prayer in a less intense way. They feel disillusioned if the human realities and weaknesses of the parish faith community do not match the idealized vision presented.

It is important that retreats be recognized as tools in the faith nurturing process. They are effective tools of evangelization and catechesis. Many young Catholics have been prompted to conversion of heart through the retreat experience. It must also be recognized, however, that a retreat cannot bear the weight of being the only tool used by a parish or movement. Retreats are most effective when they are part of an integrated program that addresses the multiple needs of youth.

# Youth in Crisis

## ❖ Youth in Crisis

## ❖ Warning Signs and Signals

**Suicide**

**Alcohol and Other Drug Problems**

**Depression**

**Child Abuse**

**Bullying**

**Self-Injury**



- *Comprehensive Mindset*
- *Ecclesial Mindset*
- *Safe-Environment Mindset*
- *Team Mindset*
- *Personal Care Mindset*

# Youth in Crisis

## **Recognize signs or symptoms of trouble or problems— Teens don't always say, "I am in trouble!"**

Some signs might include:

- Sudden mood changes
- Acting out, hostile, aggressive behavior
- Passive lethargic behavior
- Changes in eating, sleeping, dressing habits
- Sudden lack of interest in school or other activities
- Drug or alcohol use
- Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
- Expressed desire or intent to end it all

Also watch for changes in relationships

- Loss of / lack of friends
- Family breakdowns / changes
- Death of family members or close friends
- School disruptions, changes in grades, performances

Keep in mind that "normal" behavior during adolescence may include any of the above signs or symptoms. It is often the appearance of several "clustered" or pronounced behaviors to which we need to be attentive and respond.

## **Suggestions**

- Design programs which provide concerned and knowledgeable adults opportunities to interact with, support, and be attentive to teens – provide situations in which adults might detect problems in the early stages of development.
- Know your own limitations – know when to refer youth and families to professionals.
- Be knowledgeable of and familiar with the local community professionals, agencies, and resources, *especially school counselors*, who address crisis and intervention needs.
- Be sensitive to the grapevine that often develops around crises – do not add to it.
- Take care of yourself as you work with teens in crisis – have someone you can talk to.

# Warning Signs and Signals

## Suicide

1. *A previous suicide attempt:* A significant number of young people who commit suicide have attempted suicide before.
2. *Verbal threats:* statements such as, “You’d be better off without me,” or “I wish I were dead” should always be taken seriously.
3. *Changes in behavior:* normally active people may become withdrawn; cautious individuals may start taking unusual risks.
4. *Substance abuse:* alcohol and other drug abuse appear to be significantly linked to suicide attempts among youth people.
5. *Unusual purchases:* if the person buys a weapon, rope or any item that arouses your suspicion, talk openly with the person about it.
6. *Giving away possessions:* someone who has decided to commit suicide may give away personal possessions...CD’s/DVDs, favorite articles of clothing, etc.
7. *Signs of depression:* may include changes in eating and sleeping habits, anxiety, restlessness, fatigue, feelings of hopelessness and guilt, and loss of interest in usual activities.
8. *Problems in school:* a dramatic drop in grades, falling asleep in classes, emotional outbursts or any other behavior that’s uncharacteristic of a particular student may be a cause for concern.
9. *Themes of death:* a desire to end one’s life may show up in the person’s artwork, poetry, essays, etc.
10. *Sudden, unexpected happiness:* sudden happiness following prolonged depression may indicate that the person is profoundly relieved because he or she has finally made a decision...a decision to commit suicide.
11. *Other signs* may include physical complaints, frequent accidents, hyperactivity, aggressiveness, sexual promiscuity, attention-getting behavior, or prolonged grief after a loss.

## Alcohol and other drug problems

1. Changes in mood or behavior
2. Loss of interest in regular activities, such as hobbies and sports
3. Lower grades and general lack of interest in school
4. Withdrawal from family life
5. Secretiveness
6. Decreased energy and motivation
7. Overreaction to criticism
8. Sudden weight loss or changes in eating habits.
9. Changing friendships and avoiding talking those changes.
10. Slurred speech, “glassy” eyes, unclear thinking, poor short-term memory.

