HANDBOOK FOR MINISTRIES WITH YOUNG ADOLESCENTS in the Episcopal Church

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the Ministries with Young People Cluster,
of the Service, Education, and Witness Unit
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The Ministries with Young People Cluster
works with children, youth, and young adults
in the Episcopal Church and the networks
that support them.

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Focus of this section:

A family perspective in ministry views the adolescent through the prism of household life and includes a sensitivity to the realities of family living. Family ministry seeks to help adolescent families and congregations become better partners.

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Focus of this section:

To provide access to further materials for people working with young adolescents in the Episcopal Church.

Introduction to Ministries with Young Adolescents

Goals

This *Handbook for Ministries with Young Adolescents* has three goals:

a. To utilize existing research in developing a comprehensive understanding of young adolescence and for developing guidelines for young adolescent ministries.

b. To develop training designs for use by congregational, diocesan, provincial and national, youth ministries that equip local leaders with the knowledge and skills to improve effectiveness with young adolescents.

c. To design and implement effective models of young adolescent ministries for use in a variety of settings.

This handbook has been prepared under the auspices of the Youth Ministries Office, Ministries with Young People Cluster, of the Episcopal Church Center. It has been edited from a variety of sources. You may copy any material from it, provided you include a complete reference on the top page. None of the material in this handbook can be reprinted for profit.

Our thanks go to the Anglican Church of Canada for graciously allowing us to edit and adapt these materials for use in the Episcopal Church.

Approaches to Ministries with Young Adolescents[1]

How do we approach the business of youth ministries in our congregations? It has been an almost automatic assumption in the collective consciousness of most of our congregations that "youth ministries" is merely a fancy way of saying and meaning "youth group." When pushed to it, the broadest definition of youth ministries in a congregation might include something from the Sunday school program, the acolytes, a confirmation class, perhaps some involvement with a music program, but mostly it means the youth group.

That is the underlying model that we seek in the call for youth ministries and it is the hidden (and sometimes not so hidden) expectation of vestries when the call goes out for a youth program in a congregation. It's what's remembered from earlier eras: it's specific, highly visible and, when visible, easily measured. Everyone can tell right away whether the youth program is succeeding by the numbers on Friday night or Saturday or whatever. There is a subsequent trickle-down theory that is the final proof of a youth program-the number who start to show up regularly at Sunday worship. This is real youth ministries: teens at church, visible for all to see. In spite of our loyalty to this particular approach to youth ministries, it is an approach with serious limitations and shortcomings, especially if it becomes the whole of youth ministries.

In studies in both the United States and Canada, it is clear that young people today are not enthusiastic group-joiners. Only one in three young people in the U.S. is interested in belonging to a group,[2] and only 11% identify a youth group of any kind as an activity that they receive a great deal of enjoyment from.[3] So if we have 30 young people in a congregation, only 10 or fewer are even interested in belonging to a group. What about the other two-thirds? How does the church include them in its ministry?

The reality is that not only are they not likely to be group-joiners, but they are also not likely to be participants in other congregational programs — acolytes, choirs, Sunday school, etc. Yes, one or two perhaps, and during a confirmation program a reluctant, parent-pushed handful more will appear. But provide these youth an optional exit point and most of them will disappear, some never to reappear.

All of these programs are based on the same assumption — youth ministries only happens when we can gather youth together around a church facility based event: one that has to be regular to be significant. It is a "gathering" model of program.

There is a wide variety of formats. Some congregations opt for youth contact programs: low on teaching Christian education, but high on social activities, sports, entertainment, outings and so on. Others opt for the more serious content approach: Bible study, social justice issues, discussion groups, Christian education, etc. Still others opt for blends of these two and others work to involve youth in the planning and delivery of these programs. There is nothing wrong with these efforts, but they are limited by the number and sort of youth they attract. As well, they have a time restriction — the amount actually spent with young people.

A very popular and successful youth program is likely to have two hours a week contact for the average participant over the nine months that most congregational programs run. That totals only 72 contact hours per year. Assume this average youth attends church 36 weeks of the year as well and also as-

sume some other additional hours for planning or special events. Being generous, we may get the contact hours up to 180 hours per year: not a significant influence in the context of 1,000–1,500 hours of television per year, or 1,000 hours of school. And this is the profile of a committed involved youth. The church must extend its reach. Our youth ministries must not be trapped into limiting so much of our time and energy into gathering activities. We must broaden our perspective to include within our understanding of youth ministries other kinds of programs — non-gathering ones.

The church can begin to play a significant role in the guidance and counsel of youth the pastoral care of adolescents. This is a vital piece of youth ministries that often brings us into contact with youth who are not participators because they are marginalized by their circumstances — their wounds, their disconnectedness, their troubles, as well their race, ethnicity, or culture. It means youth ministries has to enter their world — beyond the safety of the program office. And these youth are often accessible through their friendship groups, their fringe participation in gathering programs or by meeting them in their environments.

People involved in congregational youth ministries have to venture into the important places of youth culture — for coffee and donuts, for burgers, to watch sports or cultural events, to talk, to listen to music. And the church must become inclusive of youth by making small adjustments that make it clear that youth count and are connected. For example, mailing copies of newsletters addressed not to parents or to parents and children, but to the youth by name; by taking an ad in the school yearbook/annual; or by mailing birthday cards or noting other significant achievements or days. And we have to reduce negative messages — like providing youth beverages at coffee hours (soft drinks as well as coffee, for example); like ensuring nametags for youth if adults have them; like not giving them the worst jobs (i.e., clean-up or set-up); and not relegating them to tend the children downstairs at events.

In addition, youth ministries programs need to face and address some of the family issues: parent program workshops to educate parents to assist their communication with their own children around the issues of adolescent development, sexuality, drugs, relationships, perhaps even joint youth/parent workshops on these topics — education for all based on dialogue and interaction. This provides an incredible opportunity to connect youth to the life and community of faith around some of the concerns that are central in their daily lives. Faith in context, not simply in church. These need to be short-term (four to six weeks maximum) and might best be staged in homes or somewhere other than the church facility.

Once these doors open, the possibilities multiply: connections between seniors and youth in a variety of ways, a variety of short-term courses on youth issues or family concerns, prayer ministry of older members for youth, homes open to youth who need a time away or who need refuge or shelter because of crises in their own homes, shared meals — a ministry of hope and contact.

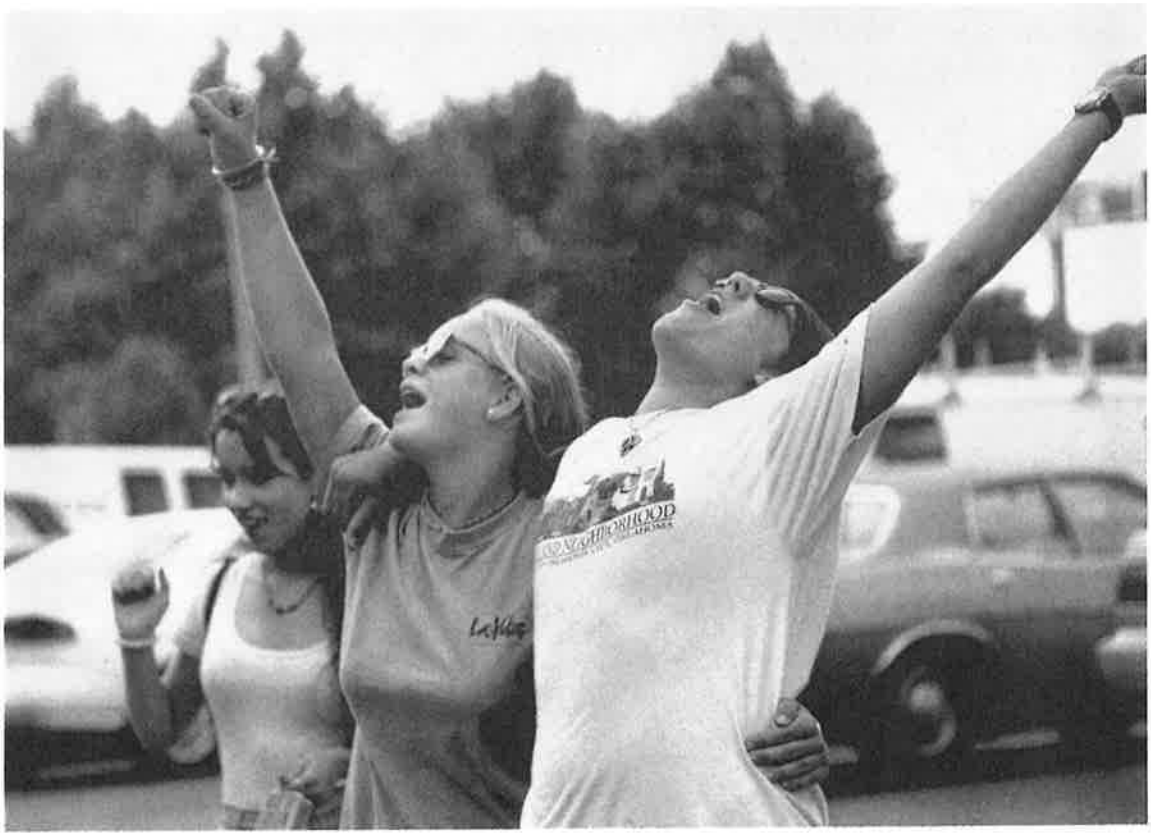
To summarize — there are three components in this approach to youth ministries: the traditional facilities and organized, program-based "gathering" activities, i.e., Sunday school, acolytes, music, youth night or youth group; second, the "non-gathering" activities, i.e., guidance and counselling, community-based one-on-one contact, mailings, etc.; and thirdly, family/parent programs. This type of programming requires a team approach and needs co-ordinating. It is not a one person performance, but based on a community of care, it builds a community that reaches out and includes youth with a variety of interests, concerns and willingness. You are with us because we are with you, not because you have come to our special place and we can count you.

It is a ministry that is built on trust — in God and in God's love for the young people of our communities and also on the principle that a well-sown seed produces life sooner or later. Our job is to scatter and sow. God makes growth happen.

It is a liberating and challenging ministry because it calls a whole congregation to care and to reach beyond itself. It will require volunteers and vision. It will require energy and commitment. And it will produce life for any congregation that is willing.

Part I

Understanding Young Adolescence



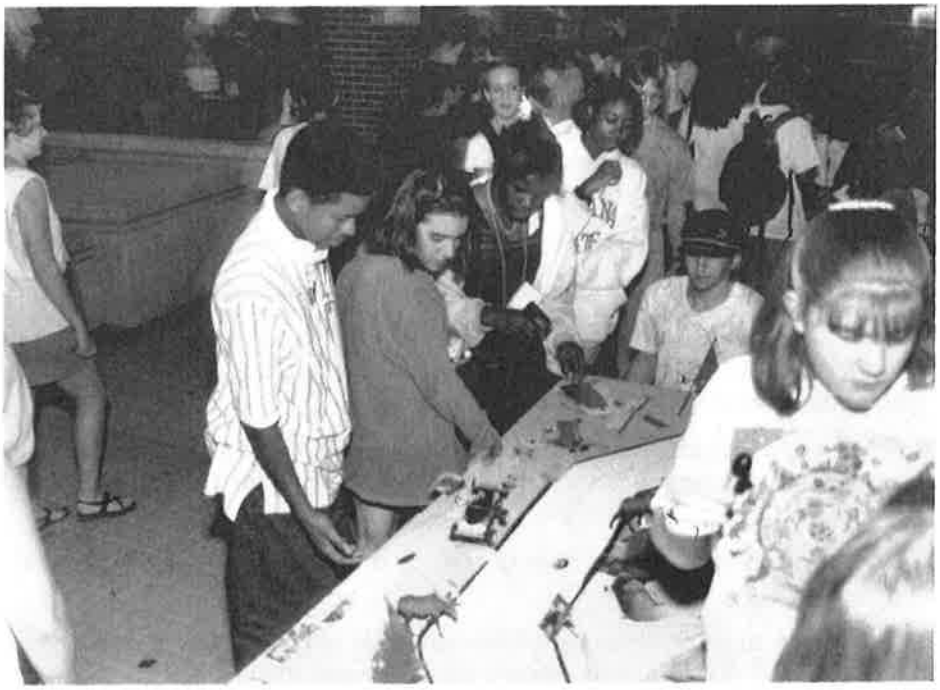
Why Look at Adolescent Development?

An effective approach to young adolescents (10- to 15-year-olds) is rooted in an understanding of lifelong learning. This moves us away from finish-line mentalities: a mistaken belief that we must get it all in before they reach a certain age.

A "banking model"[4] of youth ministries has been the practice for many years (we "deposit" a lifetime's worth of instruction in the childhood years so the individual can "withdraw" it later in life.)

Within a lifelong perspective we approach people within the context of their developmental ages and stages. The developmental and social journey of the adolescent becomes the foundational base for efforts in youth ministries. A "developmental approach" is based on a holistic understanding of the person. It not only includes, but it involves, the growth of body, mind and spirit-both individually and within a system of relationships. This means that the physical, social and intellectual changes of adolescence provide the starting point for our youth ministries efforts. It also includes an understanding of the social context that provides the fabric of the adolescent's everyday life.

Youth ministries is not about nurturing potential adult believers, but rather about enabling the growth of adolescent believers.



Normal Young Adolescent Development: Truth or Fiction (Questions)[5]

T / F 1. Adolescents who are early physical developers will be more socially and emotionally mature than late physical developers.

T / F 2. Human beings grow more rapidly during the adolescent growth spurt than at any other time in their lives except infancy.

T / F 3. It is abnormal for an 11-year-old girl to have begun to menstruate.

