

HOW TO STRUCTURE A YOUTH LEADERSHIP TEAM

.....
DEVELOPING NEW LEADERS
.....

KEEPING THE ROLES SIMPLE
.....

PROVIDING CLEAR MINISTRY DESCRIPTIONS
.....

HOW OFTEN TO MEET
.....

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.....



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!



How To Structure a Youth Leadership Team

Why You Need a Youth Leadership Team

When you have the right people on the team, it not only makes your job easier, but you improve the group's experience overall. Having more leaders alongside you provides a source for ideas, shares the burden of planning, and gives you an extra set of hands to take care of things that are a natural part of ministry. Perhaps, most importantly, you introduce your students to other leaders they can feel safe going to.

When looking for people to join the team, consider if that person will be a good role model for your young people. Naturally, we want them to be familiar with Scripture and able to articulate what we believe, but that knowledge alone is useless if their life does not reflect apostolic values. The most important thing is that your team share the same goals as you: to educate and engage the youth in your group as they grow in Christ.

There is no correct answer as to how big your team should be, but a good rule of thumb is a minimum ratio of one adult for every five-to-six youth. These ratios are guidelines, not requirements. Safety and supervision take priority. The model described below works well for ministries with:

- One primary leader
- 2-4 adult volunteers
- A small but growing student group

Develop New Leaders

If you aren't sure where to start, let's start with four simple steps to help you build your team. Leadership development should feel natural, not forced.

1. Start With Observation

- Who is faithful?
- Who connects easily?
- Who is spiritually hungry?

2. Invite Them to Help

- Sit in on planning
- Assist with prayer
- Lead a short discussion question
- Help welcome new students

Helpful Tip!

A great source for youth volunteers are parents! The beautiful part of youth ministry is that both you and the parents of youth want to encourage their children to have a strong Christian walk.

3. Coach Along the Way

- Debrief after services
- Explain decisions
- Encourage questions

4. Release Slowly

- Give responsibility in steps
- Stay nearby
- Celebrate growth, not polish

Development happens best side by side, not in classrooms.

Keep the Roles Simple

Avoid over-titling. Instead, think in functions. Clear responsibility matters more than labels. Simple titles like “Youth Team Member” go a long way. In small teams, one person may fill multiple roles at different times.

Youth Leader (or Youth Pastor)

- Sets direction and tone
- Teaches most weeks
- Provides direction to both students and leaders
- Makes final decisions under the direction of the lead pastor

Relational Leaders (1-3 people)

- Build consistent relationships with students
- Lead discussions, prayer, and activities
- Notice who’s missing and follow up
- Help maintain a safe, welcoming environment

Support/Logistics Leader

- Helps with setup, snacks, rides, and basic organization
- Assists with events and communication
- Keeps things running smoothly so ministry stays focused on people

Student Helpers (As Available)

- Take attendance
- Help with setup and cleanup
- Help welcome new students
- Assist with prayer or Scripture reading
- Serve in visible but supported ways
- Student helpers are not placed in leadership beyond their maturity level and are developed gradually.

Provide Clear Ministry Descriptions

Success should be measured by faithfulness, not perfection. A leader who is present can learn how to do things better. A talented leader who is unreliable is more of a detriment than a help.

Relational Leader Expectations

- Show up consistently
- Learn students' names and stories
- Participate in discussion and prayer
- Communicate concerns to the youth leader
- Pray for students during the week

Support Leader Expectations

- Arrive early when possible
- Help reduce stress for the main leader
- Communicate clearly and promptly
- Be flexible and dependable

Be clear on weekly and monthly commitment time estimates. If someone doesn't know what's expected, frustration will follow. Keep expectations simple and verbal.

How Often to Meet

Frequent formal meetings may not be necessary, but communication is always key. Not every month requires a meeting if communication is healthy.

Weekly

- 5-10 minute check-in before or after youth night
- Quick prayer and alignment

Monthly

- Short leader conversation (30-45 minutes)
- Ask:
 - » How are the students doing?
 - » What's working?
 - » Where do we need help?