## How to tell if someone is an alcoholic

1. Frequent use of alcohol to cope with everyday stress – more and more drinking of larger amounts.
2. Fears, anxiety...more often and more of them. Poor self-image, negative emotions.
3. Ignoring or avoiding responsibilities...family, job, school, finances. Lack of interest in non-drinking activities.
4. Arguments over drinking and drunk behavior. Accusations and denials about drinking habits.
5. Promises to “drink less,” “switch types of liquor,” “behave better” and requests to “stop nagging”
6. “Blackouts” – first rare, then more often. Drinker can’t remember what happened during drinking period.

Occasional drunkenness doesn’t mean a person is or isn’t an alcoholic or possible alcoholic. Also, some alcoholics never “act” as if they were drunk.

## Depression

A mood disturbance...feelings of sadness, disappointment or loneliness that can lead to withdrawal from people and activities, loss of pleasure and enjoyment of life, and physical discomfort, aches, pains, fatigue, poor digestion, sleep disturbance, etc.

Everyone experiences some of these symptoms at some time, but when symptoms are severe and lasting, so that pain and problems outweigh pleasure much of the time, then it’s time to get help.

Signs:

1. *Changes in behavior and attitude:* general slowing down, neglect of responsibilities and appearance, loss of appetite, agitation, pointless overactivity, poor memory, inability to concentrate, irritability, complaints about matters that used to be taken in stride.
2. *Different feelings, perceptions:* emotional flatness or emptiness, inability to find pleasure in anything, hopelessness, loss of sexual desire, of warm feelings for family and friends, exaggerated self-blame, guilt or loss of self-esteem, sometimes leading to suicidal thoughts or actions.
3. *Physical complaints with no organic cause:* sleeping disturbances, such as early-morning wakefulness, sleeping too much, insomnia, chronic fatigue, lack of energy, unexplained headaches, backaches, digestive upsets, stomach pain, nausea, indigestion, changes in bowel habits.

## Child Abuse

People who spend time around children need to be alert for signs such as these:

*Physical signs:* Note any unusual pattern or locations (sometimes hidden by clothing) of injuries, such as:

- Bruises, welts or broken bones
- Cuts or scrapes
- Burns
- Missing hair
- Injuries or redness around the genitals
- Injuries at different stages of healing
- Injury or medical condition that hasn’t been properly treated

*Child's Behavior:* Abuse can lead to dramatic changes in behavior, such as:

- Aggressive or withdrawn behavior
- Unusual fears (of certain people, going home, etc.)
- Craving for attention
- Fatigue
- Lack of concentration
- Hunger, begging for food, stealing
- Frequent tardiness or absence from school
- Unusual knowledge of sex

*Adult's Behavior:* An adult who is abusing a child may:

- Harshly punish the child in public
- Refer to the child as "difficult," "different" or "bad"
- Seem unconcerned about the child
- Give conflicting stories about injuries
- Become defensive when asked about the child's health

*Child's appearance:* A neglected or abused child may be very dirty and poorly groomed. Clothing may be in poor condition or not suited to the weather.

Children may talk of being abused: Take what they say, and any suspicions you have, seriously.

For information on reporting child abuse please refer to the [Diocese of Dallas Safe Environment Program](#)

## Bullying

In the United States, bullying among children and teenagers has often been dismissed as a normal part of growing up. Little attention has been paid to the devastating effects of bullying, or to the connection between bullying and other forms of violence. In recent years, however, students and adults around the country have begun to make a commitment to stop bullying in their schools and communities, including virtual communities and internet communications.