T / F 4. In general, adolescents who enter puberty at an early age will also go through the events of puberty more rapidly than late developers.

T / F 5. The normal variation in young adolescent physical development means that there may be at least a six-year span between a slowly developing boy and a rapidly developing girl of the same chronological age.

T / F 6. Adolescence is characteristically a stormy period marked by outright rebellion.

T / F 7. The proportion of adolescents who show signs of serious disturbance and inability to function normally is much greater than the percentage of adults who show these signs.

T / F 8. One sign of serious disturbance m young people is the inability to relate to peers and to fit into a peer group.

T / F 9. Peer pressure is a pervasive, all-powerful, negative force, to which adolescents are subject.

T / F 10. One sign of serious disturbance in young adolescents is a preoccupation with conformity to others in their peer group and their desire not to be too different.

T / F 11. Young adolescents look to their parents for affection, acceptance, values and guidance.

T/ F 12. Young adolescents do not like, enjoy or seek the company of adults.

T / F 13. Periods of disequilibrium are typical in families, as young teenagers and parents work out mutually acceptable ways to accommodate teens' new concerns and parents' continuing sense of responsibility.

T / F 14. When young adolescents request increasing levels of autonomy in areas such as dress, curfew and selection of friends, they are really asking for complete independence from adults.

T / F 15. Young adolescents are not mature enough to make commitments to people, ideas or projects.

T / F 16. The ability to think about possibilities outside one's immediate environment is a new thinking skill that gradually emerges during young adolescence.

T / F 17. Adolescents who are capable of mature thought about social justice, religion or higher mathematics also ought to be able to easily comprehend the risks involved in sexual intercourse without contraception or in drug experimentation.

T / F 18. Young adolescents' questioning of formally accepted rules and beliefs is a sign that they are using their new cognitive abilities.

T / F 19. Young adolescents are often very authoritarian because they are not yet able to see the "gray areas" between right and wrong.

T / F 20. With the onset and mastery of abstract thinking (formal operations), young adolescents are able for the first time to relate their present interests and aspirations to vocational, social and cultural roles they will fulfill in the future.

T / F 21. It is normal for young adolescents to appear to be self-centered and preoccupied with themselves sometimes, often to the exclusion of thoughts or concerns about others.

T / F 22. Adolescents usually know and understand the possible consequences of behaviors such as driving or riding in a speeding car, engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse or hitchhiking on a busy highway.

T / F 23. Adolescents are beginning to construct their faith interpersonally.

T / F 24. Parents have little influence on the faith development of adolescents.

T / F 25. Young adolescents reflect critically on their beliefs and values and form their own independent faith perspective.

Normal Young Adolescent Development: Truth or Fiction (Answers)[6]

See reference article, "Facts about 10- to 15-year-olds," on p. 79 in the RESOURCES section. The answers are cross-referenced to the facts as listed in that section.

Physical

F 1. Adolescents who are early physical developers will be more socially and emotionally mature than late physical developers.

Developmental diversity is the hallmark of adolescence. Physical development is not synchronized and does not translate into proportionate emotional maturity, and vice versa. (Fact 2)

T 2. Human beings grow more rapidly during the adolescent growth spurt than at any other time in their lives except infancy.

Adolescents grow from child to adult bodies. There are three kinds of growing during this time span: i) height and weight; ii) primary sex characteristics; iii) secondary sex characteristics. (Fact 6)

F 3. It is abnormal for an 11-year-old girl to have begun to menstruate.

Menstruation may begin as early as nine years or as late as fifteen. The average age is 12 ½ (see Table 1, p.89).

T 4. In general, adolescents who enter puberty at an early age will also go through the events of puberty more rapidly than late developers.

Puberty involves the development of primary and secondary sex characteristics and generally those who begin later have a more lengthy period of puberty. (Fact 8)

Social

T 5. The normal variation in young adolescent physical development means that there maybe at least a six-year span between a slowly developing boy and a rapidly developing girl of the same chronological age.

Developmental diversity is also true of social, cognitive, moral and faith development. When we know the age of an adolescent, that is all we know. Individual body clocks differ and adolescents differ from one to another within a group. (Fact 9)

F 6. Adolescence is characteristically a stormy period marked by outright rebellion.

Young adolescents are essentially alleviative. Adolescence is a time to renegotiate rules and boundaries, not to abandon them. (Fact 14)

F 7. The proportion of adolescents who show signs of serious disturbance and inability to function normally is much greater than the percentage of adults who show these signs.

One in five adults shows serious signs of disturbance; the same percentage is true of adolescents. (Facts 16, 17)

T 8. One sign of serious disturbance in young people is the inability to relate to peers and to fit into a peer group.

Social involvement is a healthy aspect of adolescents. The inability to relate to peers is different from choosing to have only a few friends. (Fact 20)

F 9. Peer pressure is a pervasive, all-powerful, negative force, to which adolescents are subject.

Peers can make a positive contribution to identity formation in adolescents. They can learn social skills, try on roles and learn the boundaries of risking and joking through friendly feedback. (Fact 20)

F 10. One sign of serious disturbance in young adolescents is a preoccupation with conformity to others in their peer group and their desire not to be too different.

Conforming is entirely normal in early adolescence. Identity is rooted externally in significant groups. Adolescents are beginning to be conscious of others' perception of their behavior. (Fact 24)

T 11. Young adolescents look to their parents for affection, acceptance, values and guidance.

Adolescents look to peers for companionship, and norms around dress, music and entertainment. They look to families for affection, values and help in decision-making. Although the influence of peers increases, parents do not lose the primary influence. (Fact 27)

F 12. Young adolescents do not like, enjoy or seek the company of adults.

Adolescents need some autonomy, but also seek out adult relationships, other than their parents. Positive role models are very significant at this age level. (Facts 27, 30)

T 13. Periods of disequilibrium are typical in families, as young teenagers and parents work out mutually acceptable ways to accommodate teens' new concerns and parents' continuing sense of responsibility.

Although it is disturbing, the changing boundaries in the family is normal and healthy. (Fact 28)

F 14. When young adolescents request increasing levels of autonomy areas such as dress, curfew and selection of friends, they are really asking for complete independence from adults.

Adolescents have more desire for privacy and autonomy, but need parents to continue to provide structure and limits. (Facts 31)

Cognitive and Moral

F 15. Young adolescents are not mature enough to make commitments to people, ideas or projects.

Young adolescents are eager to commit. They need short-term commitments with exits. They need to learn how to be responsible in making commitments. Short-term commitments that can be achieved allow them to feel good about the process. (Fact 32)

T 16. The ability to think about possibilities outside one's immediate environment is a new thinking skill that gradually emerges during young adolescence.

Adolescents begin to reason abstractly and consider the possibilities beyond their experience. (Fact 35)

F 17. Adolescents who are capable of mature thought about social justice, religion or higher mathematics also ought to be able to easily comprehend the risks involved in sexual intercourse without contraception or in drug experimentation.

Adolescents still have one foot in the world of concrete experience and they are inconsistent in their performance. (Fact 36)

T 18. Young adolescents' questioning of formally accepted rules and beliefs is a sign that they are using their new cognitive abilities.

Adolescents are capable of realizing that not everyone thinks the same way. They see inconsistencies and are able to formulate alternatives. This is a very healthy aspect of development that is frustrating for adults. (Fact 37)

T 19. Young adolescents are often very authoritarian because they are not yet able to see the "gray areas" between right and wrong.

Adolescents' sense of justice is yet to be tempered by mercy. They do not conceive of nuances, and exceptions. (Fact 38)

T 20. With the onset and mastery of abstract thinking (formal operations), young adolescents are able for the first time to relate their present interests and aspirations to vocational, social and cultural roles they will fulfill in the future.

Adolescents need time for visioning and dreaming about the future. They should not be forced to choose. but encouraged to try on roles. (Fact 39)

T 21. It is normal for young adolescents to appear to be self-centered and preoccupied with themselves sometimes, often to the exclusion of thoughts or concerns about others.

Two forms of "ego-centrism" are linked to this age: i) the imaginary audience is the sense that everyone is watching and judging and that the adolescent is always at the center of everyone's attention; ii) the personal fable is the story that adolescents tell about themselves that center on their own importance. It is also the source of their feeling that nobody else understands them and can be linked to dangerous behavior resulting from feelings of invincibility. (Fact 40)

F 22. Adolescents usually know and understand the possible consequences of behaviors such as driving or riding in a speeding car, engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse or hitchhiking on a busy highway.

Adolescents are not strongly consequence oriented. They are very rooted in their experience. Coupled with the feeling of invincibility, this can lead to taking dangerous risks. (Fact 41)

Faith

T 23. Adolescents are beginning to construct their faith interpersonally.

They are reforming their childhood image of God They are open to more personal forms of prayer and ritual, and become more reflective. Their faith is strongly tied to their relationships in the faith community.

F 24. Parents have little influence on the faith development of adolescents.

The most positive human influence on formation is offered by families and significant others, who are living and expressing their faith.

F 25. Young adolescents reflect critically on their beliefs and values and form their own independent faith perspective.

Young adolescence is more of a time for active participation in the life of the faith community. Young adolescents are affiliative. They believe where they belong.

Dispelling the Myths[7]

Myth: Adolescence is transitional

What young people experience in the here and now is felt more intensely, perhaps, than at any other time in their lives. Calling this period transitional implies that they (and we) might find it best to just "wait it out." All stages of life are marked by growth and change. Adolescents do not feel transitional. The needs they experience are very real, and they deserve to be addressed.

Myth: Young adolescents are children

Young adolescence is a distinct stage of life. To consider adolescents as children is to discount their emerging physical, social and intellectual maturity. Adolescents can accept a growing increment of responsibility and be expected to be increasingly accountable for their actions.

Myth: All young adolescents are alike

Actually, there is no age group that displays more variability. There may be a six-year span (in biological development alone) between a quickly developing girl and a slowly developing boy. In addition, we must consider social, emotional, intellectual and academic rates of development, each of which are on individual "time clocks." To be told that someone is 13 is to be told nothing about that person, except perhaps grade level in school.

Myth: Growth and development are predictable

In addition to the high degree of variability in development among adolescents, there is also uneven development in the various areas of growth within each individual. Biological, social, emotional and intellectual growth are not synchronized. Early physical development does not necessarily indicate proportionate emotional or social development, just as slower physical growth is not a sign of emotional or social immaturity.

Myth: Adolescence is pathological

In fact, most adolescents cope with their remarkable changes and growing spurts with the same degree of success that most adults cope with day-to-day changes and experiences. Approximately the same number of adolescents as adults (one in five) show signs of serious disturbance.

Myth: Peer pressure is an all-powerful, negative force

While the peer group can be a source of negative influence in some situations, involvement with friends is both necessary and "growthful." Peers do become more influential during young adolescence, but do not outweigh the influence of parents. When asked where they would turn for help and guidance on a variety of topics, young adolescents named parents more than peers.

Myth: Religion is not important to young adolescents

According recent studies, nine of 10 young people believe in the existence of God and the divinity of Jesus. About 40% of them describe themselves as committed Christians. The lack of attendance

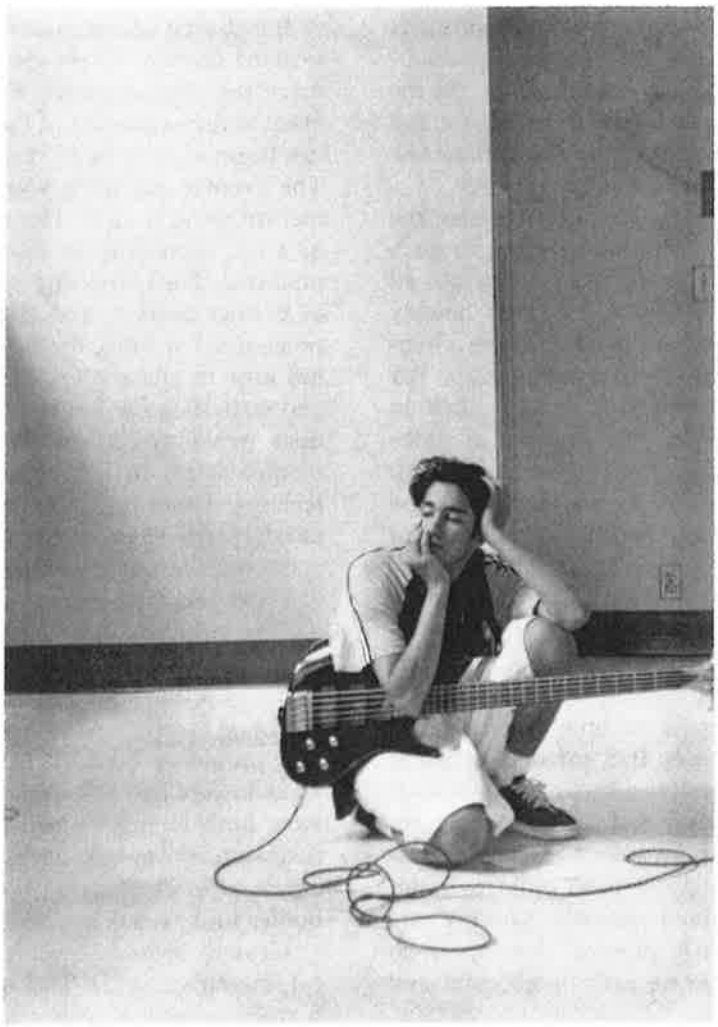
and participation in churches cannot be written off entirely as a lack of belief. Adolescent believing is directly related to belonging The lack of attendance points to larger membership issues for the church.

Myth: Young adolescents reject family values

What young adolescents become and how they behave are strongly tied to life at home. Family closeness, parental margins, parental affection, are all sought after by young adolescents. Young adolescence is an age of affiliations.

