HOW TO FOLLOW UP WITH FIRST-TIME GUESTS

- THE FIRST 24 HOURS: WHAT TO DO AND WHAT TO SAY
- HOW TO CONNECT WITHOUT BEING WEIRD
- BEST TEXT TEMPLATES
- HOW TO INVOLVE PARENTS PROPERLY
- **BONUS:** FOLLOW-UP TOOLS THAT ACTUALLY HELP



HOW TO BEST UTILIZE OUR EDUCATE + ENGAGE HOW-TO GUIDES

WHAT THIS GUIDE IS *NOT*

This guide is *not* comprehensive. While we believe it is a great primer, we also recognize that there is a nuance to every ministry context. Our hope is that this guide becomes a launch pad to help you create a stronger, healthier youth ministry.

This guide is *not* ironclad. The basic building blocks are available to you and are designed to be tweaked, modified, and altered to fit your field of labor. The concepts included in this guide have been field-tested by youth leaders just like you, but it is not a one-size-fits-all solution.

WHAT THIS GUIDE *IS*

This guide is a tool in your arsenal to help you in educating and engaging the youth that you have been tasked to oversee. In this document you'll find an overview of the topic, helpful hints, and practical resources you can implement today.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

> **Review the material.** Look over the content and meditate on the information provided.
> **Dream big!** As you take in the information, lay it over top of your current ministry and see how it could be utilized in your context.
> **Talk it out.** Share with your youth team. Get a meeting with your pastor. Talk about how to best utilize the provided information. Don't let it stay here. Put it to use!

UPCI YOUTH MINISTRIES
PENTECOSTAL Resources Group

How to Follow Up with First-Time Guests

Why Follow-Up Matters

A student's first visit is often the hardest step they will take.

All of us get nervous walking into a room where we do not know the people, the culture, or what is about to happen. Often, whether someone returns usually has less to do with how exciting the night was and more to do with how they felt.

Good follow-up does not pressure people. It reassures them they were noticed, valued, and welcome.

When done well, follow-up communicates three things:

1. We're glad you came.
2. You matter here.
3. You're welcome to come back.

The First 24 Hours: What to Do and What to Say

The goal of the first follow-up is not information. It is connection. Keep it short. Keep it warm. Keep it personal.

Who Should Reach Out?

- Ideally, the youth leader or a designated relational leader.
- If possible, the same person who met the student in person.

Timing

- Same night or next day is best.
- Do not wait more than 48 hours.

What to Say

- Thank them for coming.
- Mention something specific if you can.
- Let them know they are welcome back.
- No pressure. No long explanations.

Helpful Tip!
Assign one person to handle follow-up so guests are not contacted by multiple leaders. When texting, sound like a person, not an announcement. Use what students share: a name, a school, a sport. Those details communicate care.

Simple First Text Template

> Hey [Student's Name], this is [Your Name] from youth group. It was great meeting you tonight. We're really glad you came. Hope to see you again soon!

If You Know Something Personal

> Hey [Student's Name], this is [Your Name]. I enjoyed talking with you about [school/sports/etc.]. Thanks for hanging out with us tonight.

How to Connect Without Being Weird

Students can sense forced friendliness a mile away. Follow-up should feel like a continuation of a conversation, not a sales pitch.

Best Practices

- One message is enough at first.
- Avoid asking multiple questions at once.
- Do not over-spiritualize the first contact.
- Match their energy. If they respond short, keep it short.

What to Avoid

- Overly long messages
- Guilt-based language ("We missed you last week!" After one visit)
- Rapid-fire communication from multiple leaders
- Consistency builds trust.

Best Text Templates

Midweek Touchpoint (Optional) Send only if the first interaction was positive.

> Hey [Name], hope your week's going well. Just wanted to say we enjoyed having you with us.

Invitation Back Send 1–2 days before the next youth night.

> We've got youth this [day/time]. You're always welcome if you'd like to come back.

How to Involve Parents Properly

Parents appreciate clarity and respect. If a student is a minor, parents should be acknowledged, not bypassed.

When to Contact Parents

- If they filled out a guest card
- If the student was brought by a parent
- If church policy requires it

Helpful Tip!
Parents are allies, not obstacles.
Including them builds trust quickly.

What Parents Want to Know

- Their child was welcomed and safe
- Who is leading the ministry
- When the next gathering is

Sample Parent Text or Email

> Hello, this is [Your Name], the youth leader at [Church Name]. I just wanted to thank you for allowing [Student's Name] to join us. We're grateful they were here and wanted to personally say welcome.

How to Invite Them Back Naturally

Invitation works best when it feels open-ended.

In-Person Follow-Up (Best Option)

- Greet them by name if they return.
- Introduce them to one student.
- Keep it low-pressure.

Verbal Invitation

- "We meet every [day/time]. You're welcome anytime."

Final Thoughts

Follow-up is not a system to perfect. It is a relationship to steward. Students do not remember everything you taught. They remember how you treated them.

Be consistent. Be kind. Be real. That's what brings them back.

BONUS: Follow-Up Tools That Actually Help



Guest Info Card (Highly Recommended)

A guest info card gives you a simple, appropriate way to follow up while respecting boundaries. It should be kept simple. Students don't want to give you all of their personal information. Keep it minimal and the fields optional for best results.

Include:

- Student name
- Parent name
- Preferred contact method
- Permission to text
- One optional question: "How did you hear about us?"
- Do not overload the card.

Printed Postcard

So few people receive snail mail anymore that it feels special to have something personally addressed to you! Drop a simple postcard in the mail the day after their first visit and they'll receive it in a couple of days. (Ask for postcard stamps from USPS. They're cheaper!)

Include:

- A Short message: *"Thanks for visiting our youth ministry. We're grateful your student joined us and hope to see them again."*
- Youth night time
- Church name and contact info
- Youth leader name

FEEL FREE TO PRINT THE INCLUDED CARDS IN THIS PDF OR MAKE YOUR OWN!

welcome

Name

Parent Name

Preferred Contact Method ◯ **Text** ◯ **Email** ◯ **Voice**

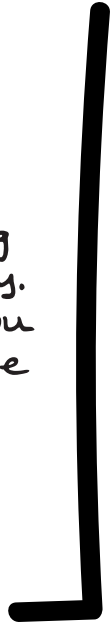
Phone/Email

How did you hear about us?

thanks for visiting

youth

Thanks for visiting our youth ministry. We're grateful you joined us and hope to see you again.



welcome

Name

Parent Name

Preferred Contact Method ◯ **Text** ◯ **Email** ◯ **Voice**

Phone/Email

How did you hear about us?

thanks for visiting

youth

Thanks for visiting our youth ministry. We're grateful you joined us and hope to see you again.