Bullying includes a wide variety of behaviors, but all involve a person or a group repeatedly trying to harm someone who is weaker or more vulnerable. It can involve direct attacks (such as hitting, threatening or intimidating, maliciously teasing and taunting, name-calling, making sexual remarks, and stealing or damaging belongings) or more subtle, indirect attacks (such as spreading rumors or encouraging others to reject or exclude someone). This information is from the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center. The following are some helpful links regarding teens and bullying:

[Bullying Fact Sheet](#) (from the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center)

[Stop Bullying Now: What Adults Can Do](#) (from the US Dept of Health and Human Services HRSA)

[Myths About Bullying](#)

Resources and Information on Internet Safety and Cyber bullying:

<http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/K12/intenet-safety>

# Self Injury

## Some Things To Look For:

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, or burns
- Unlikely excuses for injuries
- Difficulty expressing emotion
- Baggy clothing, even in warm weather
- Wearing a lot of bracelets or things on the wrist
- Unusual need for privacy when changing clothes
- Self-imposed withdrawal and isolation
- Negative self-image

## Some Things You Should Know:

- Deliberate self-injury is used as a way of releasing emotional pain.
- The behavior generally begins in adolescence and can be related to earlier trauma.
- Confiding in others is not easy.
- The behavior is oftentimes escalated by stress.
- Many times these individuals resist social norms.
- If reported or discovered, confidentiality should not be kept.
- The behavior is serious and signals a need for professional help.

Websites for more Information:

[www.focusonthefamily.com](http://www.focusonthefamily.com)

[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

# Social Media Policy

The Diocesan Social Media Policy is available on the Diocesan Website.

<http://www.cathdal.org/pages/Policies>



- *Comprehensive Mindset*
- *Ecclesial Mindset*
- *Safe-Environment Mindset*
- *Team Mindset*
- *Personal Care Mindset*

# Appendices

- ❖ **Appendix A**  
    **Sample Job Descriptions**
  
- ❖ **Appendix B**  
    **Sample Retreat Resources**

## Appendix A

### **Sample Job Descriptions:**

*The following are sample job descriptions for a professional youth minister. It is the ideal in competencies for a coordinator working in a parish. A job description should be written to the specific needs in a parish.*

## Sample Job Description #1

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### Sample Youth Ministry Coordinator Job Description

#### 1. General Responsibilities

The coordinator of youth ministry (CYM) provides vision and coordination for the parish's efforts in ministry to young people from 6<sup>th</sup>/ 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade → depending upon your parish structure. This includes high school and middle school sessions (weekly or bi-weekly gatherings), monthly activities, catechesis and sacramental preparation (confirmation).

#### 2. Accountability

The coordinator is a member of the parish staff who reports directly to the pastor.

#### 3. Responsibilities

Parish staff member--the CYM will be responsible to:

- Attend regular staff meetings
- Participate in staff planning
- Communicate to staff about youth ministry activities
- Seek staff input in planning youth ministry activities
- Be a resource person to parish staff on issues related to youth and youth ministry
- Serve as the liaison with the pastor, parish staff and the parish council

Parish Youth Ministry--the parish youth ministry program integrates adolescent catechesis into a comprehensive ministry to, with, by and for young people. The CYM's responsibilities include:

- Facilitating the Youth Leadership Team, which is responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive youth ministry program
- Serving on the Youth Ministry Commission, which is an oversight group providing vision, direction, support, and advocacy for the parish ministry with youth
- Coordinating the recruitment, training, supporting, and evaluating of volunteers in the youth ministry program
- Developing a systematic and intentional plan for adolescent catechesis that utilizes a creative variety of formats, settings, and timeframes
- Providing resources (print, video, archdiocesan events) for effective programming
- Providing appropriate training for the adults and young people in leadership positions
- Coordinating the confirmation program
- Fostering the involvement of young people in the life of the parish, including serving on various parish committees and being involved in parish activities
- Coordinating the outreach to and evangelization of all young people in the parish
- Providing appropriate services and programs for parents of adolescents
- Advocating for a comprehensive vision of youth ministry, based on the 1997 USCCB document, *Renewing The Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*
- Serving as the liaison with the diocesan office of youth ministry and their programs, services and resources

- Participating in the diocesan association of professional youth ministers and in any local youth ministers association

#### **4. Relationships**

- Pastor–immediate supervisor
- Parish Staff–close cooperation and communication and seek staff involvement and input when appropriate
- Parish Council–attend regular meetings and provide a youth ministry report
- Parish Committees–communicate and collaborate with appropriate committees, i.e., liturgy, social justice, religious education, etc.
- Youth Ministry Commission–close support and involvement
- Parents and Parishioners–regular communication and seek input as appropriate
- Diocesan Offices–regular communications, adherence to diocesan policies, participation in (arch)diocesan professional organizations diocesan association of professional youth ministers

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## Sample Job Description #2

This is a job description for a full-time primary Youth Ministry Leader who possesses the title Director/Coordinator of Youth Ministry. A job description should be written to meet the specific needs of the parish. Depending on the staff structure set by the pastor, this description may be divided among other parish Youth Ministry Leaders.