We are entangled in stereotypes about young people, stereotypes so negative that we would find them offensive were they racial, religious or ethnic. Age stereotyping of the young does not offend our sensibilities; it co-opts our sensibilities and blinds us to the realities of adolescence.

One way to de-mythologize adolescence is to get to know the particular young people in your community. Ask them to fill out an information card. See the sample on p. 90 in the RESOURCES section. Make sure you are clear with them on how the information will be used and who will read it. This information can inform you about the interests and the culture of the young people with whom you work. It can serve as a basis for programming as well as a beginning of many friendship.



Physical Development

Adolescence is a period in life when people grow more rapidly than at any other time in their lives except infancy.

For girls, this rapid growth spurt usually begins at age 10, with the peak occurring at about age 12. The growth spurt for boys begins about a year later, at around age 11½ and peaks at around age 14.

Changes in physical appearance are the most striking aspects of physical development, but invisible changes also take place. Three kinds of physical changes occur during young adolescence: (1) the adolescent growth spurt; (2) the development of primary sex characteristics; and (3) the appearance of secondary sex characteristics.

The adolescent growth spurt includes the growth to nearly the full adult height in both boys and girls. Their bodies may ache from all the internal activity. Limbs can grow quickly and unevenly, which accounts for the clumsiness that often emerges in adolescence. For example, an arm may grow half an inch in two weeks. Co-ordination can be a problem at this point, as the brain cannot keep up with the body to negotiate anything close to graceful movement. Further, the adolescent metabolism rate is very high, resulting in periods of boundless energy followed by total lethargy. Adolescents are not able to tell us what is happening in their bodies, but they act it out in their behavior. They can be clumsy, tired, energetic or hungry as a result of their growing bodies. It is unfair to interpret their behavior as careless, lazy or rambunctious without recognizing the biology that is at work.

Although it is an entirely common experience for people to grow from child to adult bodies, the individual growth patterns are highly personal. Early physical developers do not always demonstrate early intellectual and social growth.

From Child to Adult Bodies

Although it is an entirely common experience for people to grow from child to adult bodies, the individual growth patterns are highly personal. Developmental diversity is the hallmark of adolescence. That information needs to affect our approach to young adolescents. Further, they need to know that their individual biological clocks are ticking "normally,"

It is during adolescence that the reproductive systems mature. These changes are called primary sex characteristics. For girls, the marker event is the beginning of the menstrual cycle. It can begin as early as 10½ or as late as 15 years. The average age for a young woman to begin menstruating is 12½. Her breasts grow, a little or a lot, depending on the body shape she has inherited. The uterus and vagina grow and eggs in ovaries mature, and she is able to become pregnant. For boys, the marker events are genital growth and the first ejaculation. His penis and testicles grow larger and he is able to produce semen and sperm. Both young men and women begin to have strong sexual/romantic feelings. There is a wide variation in the ages at which these events begin to occur.

Secondary sex characteristics are the more obvious and perhaps the most concerning to adolescents. The hair on their legs and underarms grows thicker, darker. Body shapes begin to develop. Hips get bigger, body weight shifts in young women. Muscular strength increases and shoulders broaden in a young man. His voice lowers and whiskers start to grow on his face. Both young women and men experience their skin becoming oilier and their sweat glands begin to work. During the events of puberty bodies look, smell, act and feel differently.

Growth in each developmental area (physical, cognitive, social and emotional) occurs in a characteristic sequence for most young ado-

lescents. However, growth in the four areas does not occur exactly at the same time. Young adolescents may vary enormously in physical, mental, emotional maturity. For example, early physical developers do not always demonstrate early intellectual and social growth.

Furthermore, individual young adolescents change at different rates, according to highly individual internal "clocks." For example, a 13-year-old who looks like a young woman or man is as "normal" as peers who are only beginning to mature physically, and a 12-year-old concrete thinker is as normal as a 14-year-old who uses abstract reasoning rather expertly.

Adults must be careful not to base their treatment of young adolescents solely on one aspect of their development. For example, the physically mature into roles of leadership based on an assumption of parallel emotional maturity.

The normal variation in young adolescent physical development means that there may be a six- to eight-year span in physical development between a slowly developing boy and a rapidly developing girl of the same chronological age. Physical ability is entirely related to individual body clocks, not ability or effort. Given these circumstances, competitive physical activity with this age group is simply unjust.

Body Awareness

It is important to make a distinction between a body-based experience and a sexually-based experience. Especially for younger adolescents, the body changes (i.e., the growth spurt) is a body-based experience and is not sexually aware, or informed. The young adolescent is aware of body first and sexuality secondarily. The minor watching and the preening and the self-consciousness are based on the experience of a body that is changing. The awareness of the sexual implications and potential does not lead and direct that process but grows out of it. Adults assume the opposite and often react as if body sensitivity is actually some immense sexual discovery. In the myth of adolescents as "walking hormones," adults forget how innocently the process of change begins with growth and size changes that then gradually include sexual development.

For early and fast developers, this is compressed together in terms of experience. The physical changes and the sexual development are close together. In late developers, the experience can be quite different with a very long physical development occurring before and after sexual maturation, making body experience and awareness quite different. This complicates the body image question for adolescents at either end of the continuum. Those in mid-continuum get body awareness first and sexuality develops in the context of an already changing image and self-awareness.

There is not much tidiness as the variety of knowledge that adolescents have is so varied. Their experience is not formed by their knowledge, but by their physical experience of the body in change, day by day. Sexual development is only part of that process and may not be the focus for adolescents all the time. It is not helpful for adolescents to have to cope with adults assuming they are preoccupied with sex.

Adolescents must also contend with images in the media on a daily basis of the perfect body. Their appearance is judged by their friends, by the other sex and by their parents. Boys work out with weights, girls begin to shave their legs and begin the struggle for the perfect look that may continue for the rest of the rest of their lives.

Am I Normal?

Most young adolescents are excited by the body changes (or the expected body changes) that make them look more adult. At the same time, they are concerned about whether their bodies are "normal" and about how they will look when their bodies mature. Their primary question is: Am I normal? Adolescents need to know that the changes of puberty are normal and that they happen to everybody. They especially need information about their internal body clocks and affirmation for their unique growth pattern.

Adolescents need affirmation and encouragement to learn to love themselves as they are. In the words of the poet Marge Piercy: "Live as though you liked yourself, and it may happen."

Social/Emotional Development

Who Am I?

The primary developmental task of young adolescence is forming a working definition of self.

Myth of Storm and Stress

The myth of adolescence as a time of inherent storm and stress is harmful to adolescents in two ways. First, it fosters the expectation that young people entering adolescence are irresponsible, unresponsive, inactivated crazy and unpredictable. Since adolescents are especially vulnerable to adult expectations, they tend to live up (or down) to what adults expect of them. Second, teenagers who are having excessive difficulty during this period of dramatic change may be written off as "going through a stage" and may not get the professional attention they need.

Adolescents need permission for both kinds of behavior. It's okay to be stormy sometimes. One individual may move in and out of both periods.

Disturbing or Disturbed

It is essential for adults who work and live with teenagers to distinguish between behavior that is disturbing or annoying to adults (loud music, messy rooms) and behavior that is disturbed and harmful to the child (substance abuse, suicide attempts, depression, harmful risk-taking).

One sign of serious disturbance in young people is the inability to relate to peers and fit into a peer group. The peer group and peer pressure are often viewed as the pervasive, all-powerful, negative force to which adolescents are totally subject. While the peer group can be a source of negative influence in some situations for some adolescents, involvement with friends is necessary if youth are to become socially competent adults. Close examination of adolescent peer groups often reveals that the peer group represents not a counterculture, but a less polished, more blatant version of the adult culture that surrounds it. Don't separate friends on principle. "Sit by someone you don't know." Consider whose needs are being met.

It is through the peer group that youth begin to learn how to develop and maintain close, mutually supportive relationships with people their own age. This is a social skill not characteristic of younger children, whose most significant relationships are dependent relationships with parents, but it is an essential skill for a normal, fully functioning adult.

Friendships are laboratories for learning appropriate "adolescent" and "adult" behavior. Young adolescents learn social skills, such as how far to take a practical joke and how to ask a boyfriend or girlfriend to go to a movie, by trying out a variety of behaviors on their friends. The feedback teens give to each other about behavior may or may not be either sensitive or subtle. Peer groups exist within community and cultural contexts.

Young adolescents' preoccupation with conformity to others in their peer groups is often troubling to adults, but it is normal for 10- to 15-year-olds. Because an individual adolescent believes that everyone constantly scrutinizes his/her appearance and every act, it is excruciatingly painful to be "different." As they adjust to their own dramatic physical and social changes, and see their friends developing either faster or slower than they, young adolescents' insecurities and uncertainties drive them to look and act like their friends.

Supporting Healthy Development

There are times when adolescents need some adult-guided protection from the peer group. For example, an adult facilitating a conversation to establish ground-rules for an event. Because of their need to he like peers, their collective and their belief that "it can't happen to me," situations arise in which young adolescents need to be protected from themselves and one another. In our society, many adolescents are abandoned to the peer group in the adults' belief that they cannot offset peer pressure. Adults who work with adolescents can have an influence on peer groups through the expectations they set, the relationships they build and the opportunities they provide for adolescent peer groups to function in a constructive, healthy manner.

Positive Interaction with Adults

In addition to other close relationships with peers, close relationships with families and other adults are necessary for healthy adolescent development. Studies have shown that while peer influence and emotional closeness to peers increase during young adolescence, peer relationships supplement but do not replace ties with parents.

In expanding their social world, young adolescents frequently seek the company of adults other than their parents. These other adults, often youth workers, teachers, relatives, neighbors, or clergy members, serve as crucial role models and advisors. These new relationships with other adults are an important part of adolescent social development. As young people begin to explore what it means to be an adult man or woman, they need positive role models, especially of their same gender, race, and ethnicity, who are "living proof" of what they can become. Other adults also can provide young adolescents with a secure respite from the intensity of peer and family relationships. It is important to provide a wide range of adult involvement in ministries with young adolescents. Leadership teams are better than "gurus."

Supporting Families

Although adolescents report that they look to the peer group for companionship and for guidance in some aspects of behavior, such as dress, music, hair style and entertainment, young adolescents look to their families for affection, identification, social and moral values, and help in solving big problems or making important decisions.

Problems in relationships between young adolescents and adults, whether the adults are parents or youth workers, often center on the increasing desire of young adolescents for personal autonomy. If adolescents are to move from the dependency of childhood to the interdependency of adulthood, they must have increasing independence and responsibility. Young adolescents' requests (or demands) for more autonomy in some areas, such as dress, curfew, how they spend their free time, specific activities they will engage in, and the selection of friends, are sometimes misinterpreted by adults as cries for complete independence. While they do need gradually increasing amounts of autonomy as they mature, young adolescents continue to need limits for behavior that are set by adults. These limits should expand as youth mature, enabling young teens to have a voice in determining specific rules and expectations.

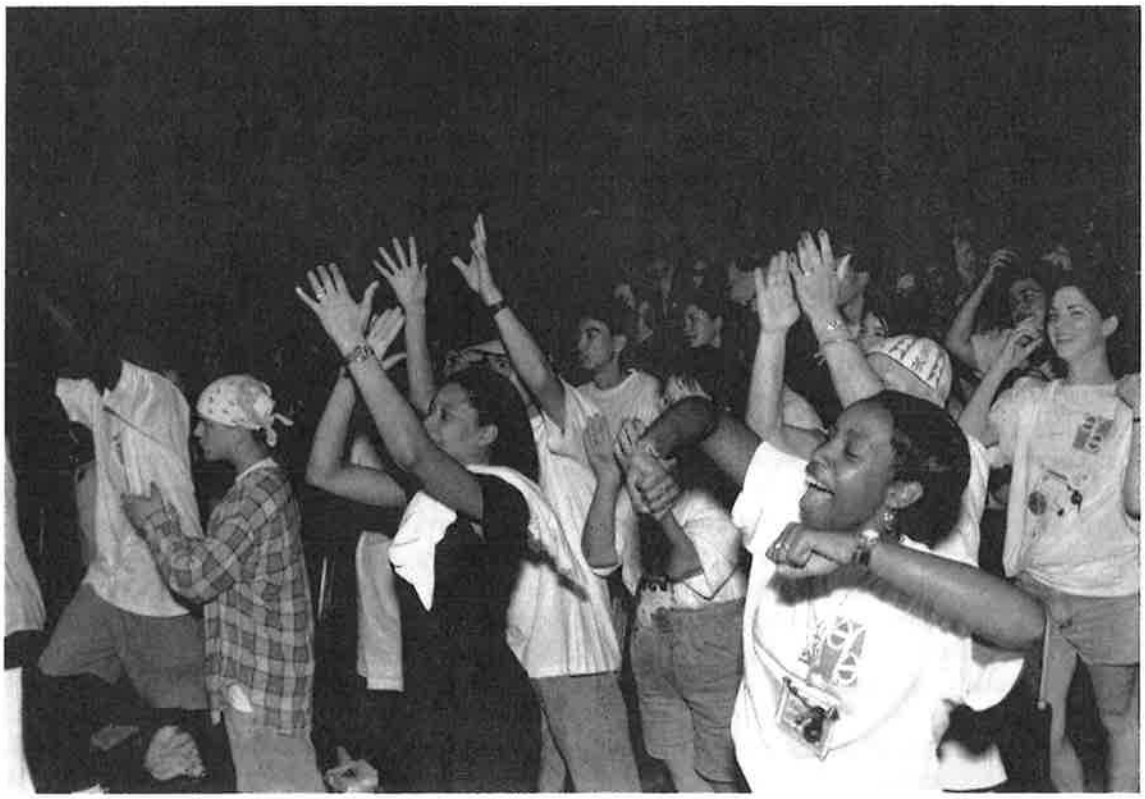
Disagreements between young adolescents and their families are usually related to the family having to reassess its expectations of a child who is growing up. Periods of disequilibrium are typical in families, as young teens and parents work out mutually acceptable ways to accommodate the teens' new concerns (e.g., the desire for more privacy and autonomy) and parents' continuing sense of responsibility. Families that can make adjustments in mutual expectations, rules, and the way the family members relate to each other emerge from periods of disequilibrium with family ties intact and sometimes strengthened. Most adolescents report good re-

lationships with their parents. They feel their parents are understanding, reasonable, fair and reliable.