As Needed

- One-on-one conversations
- Text messages or coffee check-ins

Keep meetings relational, not corporate.

Helpful Tip!

Make it easy for people to volunteer. Everyone's schedules are packed full of events and appointments. Perhaps the most challenging roadblock you will face in volunteer recruitment is the people's fear of overcommitting themselves. Be clear about time commitments. Let them know their expenses may be reimbursed by the church.

Give Good Feedback

Because the team is small, tone matters even more.

Best Practices

- Talk early, not after frustration builds
- Keep feedback conversational
- Focus on growth, not mistakes

Simple Feedback Approach

- “Here’s what I appreciate...”
- “Here’s one thing we can improve...”
- “Here’s how I can help...”

Most issues in small teams are solved through honest, caring conversation.

Ministry Descriptions

Youth Leader/Youth Pastor

MINISTRY PURPOSE

To lead, oversee, and shepherd the youth ministry of the church in a manner that promotes spiritual growth, stability, and maturity in students, while aligning fully with the vision and direction of the pastor.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Must be filled with the Holy Ghost.
2. Must meet the qualifications for church membership.
3. Must be loyal to and work under the authority of the pastor.
4. Must maintain a stable, consistent walk with God.
5. Must carry a genuine burden for youth and their spiritual development.
6. Must be dependable, teachable, and able to lead with humility.

MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Oversee and coordinate all youth ministry operations under the direction of the pastor.
- Plan and lead weekly youth services, ensuring every gathering includes a clear spiritual emphasis.
- Provide vision, direction, and structure for adult and student leaders.
- Ensure attendance is tracked and that guests and absentees are followed up on appropriately.
- Plan curriculum, calendars, and ministry rhythms.
- See that youth get to all sectional and district youth activities. Promote all district youth camps, conventions, and youth congresses to youth and young adults.
- Keep the pastor informed of needs, concerns, or issues involving students or leaders.
- Refer sensitive counseling matters directly to the pastor.
- Ensure all youth ministry policies are followed, including safety and accountability standards.

Relational Leader

MINISTRY PURPOSE

To build consistent, godly relationships with students and help reinforce spiritual growth through encouragement, discussion, prayer, and personal example.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Must be filled with the Holy Ghost.
2. Must meet the qualifications for church membership.
3. Must demonstrate faithfulness and spiritual maturity.
4. Must be willing to work in harmony with the youth leader and other volunteers.
5. Must have a genuine love for students.

MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend youth services consistently and participate actively.
- Build relationships with assigned students by learning their names, stories, and spiritual needs.
- Assist in leading discussions, prayer, or small-group interaction.
- Help identify students who are struggling, disengaged, or missing and communicate concerns to the youth leader.
- Pray regularly for students.
- Support the spiritual atmosphere of youth services through participation and example.
- Follow all youth ministry safety and accountability guidelines.

Support/Logistics Leader

MINISTRY PURPOSE

To support the youth ministry by assisting with organization, preparation, and logistics, allowing spiritual leaders to focus on ministry and relationships.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Must meet the qualifications for church membership.
2. Must be dependable and willing to serve faithfully.
3. Must work well with others and follow direction.
4. Must maintain a Christlike attitude while serving behind the scenes.

MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist with setup, teardown, and preparation for youth services and activities.
- Help coordinate snacks, supplies, seating, and room readiness.
- Assist with event planning and execution as needed.
- Help ensure facilities are cleaned and restored following youth activities.
- Communicate clearly and promptly with the youth leader regarding needs or issues.
- Serve as a steady, supportive presence for the ministry team.

Student Helper/Student Leader

MINISTRY PURPOSE

To provide students with opportunities to grow in responsibility, servanthood, and spiritual leadership while being mentored and guided by adult leadership.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Must demonstrate faithfulness in attendance and conduct.
2. Must have a teachable spirit and desire to grow spiritually.
3. Must respect leadership and follow direction.

MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist with welcoming students and guests.
- Help with attendance, announcements, or simple service tasks.
- Participate in prayer and worship moments as directed.
- Model a Christlike attitude to peers.
- Serve under close supervision and guidance of adult leaders.