**I. Position Title:** Director/Coordinator of Youth Ministry

**II. Primary Function of This Position:** The Director/Coordinator of Youth Ministry is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the parish in providing Comprehensive Youth Ministry for junior high and senior high youth.

**III. Working Relationships:**

- a. Accountable to the pastor and functions as part of the parish Pastoral Staff.
- b. Assesses and continues developing Comprehensive Youth Ministry embracing advocacy, catechesis, community life, evangelization, justice and service, leadership development, prayer and worship, and pastoral care.
- c. Maintains contact with the diocesan Office of Youth Ministry, gains familiarity with diocesan policies and guidelines, and attends diocesan meetings.
- d. Works in concert with heads of ministry, clergy, staff, parish council, and area schools.
- e. Facilitates the harmonious working together of the various personnel and programs that embody the parish youth ministry efforts.

**IV. Pastoral Staff Responsibilities:**

- a. Maintains communication with the pastor and other staff members.
- b. Attends staff meetings and events
- c. Acts as staff resource person on issues relating to youth ministry

**V. Administrative Responsibilities:**

- a. Maintains communication with youth through bulletin announcements, event flyers, and newsletters.
- b. Prepares and monitors a youth ministry budget
- c. Recruits, trains, and supervises all youth ministry personnel
- d. Arranges for every ministry to youth to be knowledgeable about the Diocesan Policies regarding Youth Ministry and to assure that the signed documents are maintained.
- e. Assures that all volunteers in the program has received Safe Environment approval and clearance.
- f. Arranges for every driver for youth ministry events to be in compliance with the Diocesan Policies, and maintains the necessary documents
- g. Provides Medical and Liability Release forms for youth to participate in youth ministry sponsored events
- h. Offers sufficient training and referral resources to handle teens with special needs.
- i. Maintains accurate records – student attendance, volunteer training, etc.

## **VI. Youth Oriented Areas of Responsibility:**

- a. Design and maintains a comprehensive youth ministry process to meet the needs of early and older adolescents (6<sup>th</sup>/ 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade → depending upon your parish structure), and adapts to changes in the youth culture.
- b. Presents programs designed for special needs (i.e., sexuality catechesis, drugs and alcohol awareness, depression and suicide prevention, etc.)

### **Advocacy**

1. Stands with and speaks on behalf of young people and their families on public issues that affect their lives (education, health care, safe neighborhoods, etc.).
2. Encourages the parish to examine its practice of fully integrating early and older adolescents into the life of the Church.
3. Networks with other Coordinators of Youth Ministry.
4. Coordinates the production and distribution of youth ministry newsletter/update for teens and their parents.
5. Develops partnerships and initiatives with civic and parish leaders to develop a shared vision and strategies for building a healthy civic and parish community
6. Empowers young people by giving them a voice and calling them to responsibility and accountability (education, leadership training, skills building, etc.)
7. Encourages youth participation in Diocesan youth events.

### **Catechesis**

1. Provides developmentally appropriate content and processes according to the USCCB Adolescent Catechesis Guidelines
2. Integrates knowledge of the Catholic faith with the development of practical skills for living the faith in today's world.
3. Engages adolescents in the learning process by incorporating a variety of learning methods and activities through which they can explore and learn about Scripture and the Catholic faith.
4. Provides for real-life application of learning by helping youth apply the learning to living more faithfully.
5. Promotes family faith development through parish-school programs by providing parent education programs and resources, by incorporating a family perspective in catechetical programming, and by providing parent-adolescent and intergenerational catechetical programming.
6. Incorporates a variety of program approaches (parish at large, small group, home-based, self-directed, independent, etc.)
7. Explicitly invites young people to explore the possibility of a personal call to ministry and the beauty of the total gift of self for the sake of the Reign of God.