Cultural Diversity

In some cultures where identification with the traditional ethnic culture and family influence are strong, these periods of disequilibrium take on a unique character. As these young people seek personal autonomy and deal with their feelings of being caught between their traditional ethnic culture and the dominant culture that surrounds them, conflict with parents, especially disagreements related to involvement in peer groups, may be intensified.

Youth leaders need to recognize that young people live in the context of their families and their cultural heritage, as do adults. "Autonomy..." "community..." "family" — all of these can be interpreted differently by persons from diverse cultures. Youth leaders need to be careful not to impose their cultural biases on the young people with whom they minister. Moreover, youth leaders should educate themselves on aspects of culture, their own culture as well as that of others, and should consistently work to uphold cultural diversity as a positive value.



Intellectual Development

What If? A World of New Possibilities

As the body and social contest of the adolescent grows beyond the childhood frameworks, so does the mind. During young adolescence a new level of complexity emerges for young people. Similarly, as the growth of the body and emotional self are in response to cultural forces, the growth of the intellect is also impacted by external influences. The education system, to name the most powerful influence, directs young people towards developing a "mature, rational, objective perspective."

Conventional developmental theorists describe this journey as the beginning of "formal operations," or the ability to think abstractly and reflectively. In Western societies this model of thinking is valued highly, and understood as progress towards maturity. Some contemporary thinkers question this valuing. They see the significance of personal experience as a way of understanding the world. Young adolescents themselves are wondering about their own intellectual ability. They may see themselves as either "too stupid," or "too brainy" for their liking.

Adults need to be sensitive in acknowledging all the values placed on the intellect — from the culture, in families and from young adolescents themselves.

Youth leaders should assume a variety of intellectual development to be present in any group of young adolescents. Provide a variety of ways of learning and of participating to ensure everyone is included. There is an example of a program to encourage young adolescents in their questioning in the RESOURCES section (see p. 93).

In Western societies this model of thinking is valued highly, and understood as progress towards maturity. (Though it is important to understand that the same value does not hold true for all cultures.)

Two Worlds at Once

Adolescents are, perhaps, most fortunate to live in two worlds at once: concrete experience, and abstract thinking. Their new cognitive capacity includes the ability to understand metaphors and concepts and also to consider the possibilities of "what might be true if...." However, they are still very strongly affected by what they know through what they experience. To a significant degree, young adolescents believe what they see in front of them.

This stage in intellectual development is the source of the typical adolescent response: "I don't know." They are unable to fully reflect upon motivations for their actions — they really don't know. Young adolescents think behaviorally. They will tell us about their experience through their behavior. Y don't want to go to school," instead of "there is a problem at school that is bothering me."

Adolescents can be very critical of adults' decisions. One especially frustrating behavior is the questioning of formerly accepted rules and beliefs. These questions are linked to the expansion of the adolescent perspective. Adolescents are a healthy sign of growth. They are able to realize that not everybody thinks the way that they do, or the way that their family does about important issues.

"That's not fair" is a common complaint in response to an adult's efforts to take into account individual differences and extenuating circumstances. Often adolescents do not understand exceptions to rules, unless of course they are their own exceptions. As they begin to think about how situations could be differ-

ent and ask themselves "what if..." questions, they can formulate alternative rules, as well as situations in which the rules may not be acceptable.

Leaders need to understand the dynamic that is at work when this questioning occurs. Often the young adolescent needs to be informed of the broader picture that is present. To a significant degree, young adolescents believe what they see in front of them. Young adolescents think behaviorally. They will tell us about their experience through their behavior.

Because I Said So Doesn't Cut It

Adolescents are capable of understanding ideals, and of using logical thinking skills to analyze their own and others' behavior in relation to those ideals. They can see and question inconsistencies between the ideal and the behavior they observe. They are capable of understanding the reasons for norms and raising objections to rules that do not appear to be logical. They need to know what the real reasons are behind "Because I said so." "Because I said so" is no longer an acceptable reason. Leaders with this age group should be able to acknowledge their own inconsistencies and live with it.

Everybody Is Watching: The Audience

Young people often appear quite absorbed by their experiences, their appearance, and their behavior. They constantly feel that they are the center of attention, surrounded by an ever-present "imaginary audience" that notices and passes judgment on how they look and everything they do. Therefore, every hair has to be in place, every word has to come out right, and most important, they must look and act like their peers. Although this self-absorption is exasperating and amusing to adults who interact with young adolescents, it is a normal and natural reaction to the many changes of adolescence. Adults need to refrain from comment, and not promote more self-consciousness about being self-conscious! Let them choose when they want to be the center of attention.

The Plot

The "personal fable" is a story young adolescents tell themselves about themselves, a story they believe to be unique and true. The story centers on their supreme importance and the uniqueness of their experience and their feelings. The personal fable finds expression in such statements as "No one knows how I feel," "I can't talk to anybody," or "You don't understand." It is also an expression of loneliness. Although the personal fable is normal, it may result in dangerous risk-taking behavior by young adolescents who believe they are immune to the consequences of their actions and invulnerable to harm. Statements such as "I won't get pregnant," "I won't die in a car accident," "I am safe on the streets," and "I won't be tired if I stay up all night," are examples of what they say to themselves and to others.

Adults can be encouraged to listen for the fable. Don't argue when told you don't understand. Try "Maybe I don't, explain it again." At your discretion you may choose to impose limits on potentially dangerous behavior.

Young adolescents begin to break out of these forms of egocentrism as they grow and mature. Through mutual relationships with other adolescents and sharing innermost concerns and dreams, they begin to realize that other people experience life somewhat as they do. As they gain life experiences and observe the harm that befalls others because of dangerous behavior, they begin to realize that they are not immune to the consequences of their actions.

Project into the Future

As their perspective broadens, their own personal references also expand Adolescents are able to project themselves into the future. Young children see the future in terms of days; young adolescents are starting to see the future in terms of days; young adolescents are start-

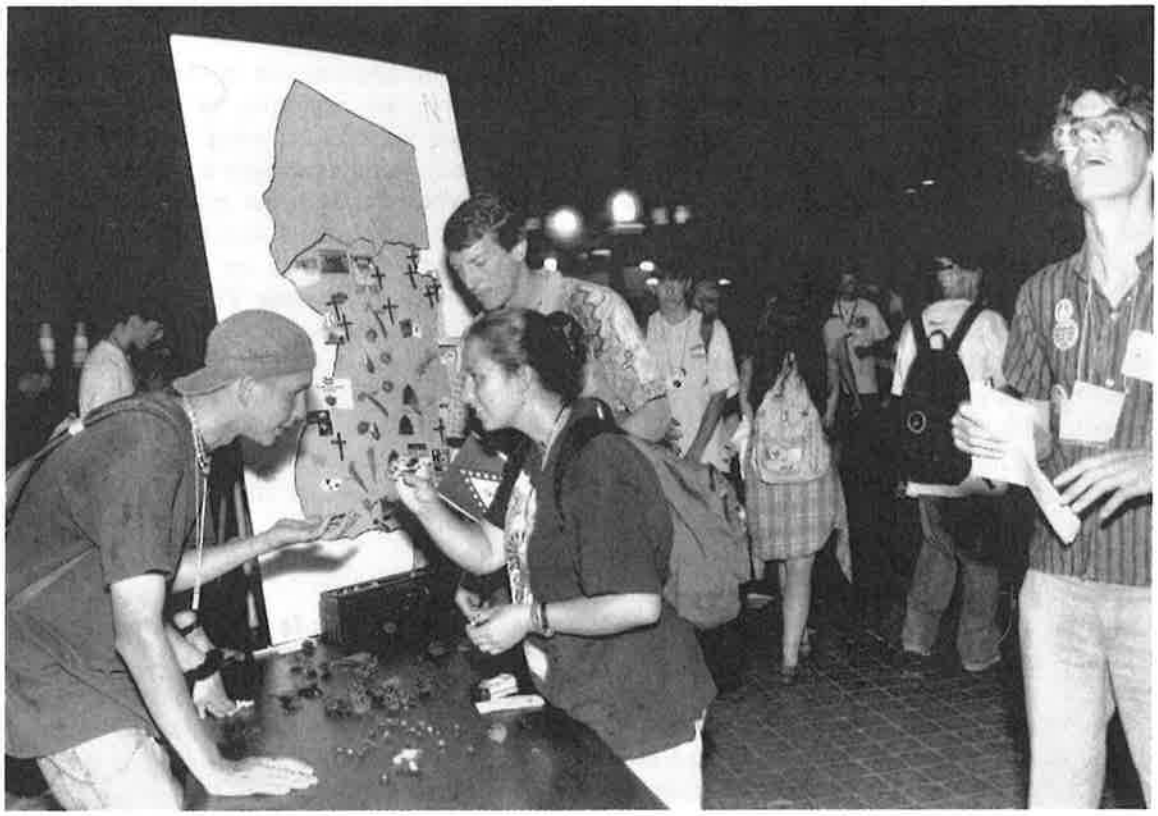
ing to see the future in terms of years, as well as days.

They can begin to relate their present interests, aspirations, and circumstances to vocational, social, and cultural roles they will fulfill in the future.

Opportunities for Commitments

Young adolescents' worlds expand to reflect their emerging capabilities, desires and interests, and to include their peers, adults other than their parents, and their communities. They often become eager to make commitments to people, ideals and projects. Because they are changing so rapidly, many of their commitments will be short-term but nevertheless intense. They need opportunities for short-term commitments with visible exits.

Being reprimanded for failing to complete long-term commitments is inappropriate. Neither should it be interpreted as a lack of commitment.



Moral Development

Adults may be disarmed by the honesty of young adolescents. They will tell you about their experience through their behavior: "I am never going to church again!" is an opportunity to open conversation.

It is important to begin by validating their experience. If they say "Church is boring," an appropriate response may be: "Yes, sometimes church is boring." "Well, why do you go then?" This is not the end of the conversation, but the beginning of a discovery into why people (and you in particular) go to church. The most meaningful responses for the adolescent are the most honest. Adults need to be clear about their own values and motivations before attempting to influence the choices of an adolescent, as no real exchange will happen without these being revealed.

Because young adolescents have one foot in the world of concrete experience and the other in the realm of abstractions, they are not consequence oriented. To be influenced by the potential consequences, one must be able to project the outcomes of the actions. A mere warning about the consequences of potentially dangerous actions is not enough information for them. Although they may not contest your advice at the time it is offered, if their experience tells them otherwise your advice has less impact. For example, a warning about the dangers of drinking and driving is lessened when they have done it and nothing has happened. Even if an accident has happened to a friend, they may explain it away, "It won't happen to me."

The "personal fable" functions in relation to dangerous decision-making. Adolescents believe they are invincible. They do not have a consistent sense to their own mortality.

Moral education needs to be current, ongoing, and related to their own issues.

Reasons Not Rules

One of the significant tasks of adolescent development is to develop and strengthen one's own ability to make decisions with integrity. Young people need adult encouragement, trust and support in this process. Young adolescents are only beginning to learn to reason deductively. They need to know the "real reasons" for behavior choices to help them make sense of decision-making. They need reasons, not rules. A strict system of rules will not be helpful to them in making decisions on their own in various and complicated situations. Learning to reason will.

Young adolescents can be very authoritarian. As they are beginning to consider ideals like justice and broader social issues, they begin to understand that there is such a thing as a social contract, and that rules and laws are necessary for the greater social good. However, they are not yet able to see the "gray areas" between right and wrong. Their notion of justice is not yet tempered with mercy. It takes time for them to understand the nuances and interrelatedness of different ideals. Justice education can often leave leaders at odds with young adolescents when they fail to appreciate nuances. Be aware of their limitations in perception.