### **Community Life**

1. Develops the friendship-making and friendship-maintaining skills of young people grounded in Christian values.
2. Engages adolescents in the life, activities, and ministries of the parish in meaningful and age appropriate ways.
3. Creates an environment characterized by Gospel values that nurtures meaningful relationships among young people and between adolescents and adults.

4. Provides opportunities for multicultural community building that promotes respect for young people's racial and ethnic cultures and develops the skills for communication and understanding.
5. Provides avenues for adolescents to participate as members of the faith community and opportunities for the faith community to acknowledge, celebrate, and value its adolescent members.

### **Evangelization**

1. Calls young people to follow Jesus in a life of discipleship.
2. Invites young people personally into the life and mission of the Catholic community
3. Calls young people to be evangelizers of other young people, their families, and the community.

### **Justice and Service**

1. Engages young people in discovering the call to justice and service in the Scriptures, in the life of Jesus, and in Catholic social teachings.
2. Involves adolescents and their families in actions of direct service to those in need and in efforts to address the causes of injustice and inequity.
3. Develops the assets, skills, and faith of young people by promoting Gospel values in their lifestyle choices.
4. Nurtures lifelong commitment to service and justice involvement.

### **Leadership Development**

1. Develops a leadership system that invites, trains, supports, and nourishes adult and adolescent leaders and provides for the coordination throughout a comprehensive model.
2. Develops and nurtures adult leaders with solid theological understandings, relational and ministry skills, and organizational ability appropriate to their particular role in ministry with adolescents.
3. Empowers and enables all young people for leadership and ministry with their peers and with the larger church.

### **Pastoral Care**

1. Develops the life skills of adolescents, such as relationship building, assertiveness, nonviolent conflict resolution, decision-making, and planning.
2. Creates networks of care and support for young people and their families.
3. Provides programs and resources for parent education and skills for effective parenting that incorporate understanding of adolescent development and family life tasks.
4. Guides young people in making important life decisions.
5. Referral skills: knowing the support services and referral resources to promote healing.
6. Provides support and enrichment for adolescents and parents experiencing divorce, separation, or family problems.

### **Prayer and Worship**

1. Plans and implements specific liturgical celebrations for youth.
2. Provides opportunities with parish worship committee for youth participation I parish liturgical celebrations and events.
3. Encourages and assists in the formation of youth as worship leaders and liturgical ministers.
4. Encourages and assists in developing the personal prayer life of youth.

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***Diocese of Victoria***

## Sample Job Description #3

**Title:** Coordinator of Youth Ministry

**Reports to:** Pastor

### General Description

Responsible for developing a parish based pastoral ministry with youth. Reaches out to all youth in the community, provides for formal catechesis, invites and enables youth to serve others. Develops close communication with and mutual support from families of youth and collaborates with other community and parish youth organizations.

### Job Responsibilities

#### A. Program Development

- Creates and develops core group and provides for its enrichment
- Develops leadership skills in youth and young adults
- Develops a network for reaching out to youth, particularly to the alienated
- Is available for and has set times for listening, advising, and referral
- Plans, coordinates, and implements weekend retreats and evenings of prayer reflection
- Develops the kind of relationship with parents that are conducive to open communication between parents and youth
- Assists in the preparation of liturgical celebrations for youth

#### B. Recruitment and Training of Leaders

- Recruits, trains, assigns, and evaluates the youth leaders. Coordinates participation in diocesan-sponsored training programs
- Serves as an advisor and support to youth leaders
- Monitors the efforts of volunteer leaders and evaluates progress
- Makes special efforts to gain the endorsement, support, and involvement of all adults, especially parents and parish organizations
- Defines the responsibilities of each adult leader/advisor
- Publicizes and offers education programs and support systems for volunteer leaders

#### C. Administration

- Initiates ways of gathering data on the needs, interests, attitudes and beliefs of youth and young adults
- Plans, organizes, and implements programs/experiences that provide a holistic approach in meeting the needs/interests of youth and young adults
- Submits annual financial report and budget; administers budget throughout the year
- Maintains necessary office and program records, including a log of activities and time
- Determines effective means for publicizing and promoting programs and experiences
- Submits periodic reports to the pastor detailing programs in youth ministry
- Initiates procedures for evaluating all aspects of the parish's ministry to youth

#### **D. Communication**

- Keeps the parish faith community informed of youth ministry activities and goals
- Advises, communicates, and cooperates with other parish and diocesan organizations
- Works with youth ministry team on goals and programmatic ideas for meeting needs
- Participates in parish governing structures to insure greater participation of youth in parish life and to facilitate communication and decision-making
- Supervises and coordinates scheduling of youth events and activities
- Keeps informed through attendance at diocesan, regional, and national conferences, regular reading, and membership in professional associations
- Is aware of community agencies and resources that interface with youth
- Sets annual goals and objectives for each junior/senior high program as requested

#### **Necessary Qualifications**

- Active member of a Catholic parish faith community
- Bachelor's degree in a related field
- Youth ministry experience in a Catholic parish

## Sample Job Description #4

**Title:** Coordinator of Youth Ministry

**Reports To:** Pastor

### **Primary Objective**

- Empowers young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today
- Works to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person
- Seeks to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the faith community

### **Areas of Major Responsibility**

#### **Relational Ministry**

- Creates opportunities to interact with youth, and sometimes parents, in small group and on one-to-one basis
- Attends special school events and sports functions and visits schools when possible
- Makes home visits as time allows
- Is available for emergency and crisis counseling and/or referral for youth and parents as the need arises
- Models Catholic life style
- Acts as an advocate on behalf of youth before the church and the community

#### **Program Coordination**

- Administers, directs, and coordinates the confirmation program
- Conducts the 9<sup>th</sup> grade sexuality program
- Coordinates and/or design retreats
- Coordinates peer ministry program for senior high youth
- Coordinates, supervises and plans liturgical opportunities involving youth participation
- Recruits, trains, and supervises catechists and helpers for junior and senior high levels
- Evaluates, develops, and implements junior and senior high faith formation program
- Sets goals and objectives for junior and senior high programs for the coming year
- Attends bimonthly staff meetings
- Acts as advisor to youth board
- Coordinates schedule youth social activities

#### **Personal Growth**

- Participates in annual retreat and spiritual direction
- Is a member and participant in the professional youth network and/or peer support group

The Sample Job Descriptions for Youth Ministers are from the *Parish Job Description Manual*, published by the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators, 100 E. Eighth St., Cincinnati, OH. Used with permission. The *Parish Job Description Manual* also contains sample job descriptions for more than sixty parish positions and is available for purchase by contacting NAPCA at 513-421-3134 or [nacpa@nacpa.org](mailto:nacpa@nacpa.org)

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**ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. PAUL-MINNEAPOLIS**

## Sample Job Description #5

**Title:** Coordinator of Middle and High School Ministry

**Accountability:** The coordinator is a member of the parish staff who reports directly to the pastor.

### General Responsibilities

The coordinator of youth ministry provides vision and coordination for the parish's efforts in ministry to young people from 6<sup>th</sup>/ 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade → depending upon your parish structure. This includes AYM-high sessions and AYM middle school sessions (both bi-weekly gatherings), monthly activities and confirmation.

### Parish Staff Member

- Attend regular staff meetings and participate in staff planning
- Communicate to staff about youth ministry activities and seek staff input in planning youth ministry activities
- Be a resource person to parish staff on issues related to youth and youth ministry
- Serve as the liaison with the pastor, parish staff, and the parish council

### Parish Youth Ministry

The parish youth ministry program integrates adolescent catechesis into comprehensive youth ministry. The CYM will be responsible to:

- Facilitate the Youth Ministry Leadership Team, which plans, implements, and evaluates the youth ministry program
- Serve on the Youth Ministry Leadership Commission, an oversight group that provides vision, direction, support, and advocacy ministry with youth
- Coordinate the recruitment, training, support, and evaluation of volunteers in the youth ministry program
- Provides resources (print, video, diocesan events) for effective programming
- Provide appropriate training for the adults and young people in leadership positions
- Foster involvement of teens in the life of the parish, including serving on parish committees and being involved in parish activities
- Coordinate the outreach to and evangelization of all young people in our parish and the confirmation program
- Provide appropriate serves and programs for parents of adolescents
- Advocate for the "vision of youth ministry" and youth ministry program's mission statement to the parish
- Serve as the liaison with the diocesan office of youth ministry and their programs, services, and resources
- Participate in the diocesan association of professional youth ministers

### Relationships

- Pastor – immediate supervisor
- Parish Staff – close cooperation and communication and seek staff involvement and input when appropriate

- Parish Council – attend regular meetings and provide a youth ministry report
- Parish Committees – communicate and collaborate with appropriate committees, i.e., liturgy, social justice, etc.
- Parents and Parishioners – regular communication and seek input as appropriate
- Diocesan Offices – regular communications, adherence to archdiocesan policies, participation in diocesan professional organizations

### **Program Objectives**

Goals: The parish youth ministry program is based on the USCCB document, *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*.

The goals of youth ministry are to:

1. Call young people to be disciples of Jesus Christ;
2. Draw young people into the life, work, and mission of the faith community;
3. Foster the total personal and spiritual growth of young people.

**Objectives:** Specifically, the parish youth ministry program has the following objectives. To:

- Enable young people to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ,
- Connect young people with the life of the parish community and to make them more visible in parish life,
- Connect young people with caring, believing adult role models,
- Provide young people with service opportunities,
- Provide a safe environment and a place where young people share and grow together in faith, learning more about being Catholic,
- Develop an intentional outreach to uninvolved and unchurched youth,
- Involve young people in prayer and worship
- Enable our young people to become happy, healthy, and holy adults.

### **Salary Package**

The parish will provide compensation commensurate with education and experience, based on diocesan salary guidelines, plus health care, pension and disability. Exact terms will be negotiated with the pastor.

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# Sample Job Description Format Worksheet

**Title:**

**Reports To:**

## General Description

### Job Responsibilities

#### A. Program Development

1. Groups to be served and particular characteristics (age, language, pastoral needs, etc.)
2. Program areas for each group (i.e. catechesis, sacramental preparation, justice, educational advocacy, service, liturgical participation, retreats, etc.)

#### B. Recruitment and Training of Leaders

#### C. Administration (staff responsibilities, budget, reporting and accountability to pastoral council, committees and volunteers, etc.)

#### D. Communication

### Necessary Qualifications

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# Appendix B

## Sample Retreat Resources

*This section includes samples, guides, and resources that can be used to help plan, implement, and evaluate your retreat.*

## ***RETREAT BE-ATTITUDES***

Blessed are those who are in their own bed at the lights-out hour.

Blessed are those who do not leave the retreat facility during the retreat.

Blessed are those who are punctual for they shall meet their maker on time.

Blessed are those who refrain from foreign substances for they shall enjoy the whole weekend.

Blessed are those who report any injuries for they shall be healed quickly.

Happy are those who nurture their neighbor's self-esteem for they shall find support.

Happy are those who participate fully in the retreat for their rewards are endless.

Blessed are those who follow these Be-Attitudes for they shall find happiness on this retreat.

1986 by Stephen F. Tholcke, Diocese of Sacramento

## ***LISTENING SKILLS***

There are many ways of listening. Sometimes we listen just for the facts; sometimes we listen for the message behind the facts. It is possible to say there are two levels:

- A. *Literal listening***
- B. *Inner/heart listening***

When a person shares their story with us, they want to be valued. They want to be recognized as giving you a part of themselves. Some simple skills help us to do this:

- A. **Silence:**** This is leaving time and space for the other person to speak, to respond.
- B. **Passive Affirmation:**** Responses such as a smile, a nod of the head, a "yes", or like expressions tell people you are with them.
- C. **Active Listening:**** This type of listening involves a variety of skills: clarifying, repeating, paraphrasing. The point is to let the person know whether you understand what they are saying.
- D. **Focus Statements:**** These are summations of what you have heard. It sums up the overall message, and lets the person know their ideas have been recognized.