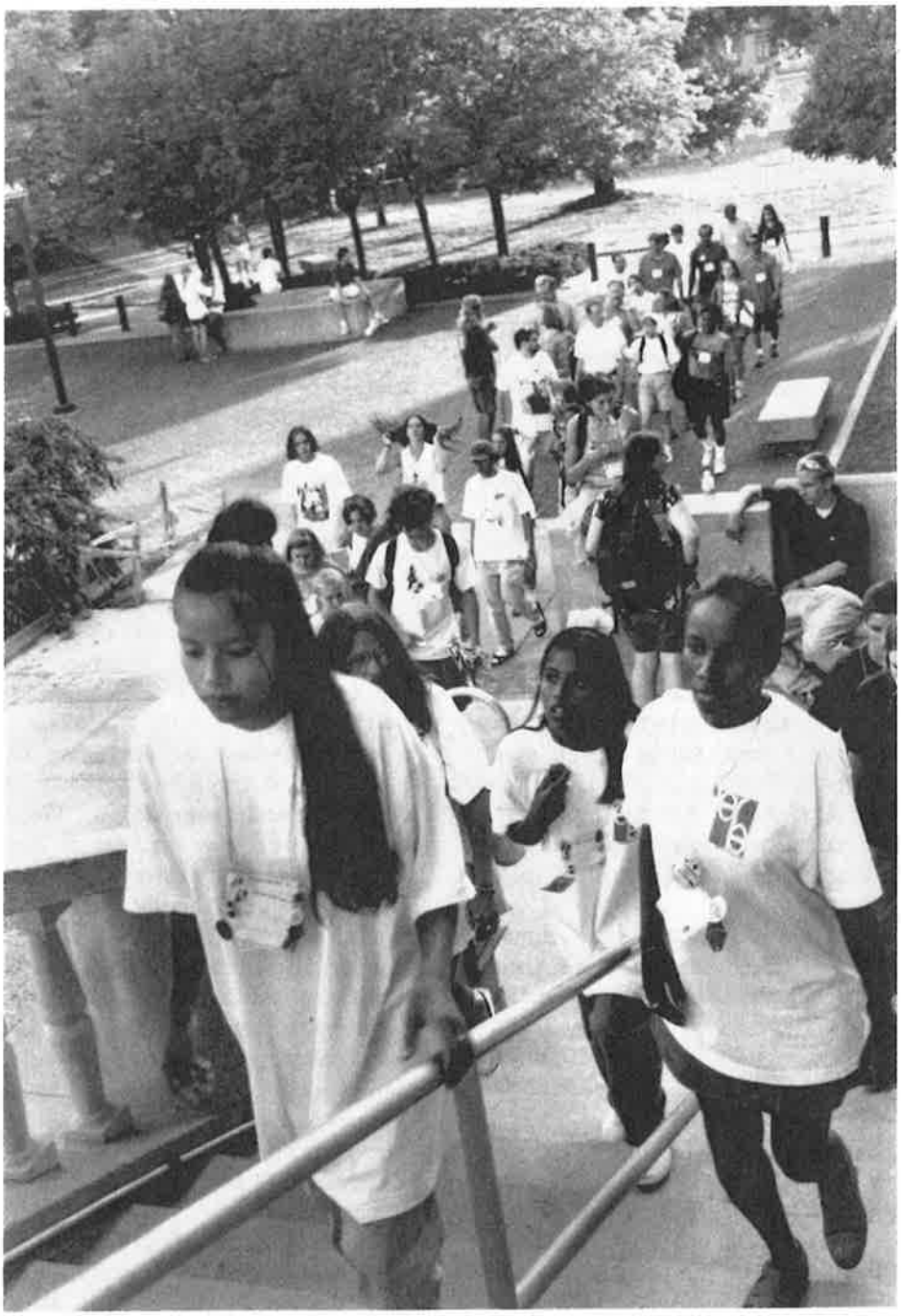
Believing Is Belonging

Young adolescents make moral decisions based on external demands. Personal standards of behavior are determined largely outside the self. Family, peer group, society and organizations they belong to, such as the church, all influence them.

Personal belief about what is right yields

to the group's interpretation of what right is. The young person respects and uses others as reference points in his or her resigning about the rightness and wrongness of personal sets. Provide group opportunities. Loyalty and conformity to groups are primary values. Personal acceptance and approval by others is crucial to self-esteem. Don't demand conformity.

The challenge for families and churches, and peers, is to provide strong and healthy communities where adolescents can nurture their own personal integrity.



Faith Development

"How do we get young people involved in the church?" is the wrong question. It perpetuates a mindset that is really not that helpful. "How can the church be involved with young people?" is a better question.

Youth ministries is not about nurturing potential adult believers, but rather about enabling the continued growth of adolescent believers. A "banking model" of children's and youth ministries has been the practice for many years. We "deposit" a life time's worth of instruction in the childhood years so that the individual and the community can "draw" on it later in life.

The shift towards lifelong learning communities is perhaps the key to changing this finish-line mentality. Within a lifelong approach, we approach people in the context of their developmental ages and stages, while they are still in them. The physical, social and intellectual changes of adolescence provide the starting point for youth ministries efforts.

The totality of a ministry with adolescents is not captured by a youth group or a religious education program. Youth ministries is not limited to the programs and activities sponsored within the church community. It is also directed outward to the needs, concerns and issues of youth in society.

One author has suggested three dimensions towards a more comprehensive youth ministries approach: becoming, belonging, and transforming.[8]

Becoming

Becoming works to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person. Our understanding of the unique life tasks and social-cultural context of adolescence provides direction for fostering their growth. We need to encourage growth in their heads, hearts and hands, simultaneously.

However, any efforts to foster personal growth must take into consideration the developmental diversity that is characteristic of this age group. Inconsistency is consistent. They differ from group to group. They differ from one to another within a group. They differ even within themselves as unique individuals.

Early in adolescence, new cognitive abilities make possible mutual, interpersonal perspective-taking. Adolescents begin to see themselves as others see them. It is entirely normal for them to take seriously the opinions of others. Adolescent believing is a collective process. They need opportunities to sort out the variety of beliefs, values and ideas with significant adults and peers.

They are beginning to construct the interiority of themselves and others. A new step towards interpersonal intimacy and relationship emerges. A new self-consciousness is on the rise.

Similarly, they are beginning to construct their faith interpersonally. They recompense their childhood image of God. God becomes a personal God. They are open to learning more personal forms of prayer and becoming more reflective in entering into liturgy and sacrament. (Young adolescents need opportunities to connect religious traditions with varied opportunities for self-discovery and self-definition.)

Adolescents tend to find God (or God finds them) more in their own present experience than in their faith community's tradition. They experience God in terms of how they experience other human persons. Where their bounds are wide, so their imaging of God will be more encompassing.

In ministering with adolescents, we should be especially alert to their personal experience for God's active presence. It does not mean

that we abandon the tradition of the faith community. Rather, we need to make an effort to connect the young adolescent's experience with the community's understanding of God as parent, Jesus as friend, the church as supporting community, the sacraments as life, strength and nourishment

The most powerful human influence on the forming faith of young people is that exerted by families and significant others who are living and expressing their own faith. To a large extent, they make their moral judgments in keeping with what is expected of them by family, peers and other significant others in their lives.

Young adolescence is a time to encourage affiliation to one's faith community through knowledge of its tradition and through participation in its present life and vitality. It is a time for active participation in the life of the faith community, with its symbols, rituals, history and traditions. It is a time for allegiance and alliance.

Belonging

Belonging seeks to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the faith community. Active engagement of young people in the life of the Christian community provides an important context for growth. As it is, young people are often segregated from the real centers of power, responsibility and commitment in community life. There is a very definite link between believing and belonging. Adolescents believe where they belong young adolescents seek their faith-identity in the authority of a community's understandings and ways. They work to establish a firm set of beliefs, attitudes and values. They want to know who shares their same beliefs.

They need opportunities to experience a sense of belonging, of membership in the Christian community; to experience the Christian story: its understandings, rituals, actions. Nurturing faith is not another program task, but it is encouragement into a life of relationships

Young adolescents are seeking personal commitment. Commitment includes reaching out towards people, ideas, beliefs, causes and work choices. The church can assist young adolescents as they begin this formation process of building commitment and purpose in their lives.

Participation in religious services provides an outlet for the curiosity, idealism and desire for accomplishment that is characteristic of young adolescents. Involvement in worship events and community service can be a source of affirmation when they are actively involved in decision-making.

If adolescents are in fact prone to be involved in faith communities, where are they? Obviously, with one look at the demography of almost any "typical" Episcopal congregation there is something quite amiss. Virginia Hoffman comments:

I have noticed lately that the median age of those attending religious gatherings is much higher than my own 46 years. This is a sobering reality we need to face — we are missing a whole generation and are on our way to missing another.[9]

Contemporary denominations have bought into the story that it is a natural movement for young people to leave the congregation. They anxiously await their return following this "phase of rebellion." Our acceptance, however reluctant, of this "trend" prevents us, or perhaps more aptly protects us, from looking seriously at the issues of belonging for young people in faith communities.

There are no mysterious reasons as to why young people do not participate in churches. For the most part, they are not welcome. There are not opportunities for meaningful participation. Their absence speaks as powerful evidence.

This pattern will only be reversed when congregations seriously take on the issues of inclusiveness and participation in all aspects of its life.

According to Peter Benson, the five areas of congregational life that help youth to mature in faith are:[10]

- a thinking climate (challenging and questioning);
- a warm climate (welcoming);

- a caring church (among church leaders);
- service to others (beyond the church);
- worship (uplifting worship services).

This pattern will only be reversed when congregations seriously take on the issues of inclusiveness and participation in all aspects of its life.

Effective ministries for adolescents will provide regularly for development and practice of new forms of prayer and spirituality. These should deepen the youth's understanding of the presence of God in their lives, and provide opportunities for them to live out their faith.

How can we express the adolescent journey in ritual?

James Fowler speaks of grounding youth in a creative orthodoxy:

The congregation's goal should be to provide youth people with a coherent, persuasive version of the Christian story, one that constitutes a viable faith ethos... the emphasis should be on transmitting a lively and authentic Christian orthodoxy, coupled with truly challenging opportunities for service....[11]

Transforming

Transforming empowers young people to transform the world as followers of Jesus by living and working for justice and peace. Youth ministries empowers young people with the knowledge and skills to serve others and to learn how to transform the structures of society.

Effective youth ministries encourages young people to examine their culture in the light of their faith and their faith in the light of their culture. Contemporary young people need to be engaged by the dialogue between faith and culture. Virginia Hoffman describes the resistance to face the world as follows:

Some church professionals would rather not be born. Instead, they are trying to devise ways to lengthen the umbilical cord, or to enlarge the womb so that it is big enough for adult children to stand in. They are working from the inside out to keep the walls intact, to mend the holes, to keep out light and air. The womb is stretched so far beyond its ability to function that it is now in need of constant maintenance. We do no one service by pretending that things are fine the way they are. If we are going to teach our young companions to live by the Gospel of Jesus, we cannot do that by living the gospel of the divine right of kings or the gospel of dominant/submissive gender roles. It does not work to continue to act those same conventional roles ourselves, to ask them to participate in those roles with us, and balance our deeds with occasional disclaimers.[12]

It is often in and through the cultural context that young people will give birth to their personal faith and adopt our communal faith. This cultural context is not a peripheral concern in our ministry, but a foundational principle. As members of the Anglican Communion, Episcopalians are connected through faith with 70 million persons, living in 164 countries, in 31 self-governing churches throughout the world. Part of the challenge of ministries with young people in our ethos is to open the door to this diversity, so both we and the young people can become transformed by it.

Communities that foster becoming, belonging and transforming will be led into the future by the vision and creative energy of young people.

"I Don't Wanna Go!"[13]

"I don't want to go to church anymore." That phrase from a son or daughter can strike terror in the hearts of faithful parents. It may mark the beginning of family arguments, feelings of failure and hostile compromises. Worship or Christian education attendance can become the litmus test of faith in a family. When that happens family relations are inevitably strained and the child's spiritual development takes second place to the family's/parents' values and discipline. Even if the daughter or son continues to come to church, faith is not necessarily increased. Such a scenario need not be.

To sort out the tension of church attendance in family life we need to look at several dimensions of the problem: the nature of spiritual or faith development, family rules or discipline, needs of children and youth, and parent advocacy for children.

Faith Development

When a child is baptized or dedicated, that child's parents and sponsors promise to raise the child to have faith in God and to participate in the life of the church. For many parents what that promise essentially means is taking their child to Christian education or Sunday morning worship. It is their hope and belief that the church will somehow enable their child to develop faith in God. Therefore, when their child says: "I don't wanna go!" they find themselves in the uncomfortable position of having their chief means of raising their child in the faith taken away. For ordained or lay professionals in the church there is the added tension of having their ability to nurture faith in others judged by their ability to bring their own children happily to church. It is no wonder then, that some parents will coerce, bribe, threaten or shame a child into going to church. For that to change it is necessary for parents to consider another perspective on what raising a faithful child means.

Participation in the worship life of the congregation is one of the ways that faith is expressed. It is also one of the key ways faith is formed. But it is not the primary way. The fundamental formation of a young person's understanding of the world and faith in God takes place within the home. When parents are enabled to pray with their children, create household rituals to mark key family and congregational celebrations, work together on issues of justice, peace and earthcare, and take their own spiritual development seriously, their sons and daughters learn a great deal about what it means to be a faithful person. Young people learn very early whether or not asking questions about God, life and death make their parents uncomfortable. They know whether their parents allow their questions and take their comments seriously.

In a home where parents nurture the faith of their children in day to day life, participation in the worship life of the church is but one, albeit very important, aspect of faith expression. Worshipping together can still have its own tensions but attendance will not matter as much to the parents as will the developing faith of that young person. Within that framework it is easier for parents to hear their children's dissatisfactions with church as problems to be discussed and potentially solved rather than as a sign that their children are reflecting them and rejecting faith in God.

Family Rules

It is not unusual for it to take some negotiation in families to establish the "church going rules." Does the parent go with his/her chil-

dren? If there are two parents do they both go? Does everyone go every Sunday? What happens in the summer? Does the family attend church away from home? Usually it is the parents who workout the family pattern initially. When children become part of the scene the rules may need to be renegotiated from time to time as different concerns emerge. Do the children stay in the worship service or attend church school? Can they decide what to do week by week? If the child wants to go and the parents do not, do they enable the child to get there? Is the older child or adolescent allowed to attend amid-week service and miss Sunday morning? For what reasons? Often it is a matter of trial and error to determine what suits the child's and the parents' needs best. Negotiating attendance, however, is a particularly difficult issue because raising it calls the whole enterprise into question.

Add to that the age consideration. When a four-year-old says, I don't wanna go to church today. I want to play with my friend," it will not take much effort on the parents' part (provided they really want to go themselves) to help the child realize that going to church and worshipping God with other Christians is an important thing to do in their family and that there will be time to play with the friend later. Four-year-olds generally want to be with their parents and do things with them. What is important to the parent is important to the child — church included. The child's needs are met and the problem is solved.