Group structures can also be used to help build climates. The three most common ones are:

- A. **Simple Sharing:**** Each person gives their opinion without discussion. Clarification may be asked, but the thought stands without an evaluation.
- B. **Group Listening:**** As people share their ideas, common themes and ideas evolve. After the conclusion of sharing around an idea, you stop to hear the message of the whole. What is the group saying about the topic?
- C. **Discussion:**** The format is more give and take. The focus should be on an issue, not on the personal feelings or opinion of the participants.

## **HOW TO WRITE A TALK**

1. What is the topic or theme of the talk? How much time is allotted for the talk?
2. What three (3) objectives (think, feel, do) should be covered in this talk? (The key objectives should have been agreed upon by the team during the retreat planning process.) What ideas can support the objectives?
3. What is the starting point of the retreatants? (If the topic is moral decision making, and none of the participants have any information or experience in that area, the talk should reflect that.)
4. What personal experience have you had that relates to the topic? (If the topic is focusing on different ways to pray, it would be important for the presenter to share ways he/she has prayed -- using Scripture, music, reflection, for example.)
5. How do the Scriptures deepen our understanding of the Church's tradition? (What experience or part of our history as a people of faith can speak to the topic?)
6. What activity or process can you use to help the retreatants "internalize" the information? (What will help make the topic more real for the participants?)
7. What resources are available to use in gathering facts, planning activities, discussion questions for your talk?

### What dimensions should be integrated in all talks?

#### **Jesus:**

How does the talk relate to the person of Jesus and the Gospel message?

#### **Action:**

How does the talk lead the participants to live a more faithful Catholic Christian life?

#### **Interpretation/Reflection:**

How have we enabled each person to interpret what is happening in their life in light of our Catholic Christian life? How does prayer fit in the reflection?

Practice your talk with members of the team before you give it on the retreat. The team members can offer suggestions for improvement.

## **EVALUATING AN ICE BREAKER OR GAME**

1. Were the directions clear? Were they loud enough?
2. Was the leader facing the entire group?
3. Was the leader enthusiastic? Did the leader pick up on humorous situations?
4. Was everyone involved? Were there periods of waiting?
5. Were the materials prepared and ready-to-go?
6. How did the group respond? Did they enjoy the activity? Were they bored? Did the game get "out-of-hand?"
7. Evaluate the length of the game. Was it played too long? Too short?
8. What was the atmosphere after the game? Did it lead into the next activity or talk?
9. How could the game, or the leadership of the game, have been improved?
10. Were safety measures maintained?

## **EVALUATING A TALK**

1. Was the speaker loud enough? Comment on the speaker's pace, diction, inflection, eye contact with the audience, and mannerisms.
2. Could the audience identify with the talk?
3. Was the speaker prepared? Did the speaker use appropriate resources in developing his/her talk?
4. Did the speaker use personal examples? Did the speaker relate in the first person? Was the language understandable? Did the speaker avoid excessive emotionalism?
5. Did the speaker appear genuine and honest? Was there an effort to share his/her personal faith?
6. Did the speaker refer too much to notes? Was there an outline?
7. Comment on the time the speaker took. Could the talk have been given in less time with the same effort? Was there a conclusion?



## **SAMPLE RETREAT PARTICIPATION EVALUATION**

**Instructions:** The following is an evaluation for this retreat. We would appreciate your honest thoughts and comments.

1. How was the retreat meaningful for you?

2. For you, what aspect(s) of the retreat was most meaningful? Check all that apply.

- building of community among participants
- small group discussions
- group recreation time
- prayer times
- reconciliation celebration
- Eucharistic celebration
- other

3. How relevant were the talks to you, considering where you are right now in your life? Please rate them, 1 being somewhat relevant to 5 being powerful.

- |                              |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Friday night – (title)       | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Saturday morning – (title)   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Saturday afternoon – (title) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Saturday evening – (title)   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Sunday morning – (title)     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Sunday afternoon – (title)   | 1 2 3 4 5 |

4. Additional comments:

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