This is not so easily done when the child is older. As a young person matures from the infant in the nursery to the articulate person of faith, different needs and concerns emerge at different ages. If parents and other adults take seriously the needs of the young person they do two things. They let her/him know that, as an individual, s/he is important in the family and the Christian community. They also model concern, flexibility and a willingness to grow that will stand in good stead as a model of God's continual faithfulness to us. While each stage of a young person's life has its own needs, early and mid-adolescence are particularly important in relation to church participation and attendance.

Age Appropriate Unrest: Two Examples

When a young person of 11 or 12 says that church is boring, that he doesn't know anyone there (even if he has been attending that church since he was two), and that no one goes anymore, a parent is hearing that young adolescent declare his discomfort, often appropriate, with church. Congregations often fail young adolescents and our sons or daughters are just letting us know how. Perhaps not enough attention is being given to providing him with a social group to which he can belong. It could be that his Christian education class is not taking into account, among other concerns, his greater concern with day to day life, desire to discuss relevant short-term topics and need to have some say in setting the agenda. There is no room for his contribution in the worship service and the language is not explained or the concepts made applicable to his daily life. No wonder he is restless!

His sixteen-year-old sister is also declaring that she doesn't want to go to church anymore. She says the minister pays no attention to the issues that concern her, that everyone in the congregation is too rigid and that the talk about Jesus as the Son of God makes no sense to her anymore. She wants to go with a friend to visit some of the other faith communities around and see what other groups are saying about faith in God She rather likes what she hears from some of her friends at school who are Buddhist. They sound like they have a more open understanding of God.

It would be a mistake, however, if the parents of these two listened to their complaints and immediately said either "you must attend no matter what" or "okay stay home." Instead the first step would be to have conversations with the two of them that centered on what they were learning spiritually and how they wanted to develop. What someone like the boy of 11 or 12 wants and needs is to find significant ways to contribute to and be recognized by the congregation. He wants to understand what belonging to the faith community means for him. He is not asking to find his own way; he is asking how to belong. His 16-year-old sis-

ter, however, is in the midst of finding her own values and way of faith. She wants to be able to explore alternative systems of belief knowing that she has the freedom to reject the path chosen by her parents. The question is whether the church community and her parents will honor her quest.

The parents of these two are in a wonderful position to help young people develop spiritually by engaging with them in the tasks at hand. To do so may mean reexamining their own beliefs and engaging with their own questions of faith. It may mean, especially with the older one, giving her the freedom to pursue a separate path. (Can we as parents give our "emerging adult" children any less freedom than God gives us?) It may also mean they need to push a little within their own church community.

Parent Advocacy

Too often parents privatize their family faith struggles out of the mistaken belief that they are failing as parents or that their children just don't like church. But the needs of their children are usually the needs of other children as well. If the parents of the imaginary twosome above took their concerns to others in the congregation they might be able to advocate successfully for the changes their son and daughter need. Perhaps the 12-year-olds' Christian education session could be livened up and their contribution integrated in the worship service. A weekend away, a sleepover, or Sunday afternoon pizza parties could help him in finding a circle of friends and a place to belong. Perhaps one or two other adolescents or young adults might want to have an informal group discussion of other faiths. The 16-year-old daughter along with others could visit other faith communities and have a place in her own congregation to talk about what she learned. The parents might even find their own faith enhanced by engaging with others, including their children, to make the church community responsive to the needs of its participants of all ages.

Conclusion

The faith journeys of all God's people are to be taken seriously. Participation in a worshipping community enables children and youth to express through ritual the faith they currently have and to explore how that faith can influence their values and actions. Seeing their parents and other adults worshipping God gives them images of how they might live out their faith when they are older. Attendance is a secondary issue to being a family and a congregation that strives to enable people to express their faith in God, their concern for humanity and our earth home, and their support of one another as companions on the journey.

Part II

Responding to the Needs of Young Adolescents

Seven Developmental Needs of Young Adolescents[14]

Physical Activity

Young adolescents' spurts of boundless energy are as well known as their periods of dreamy lethargy. They need time to stretch, wiggle, and exercise rapidly growing bodies; they also need time to relax. Adults who work with young adolescents need to remember the diversity in strength, dexterity and size of youth in this age group. Intensely competitive physical activity often places unnecessary burden on late-bloomers who cannot compete successfully. Early bloomers who are pressured into conforming to towards athletic prowess rather than intellectual or social development also can be harmed by stressful sports competition.

Competence and Achievement

Because young adolescents experience extraordinary self-consciousness about their own new selves and the attitude of others towards them, it is easy to understand their overwhelming desire to do something well and to receive admiration for achievement. Young people hunger for chances to prove themselves, especially in ways that are rewarding if all goes well and not devastating if there are some disappointments. Young adolescents need to know what they do is valued by others whom they respect.

Self-Definition

Rapidly changing bodies and minds require time to absorb new ways of thinking, new mirrored reflections and new reactions from others. To accommodate the new selves that they are becoming, young adolescents need chances to consider what it means to be a man or woman and to belong to a racial, ethnic, and/or cultural group. They need time to find a friend and share a secret or to have a good talk with an adult. They need opportunities to explore their widening world and to reflect upon the meaning of new experiences, so that they can begin to consider themselves not just as observers, but as participants in society.

Creative Expression

Opportunities to express creatively their new feelings, interests, abilities and thoughts help young adolescents to understand and accept the new people they are becoming. Performing and being exposed to drama, literature and musical works of others helps them see that people before them have felt the emotions and thought the ideas that are new and confusing to them. In addition to the

arts, young adolescents can find opportunities for creative expression in sports such as synchronized swimming and roller skating and in activities like tending a garden or painting a wall mural.

Positive Social Interactions with Peers and Adults

Young adolescents' parents and families remain of primary importance in setting values and giving affection. Their peers offer needed support, companionship and criticism. In addition, adults other than parents have an effect on the lives of young adolescents, who are so eager to understand the possibilities of adulthood. Young adolescents need relationships with adults who are willing to share their own experiences, views, values and feelings with young people. These adults will also encourage adolescents to develop positive relationships with peers.

Structure and Clear Limits

Young adolescents live in a society of rules, and they want to know and understand their own limits within that system. Clear expectations are crucial to unsure, self-critical young people. Their search for security in a world of conflicting demands is helped by explicit boundaries that define the areas in which they may legitimately seek freedom to explore. They differ from younger children, though, in that they are increasingly capable of participating with adults in framing their own rules and limits.

Meaningful Participation

Youth need to participate in the activities that shape their lives. Successful events are planned with, not for, young adolescents. As they develop a mature appearance and more sophisticated social and intellectual skills, they want opportunities to use their new talents. And by learning that their actions can affect the world around them, they gain a sense of responsibility. Adults can help young adolescents see themselves as citizens by providing opportunities for them to make meaningful contributions to their communities. Adults need to adapt responsibilities to the short-term attention span characteristic of young adolescents, and to select varied tasks that enlist diverse interests and abilities.

❖

Developmental diversity is the central characteristic of young adolescence. Because of the wide variations in "normal" growth rates during puberty, there may be a six- to eight-year span in physical development among a group of young adolescents of the same chronological age. Just as important, young adolescents master at very different rates the new cognitive skills that begin during this time. A group of 13 or 14-year-olds would probably include some girls who look like young women and are capable of bearing children. Beside these girls might stand girls who are just beginning to develop womanly curves and are not menstruating. A few boys in the group might look like strapping young men, while others have barely begun their growth spurt. A few of the boys and girls may have mastered the new thinking skills we call "formal operations, "but most will be moving between the concrete thinking of childhood and the abstract thinking that is more characteristic of adulthood. Because of their enormous developmental diversity, young adolescents require a variety of types and levels of activities designed to meet the seven needs described.

Implications of Developmental Research for Ministries with Young Adolescents[15]

To be effective in meeting their needs, ministries with young adolescents should provide the following opportunities:

- **A chance to explore who they are and who they can become.** The major developmental task of young adolescence is to build the foundation for a strong and realistic concept of self When development in young adolescence proceeds in positive ways, we see a movement in all areas — social, emotional, intellectual and physical — towards increased independence competence, and greater responsibility to self and society.
- **Time to reflect on their changing self-concept.** Young adolescents need positive feedback on their emerging self-concept, and opportunities in which they can experience a sense of mastery and competence.
- **Opportunities to form positive relationships.** Experiences with peers in a comfortable and secure environment are essential for the development of friendship-making and friendship-maintaining skills.
- **Experience a sense of competence.** Providing adequate support and training towards the performance of meaningful tasks is their communities and in their congregation allows young adolescents to feel that their talents are valuable and valued.
- **Opportunities to gain experience in making decisions.** Setting norms, and shaping program content with adult help, allows young adolescents to feel a sense of participation in shaping their lives, while at the same time recognizing the limits of this freedom.
- **Time for laughter, high spirits and physical activity, as well as time for contemplation and opportunities to be alone.**
- **A chance to explore and discuss vocation and career.** "So I get a good job when I am older" is one of the top values of young adolescents.
- **Opportunities to explore, discuss and act on justice issues like racism, poverty and peace.** Their concerns should be taken seriously by helping them take constructive action and helping them reflect on these experiences.
- **Opportunities to receive accurate information and guidance about human sexuality.** Young adolescents need to explore what being a man or woman means and to communicate with their parents about human sexuality in a Christian-values context.
- **A chance to apply Christian values** and utilize decision making skills as they struggle with moral judgment questions.
- **Opportunities to experience a sense of belonging, of membership in the Christian community;** to experience the Christian story: it's understandings, rituals, actions.

- **Opportunities to sort out the variety of beliefs, values and ideas** that are grounded in both significant others and peer-group consensus. The goal of this sorting out process is to aid the adolescent in responding to Jesus from a growing inner sense of self, rather than relying on external influences.
- **Opportunities to connect religious traditions with varied opportunities for self-discovery and self-definition.**
- **Time to discover a relationship with God in a more personal way.** Young adolescents need time to reflect on the experience of God as a friend or companion and what this means for him or her on an intellectual, affective and moral level.
- **Time to explore their relationship with Jesus, concentrating on who Jesus really is** — his values, his intentions, his motives and his attitudes, as well as what he really proclaimed and how this relates to the adolescent's own life.
- **Opportunities to develop skills for communicating with diverse adult, Christian role models.**
- **A chance to know mature adults who are comfortable with young adolescents and are willing to explore sensitive issues with them.**
- **Opportunities to know adults who will share their own life experiences that relay themes of personal relating and personal commitment.**
- **Opportunities to learn to socialize, build better communication and grow with their parents/families.** Young adolescent ministries needs to be a ministry with parents/families. Whether it is an educational program on human sexuality or Scripture, a communication workshop, or a social or recreational event, the family should be an integral part of the program.

Young Adolescents . . . Therefore They . . .[16]

Young adolescents . . .
are at a unique, vulnerable time in their lives, when adults continue to be important to them;

Therefore they . . . need relationships with reassuring and informed adults who like and respect them and who serve as role models and advisors.

So they . . . Example: Come to us for reassurance.

Young adolescents . . .
seek limited in dependence and autonomy; may imagine themselves to be invulnerable to dangerous risks.

Therefore they . . . need adult guidance in setting clear limits, but they should help to make rules within those guidelines.

So they . . . Example: Display out-of control behavior when limits are not clear.

Young adolescents . . .
live in a constantly expanding world, as they master new social skills and begin to see themselves in relation to their communities and to society in general.

Therefore they . . . need opportunities to make meaningful contribution to their communities, as they see themselves as participants, not as observers in society.

So they . . . Example: Volunteer for service projects.

Young adolescents . . .
develop new thinking skills; question rules and beliefs that had been accepted on face value up until now.

Therefore they . . . need to have a voice in planning the activities that shape their lives.

So they . . . Example: Argue with adults about whether norms are reasonable and fair.

Young adolescents . . .
are a diverse and challenging age group with which to work.

Therefore they . . . need youth workers and other adults who like and respect them for who they are right now; who respond sensitively to both their present joys and confusion and their dreams and worries about the future.

So they . . . Example: Have disdain for statements that start with "When you grow up. . . ."

Young adolescents...
grow more rapidly than at any other time in their lives except for infancy.

Therefore they... need lots of physical activity — not intense competition — and time for relaxation too.

So they... Example: Fidget or squirm when sitting.

Young adolescents...
change at different rates, according to highly internal "clocks," can be painfully self conscious and critical, and are vulnerable to bouts of low self-esteem.

Therefore they... need many varied opportunities to achieve and to have their competence recognized by others.

So they... Example: Ask for affirmation on their work.

Young adolescents...
develop secondary sex characteristics and the capacity to reproduce;

Therefore they... need time for self-definition; that is, time to reflect upon and absorb their new "look," and new reactions from others.

So they... Example: Constantly look in mirrors.

Young adolescents...
have new interests and abilities, as well as many new feelings, thoughts, and concerns about themselves and the world around them.

Therefore they... need opportunities to express creatively these new interests, thoughts, and emotions.

So they... Example: Identify with characters in stories, videos and TV.

Young adolescents ...
identify with their peer group, and want to belong; develop deepening, mutual friendships.

Therefore they... need opportunities to form positive relationships and experiences with peers.

So they... Example: Resent being separated from "best friends."

What's Missing? Motivation[17]

Motivation is created when a young person has a reason to want to do something.

Do you work with bored, restless or indifferent young adolescents? You might be missing the key ingredient here. Recently a group of congregational youth coordinators and catechists met to discuss ways to improve their junior-high programs. They started their discussion by listing concerns and frustrations each was experiencing. Some of the issues raised dealt with youth, while others centered on programming. Here is a sampling of their frustration:

"They don't pay attention, they don't seem to care at all."

"We planned a special program just for them, but the kids didn't show up."

"They say they are going to do something, but they rarely follow-through. They are not very committed."

"My group is just plain bored."

"I can't get my class to be the least bit enthusiastic about anything"

Several others in the group had very different experiences. They spoke of exciting, successful programs with young adolescents. These young people were their favorite ones to teach and spend time with.

"They have so much energy and they are so much fun to be with."

"My youth show a lot of interest as long as I give them a chance to be creative."

"The junior-high youth I work with are always ready to help on any project in the congregation."

It became clear that the primary difference in the experience of the two groups was not the kind of programs they had; nor was it a question of the quality of the leaders. *The real distinction was how well motivated the youth were.*

Motivation is created when a young person has a reason to want to do something. If that reason or motivation comes from within the person, then it is most likely to prompt action. Ideas, needs and emotions can all be internal motives. If we wish to motivate young people, then we need to start with them. Their ideas and opinions must be integrated into our programs. When programs respond to their needs we are able to build in personal motivation. Greater involvement and a positive attitude follow.

We have trouble motivating youth when we try to get them to do something we want by exercising our power. Typical power statements begin with: "if you don't" or "Because I said so." This approach uses an external force for motivation. The result is apathy or outright rejection of the adult leader, the program or the institution.

We need to carefully examine how it is we attempt to motivate the youth we serve. There are several important concepts that provide some direction.

Ownership

Programs should be planned with and not just for youth. **If youth have some ownership of the congregation's program, they are more likely to attend, actively participate, and enjoy it. Ownership is built through consultation.** Leaders must listen to the needs of youth before designing programs. Written surveys, personal

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interviews, and observation are all methods of gathering information about young adolescents. In order for ownership to be built, however, it is important that youth know they are being listened to. It is not enough to simply give out a survey. They need to see how their input is being used.

Program planning provides young adolescents with a great deal of motivation. They like to plan programs that allow them to accomplish something and to see the results of their work. They learn about responsibility and build a sense of confidence. Even in more structured programs, ones with a predetermined content, young people can be involved in decisions about everything from time schedules to furniture arrangements and the type of refreshments to be served.

Collaboration, Not Competition

While some young adolescents may be motivated by competitive activities, for example, sports and contests, many others are not. The great diversity in the physical, social and emotional development of 10–15-year-olds leads to a great deal of confusion and self-doubt. Many competitive activities provide early developers with unfair advantages and may punish late developers. Competition emphasizes comparison and winning, yet young adolescents need to feel accepted, valuable and included.

Junior-high programs that provide opportunities for youth to collaborate with each other and with adults receive an enthusiastic response. Group projects, non-competitive sports, discussion groups, and family and intergenerational programs are all successful with young adolescents. **When youth link together to complete a task, they grow in appreciation of their own giftedness, as well as acknowledge the gifts of others: Motivation will come from experiencing themselves as a valuable participant in the group.**

Peer Relationships

While the peer group obviously plays an important role in motivating young people, it is not necessarily a negative influence. Junior-high youth are often very self-conscious and therefore want to "be like everyone else" in order to be accepted. The task for adult leaders is to channel that group influence towards positive actions.

All young adolescent ministries programs need to build healthy peer relationships. These relationships can become a primary motivation for ongoing involvement in the church. Programs should enable young people to learn from each other. Worship events, planned and led by young people, will allow them to share and celebrate their faith together. Service programs are prime opportunities for youth to collaborate in helping others. Social events can build bonds of support as youth recreate together. Most importantly, the church must provide an environment that warmly welcomes the youth as full members of the community.

Adult Encouragement

Young adolescents look to adults whom they like and respect as models for their behavior and attitudes. In addition, young people are more likely to be actively involved in a program and follow through on commitments when they know adults they care about expect this of them. Personal encouragement from a caring mentor can be a powerful motivator for youth who are unsure of themselves.

Youth programs therefore need adults who are willing to spend their time building supportive relationships with young adolescents. When adult youth relationships are well established and based on mutual respect, there will be little need to motivate through threats or warnings. Adult affirmation and encouragement will lead to positive responses from the youth.

Disturbing Behavior[18]

Strategies for dealing with disturbing behavior:

1. **Divert the problem behavior by channeling it into an acceptable activity.**

If programs are being interrupted by the "underground trading" of baseball cards, establish a time for trading.

2. **Prevent predictable problem behavior.**

If the young people have been taking standardized tests in school all day, offer non-taxing activities that help them unwind physically and emotionally.

3. **Set clear limits on behavior and enforce the limits.**

Youth workers and young adolescents can work together to define rules that they agree are clear, logical and fair. If everybody knows that young people are not allowed to hang out in the gym but must sign up for activities or leave, they will understand a youth worker's directive to clear the gym so a gymnastics class can begin Power struggles between adults and young people can be avoided or defused when youth workers can cite reasons for rules that the youth themselves have had a voice in making, rather than operating from the position of "Because I said so."

4. **Protect young adolescents from harmful or overly stressful situations.**

If younger adolescents are being hazed, if one young person is being scapegoated, or if rival groups are antagonizing each other, design program activities that temporarily separate the groups or that confront the issue through limit-setting, sensitive discussion and required collaboration.

5. **Teach alternative, acceptable behaviors to replace unacceptable behavior.**

Give young adolescents opportunities to practice the alternatives. If young adolescents make unkind comments about the senior citizens who share your building and are sometimes discourteous, to them, start a skills exchange that begins with discussions, about attitude towards the elderly and provides opportunities for teenagers and elderly people to benefit from one another.

6. **Make sure program activities provide whatever emotional or technical support young adolescents need.**

The fine line between too much and too little structure varies every day and in every situation for young adolescents, so it is not easy to know just how much structure an activity requires. Youth workers need the correct skills to diagnose a group of young adolescents and the flexibility to frequently readjust the amount of structure they provide. If planning a session for a camping trip is deteriorating into horseplay, it could be because the young adolescents do not know what to do next or how to do it.

7. **Have established, understood criteria for behavior.**

Youth workers should develop a process for removing disruptive people from individual program activities and from the program as a whole. Also, there should be an established mechanism through which the offending participant can return to the program.

8. **Remove the offender from the group.**

When a youth worker is confronted with unacceptable behavior from either an individual

or a group of young people, he or she can remove the offender from the group. The established policy regarding removal must always be followed.

9. **Gently put the problem back on the young person.**

For example: YOUTH: "Do you think I should sign up for tutoring or gymnastics?" YOUTH WORKER: "You were in gymnastics last time. You have been saying you are behind in math. I would suggest tutoring." YOUTH: (defiantly) "But this is my free choice, and I hate math! You can't tell me what to do. YOUTH WORKER: "You are right, the choice is yours. But you asked me what I thought and I told you. Now it's up to you.'

10. **Help the young adolescent(s) gain insight into their behavior.**

This often can be done by relating behavior to feelings. For example: "You have been short-tempered and insulting with each other and with me for the past two days. This is unusual for you. I wonder if it has anything to do with the butterflies we are all feeling about the opening of our show tomorrow?"

11. **Help young adolescents clarify the reason behind their behavior.**

"You've been picking on Jim a lot lately. What's going on between the two of you?"

12. **Use humor to get your point across.**

Humor can often be effective in defusing volatile situations. Remember, however, never to make fun of young people or to laugh at them. (Self-directed humor often helps.)

13. **Ignore the behavior altogether.**

For example, inappropriate attention-seeking behavior is best ignored altogether so long as it is not harmful and you make an all-out attempt to pay attention to the youth when he/she is doing something good. Most behaviors that annoy adults but are not disruptive or distracting the group are best ignored.

14. **Acknowledge that the behavior is normally unacceptable, but permit it due to unique circumstances.**

For example, young people are complaining about having to clean up the craft room and store their projects that are at a fragile stage. The youth worker might acknowledge that although it is a rule that the room be clean after each class, since the projects are fragile and no one else will be using room, they may leave their projects and equipment out as long as the equipment is cleaned.

15. **Tolerate behavior by giving a warning or offering a grace period.**

For example, a youth worker has been working with a boy for several weeks to get him to take part in activities, rather than passively watch or heckle other youngsters. The boy finally participates in an activity but gets into a name-calling argument with another member. Instead of telling both to sit on the sidelines for 10 minutes, which is a typical consequence for name-calling, the youth worker gives them a stern warning, gets them back into the activity and has a talk with them afterwards.

16. **Use subtle cues that young adolescents understand and respond to because of your relationship with them.**

A subtle hand signal, clearing your throat, or a muttered "Uh!" may get the message across that the behavior must stop, while helping the offender save face.

17. **Do the unexpected.**

Surprise an unruly group or individual by doing something creative or totally unexpected For example, pull an individual offender aside for a quiet, supportive talk; reverse roles with the offender, or stop the activity and interject a fun, energetic, tension-releasing activity.

Preventing Sexual Abuse

More young people than you can imagine are dealing with the trauma of sexual abuse. One in three girls and one in six boys will have received some unwanted sexual attention before the age of 18.[19] At least one child in 10 is traumatized to some degree as a result.

Despite the frequency of occurrence, sexual abuse is one of the most under reported crimes in our society. The abuse goes undisclosed because of fear of not being believed or protected, or of a negative response.

It is a myth that the offender is usually a stranger. In 85% of the cases, the offender is known to the victim and is someone who is in a position of trust or authority (parent, relative or friend of the family, clergyperson, teacher, leader). The abuse often takes place in the home and is usually repetitive.

Responses

Individual

The best way to respond to the adolescent whom you suspect may have been sexually abused is to listen carefully to what the adolescent says and to be attentive to his or her behavior. Show your concern. Ask if anything is the matter. But do not press for an answer. Let it be known that you are ready to listen at any time.

If a young person discloses sexual abuse, there are important steps to follow:

- Talk to the young person. Allow him/her to tell you what happened in their own words, without pressing for details. Detailed questioning is best handled by professionals.
- Listen to the young person. The young person needs to be believed, to know that it is not his/her fault, and that it was right to tell. Remain calm.
- The recipient of a disclosure must report this information to the police or the young person welfare agency in your area, depending on the age of the adolescent and the provincial jurisdiction. Following the disclosure, there may be protection and recovery issues. It is important to know who to contact before an incident occurs. Contact your diocesan office for your local policy.

Community

Be proactive in educational efforts towards prevention of abuse.

- Have established policies about sexual harassment abuse, or disclosure of abuse for all of youth ministries (i.e., congregations, camps, etc.).
- Identify people and resources in your community. Ask an informed person to prepare a list of resources and services in your community so that people can be given appropriate referrals.
- Parents, young people, ministry professionals need information and education about sexual abuse.
- A major task for the church is that of consciousness-raising around the issue. A report from the Lambeth Conference of 1988 on sexual abuse states that: "Sexual abuse is self-gratification by exploitation. It makes an impersonal object of the other person, abusing both the person and sexuality itself.... **The Church must be clear about these violations of sexual intimacy... aggressively proactive about its social policy and action, and be forthright in dealing with violations in its own community."**

Prevention Education[20]

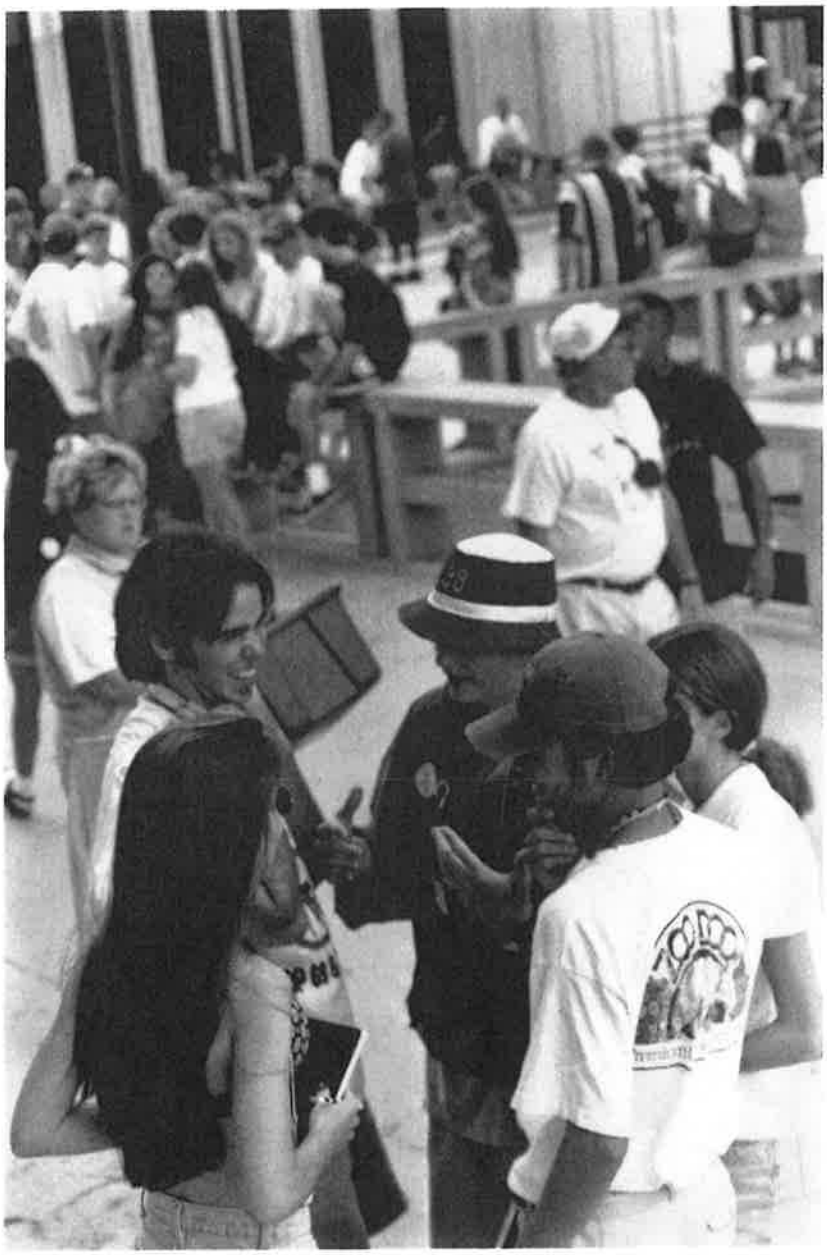
Prevention education accomplishes the following:

- It breaks through the individual and societal silence and denial which have long supported/tolerated sexual abuse.
- It increases access to community resources for treatment and intervention by young people.
- It decreases the level of public acceptance of sexual abuse.
- It increases the degree of understanding and awareness by adolescents of the issues related to sexual violence.

Prevention education is necessary on two levels: short-term and long-term. The focus of short-term education is the dissemination of factual information about rape, incest and child sexual abuse; and the development of skills to enable an individual to effectively avoid or resist an approach by an offender. Another necessary ingredient for education is information about what to do and who to contact for help if assaulted. Long-term education has to do with institutional and societal change directed at the root causes of sexual abuse. The focus is on an examination of the role that basic cultural attitudes and practices play in supporting and encouraging violence.

Part III

Programming



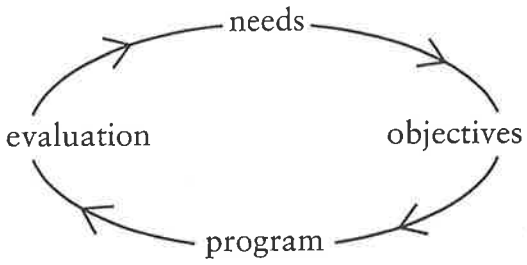
Program Development: An Overview

To develop a program it is necessary to select a methodology that best suits not only the situation that you are in, but also is a way of doing things that is comfortable and workable for you.

Needs-Based Approach

This approach involves an assessment of needs. It can be done informally; however, a more formal assessment process helps to build ownership in the program and makes programming a more accurate reflection of the community's needs. Needs should be drawn from those whom you want to own the program.

The program designed should reflect the needs noted and be specific about how it will meet those needs.



Needs can be gathered by the following methods:

1. Written data, e.g., a survey or questionnaire.
2. Verbal data, e.g., interviews or group discussion.
3. By observation of the existing situation.
4. By learning the history of the community and previous successes and failures in the same area of program.

Components of Youth Ministries

Youth programs must meet the needs of the whole community — youth and parents and, therefore it is necessary to have components of the program that touch on all areas of life. Good programming reflects the needs of the participants and is broadly based.

The components are the following:

1. Christian Education and Catechesis
2. Community Life
3. Service
4. Guidance and Counsel
5. Prayer and Worship
6. Justice and Peace.

These components may overlap so that a program designed to serve in one area may be effective in other areas as well.

Discovering Leaders

Offering an opportunity for leadership is providing youth and adults with an opportunity to use their gifts.

En - able - ment = Empowerment

There are some primary factors in uncovering and enabling leadership within your own community. They include:

1. **Surfacing people's gifts.** This assumes
   - charism of community
   - gifts of the Spirit
   - God loves us/them
   - needs can be met.
2. **Equipping the leaders.** We must provide training, resources, support and recognition.
3. **Organization of the work.** We must place people in a circumstance where they can work and share their skills and gifts. They must have a context that is workable for them.
4. **Supporting the leaders.** A minister must not minister alone. Support must be affective and include celebration and thanks. Support must provide for evaluation so that there can be assessment, measurement, encouragement and correction. Support must include supervision so that leaders are not on their own, have a sense of limits and control and have someone else with whom there can be reflection and explanation.
5. **Sharing the story.** We must provide opportunities for the community to hear what is happening and to give leaders an opportunity to hear each other's stories for consideration and learning.

We must see and present leadership as an opportunity and a privilege, not as a problem and a source of guilt and burden.

Developing a Support Group

It is important to ensure that the youth ministries of your congregation is not a one-person program. Neither you nor it will survive. There needs to be a common understanding of the ministry: goals, purpose and direction. There must be people within the congregation who are advocates and supporters of youth ministries. It may be that before you can develop a youth program, it will be necessary to form a support group. If the congregation has already agreed to a youth program, then it is essential to put a support group into place.

Group Makeup

The people who are in a support group need to be people who have a genuine concern for youth. They should understand that they are not being asked to do youth ministries but to support it. They should be representative of the congregation and larger community in age, race, gender, and interest. To begin, the group should include no more than 3–8 people. It may grow and diversify over time if it is a large congregation with an active program.

Group Tasks

The function of this group is to provide support for youth ministries in the congregation and for the leadership of the youth ministries program. They should be asked to pray not only for the whole direction and work of youth ministries, but also for individual young people and leaders. They may choose to study together and to seek a vision for the youth ministries of the congregation and the surrounding community. Their task is to uphold a vision for youth ministries in the congregation and to create through their own involvement and interest a climate of concern and for youth. They may be asked to advocate for youth in the structures of the congregation. They may be useful in assisting in the recruitment of volunteers and resource people for your youth programs.

This group should not be comprised of the people who have a hands-on role in operating the program. They may have no obvious active involvement or they may become gradually more involved. They will need to meet occasionally, with flexibility in terms of time and membership. It may be that this group only meets once a month in support of a working program, but more frequently at the beginning or in other times of difficulty and crisis. Leadership in this group should be shared.

Developing a Working Group

The *working group* is the team of people who actually work with youth in a variety of roles and with a variety of tasks, each requiring a specific but limited time commitment.

It is important to ensure that the youth ministries program of your congregation is a *team* ministry. Team ministry is essential for a broadly based and effective youth program. It is important to have established a purpose statement and to be working with agreed long- and short-term goals in your work. You will need to know what you, together, are trying to accomplish and whether you are moving in the direction your parish is supporting. These people will assist you with youth ministries in your congregation.

Team Members

These people will like young people and be willing to be with them or be willing to work on their behalf. They will have some interest or skill to do the specific job or task that they are asked to do. It is essential to try to match people and jobs. It is also important to share the load as much as possible.

Recruiting Members

This is one of the most important pieces of building an effective and enduring youth ministries program and involves care and planning; as well, recruiting may take some time. (See p. 102 in the RESOURCES section on recruitment.)

Supporting Your Team

If you want the ministry to grow, support cannot be ignored. This may include the need for training for some of your leadership and working team in areas that they request. It will require the general support of the congregation and the specific support of your support group. Some public act of commissioning or blessing for youth leaders or volunteers helps affirm this work as ministry. Praying together before events and involving the volunteers who do the small and less noticed jobs can build ownership and involvement. Encourage the young people to express their appreciation. Be creative and thankful.

It sounds like a lot of work to get started in building a team. It is. But if this part of the work is done well, the difficulty and despair that inevitably sets in for a program eagerly and hastily begun may be avoided. Careful preparation of a ministry is vital for the health and well-being of both the leaders and the participants.

Program Areas

1. *Christian Education and Catechesis*

   Focus: To nurture personal faith development and to share the values, beliefs and story of the faith community with young people.

2. *Community Life*

   Focus: To build Christian community with young people through programs and relationships that promote openness, trust, respect, cooperation, honesty, responsibility and service; and to create an atmosphere where young people can grow and bring their struggles, questions and joys.

3. *Service*

   Focus: To provide opportunities for community service through education and programs.

4. *Guidance and Counsel*

   Focus: To provide support, education, resources and counsel for decision-making, crisis intervention and prevention.

5. *Prayer and Worship*

   Focus: To enable young people to grow in their personal spirituality and to provide a variety of worship experiences to deepen their relationships in community; to involve young people in the sacramental life of the church.

6. *Justice and Peace*

   Focus: To develop social consciousness and commitment to peace and justice; to provide opportunities for education and social action.

   N.B.: There may be duplication from one area to another. The same program or event might be effective in other component areas.

The Contact Point Model[21]

Sponsoring Group

As may be inferred by the name, "contact" is the basis of this model — contact between the group who sponsors the ministries, the congregation, community, or diocese, and every young person who is related to the sponsor.

Potentially every young person who is associated with the congregation can be affected by the youth ministries program using this model.

This model, unlike others, is not hinged on belonging or attendance. Both of these elements are included, though the success of the effort is not dependent upon them.

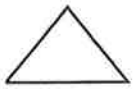
The "sponsoring group" is at the center of the model, which presumes, for example, that the congregation is the group who owns the youth ministries program. Young people play a significant role in planning and program, however. The ministry is the responsibility of the whole community.

The Contact Point Model includes programs developed in three formats: gathering, non-gathering, and family/intergenerational.

Gathering Programs

are the most familiar and visible examples of youth ministries. Youth group meetings, conferences, sports activities, educational programs — provide young people with opportunities to learn and learn from one another.

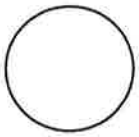
The Contact Point Model also includes the times when the sponsoring group gathers and asks about the involvement of young people in the bigger scene.



Non-Gathering Programs

youth ministries efforts are an important part of the congregation's outreach and nurture of adolescents. These efforts are vital as they bring the congregation into contact with youth who may not be participants in its current activities.

Non-gathering efforts include mailings, resource listings, advertising, phone calls, etc. A non-gathering focus also raises the issues of advocacy, pastoral care, and culture to the agenda of youth ministries.



Family/Intergenerational

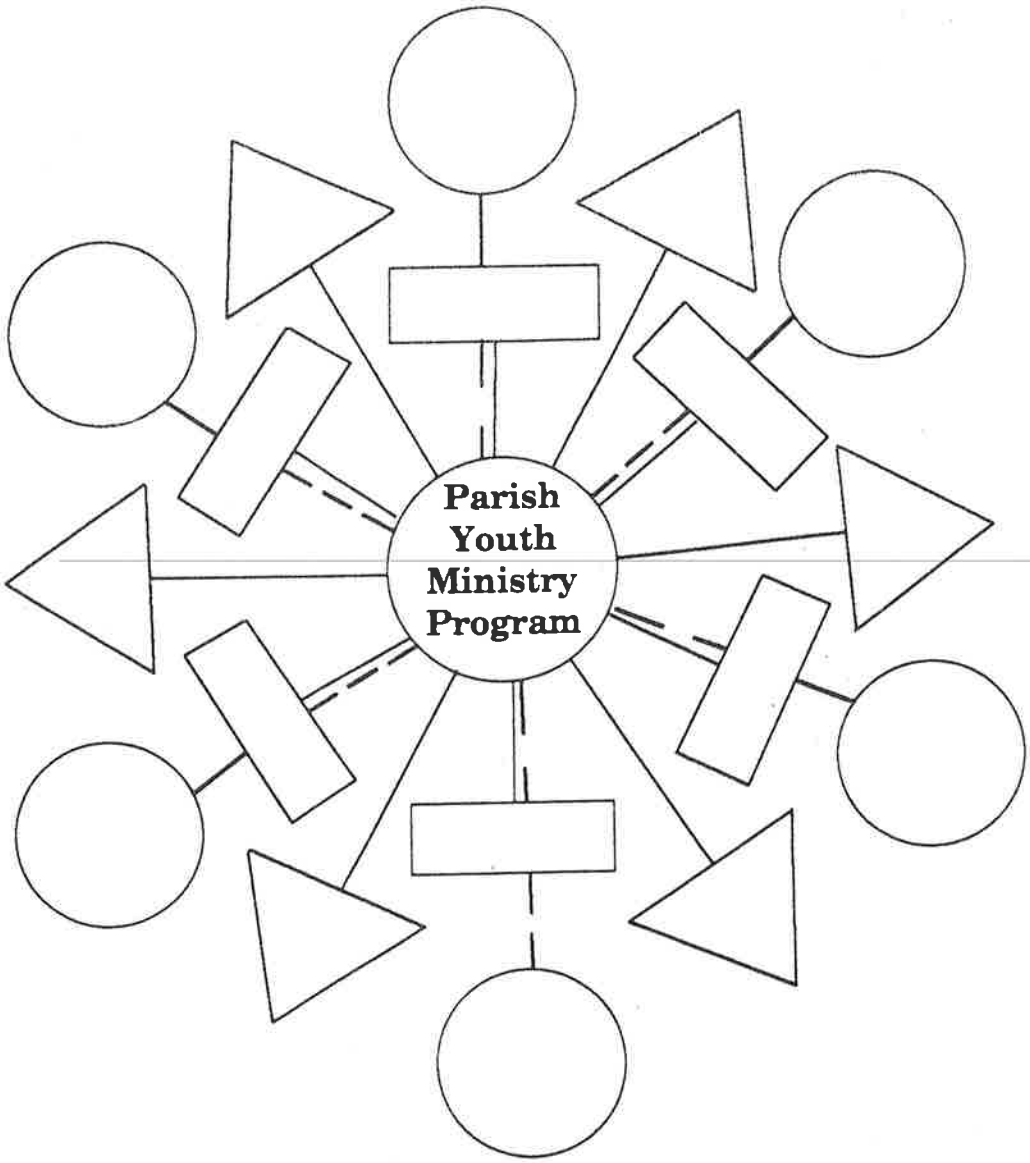
programs recognize the adolescent through a household prism. These efforts seek to support adolescent families and make the church and family better partners. Further, this focus includes activities across generation lines. Some examples of this area are: parent-teen workshops, rituals for family life, youth-senior skills exchange.

Youth ministries always has a dimension of *advocacy* that cuts across the system. The focus of advocacy is to help interpret the needs of young people in the church and in society; to ensure the voices of young people in decision-making, and to address the representation of young people in the systems of the church.

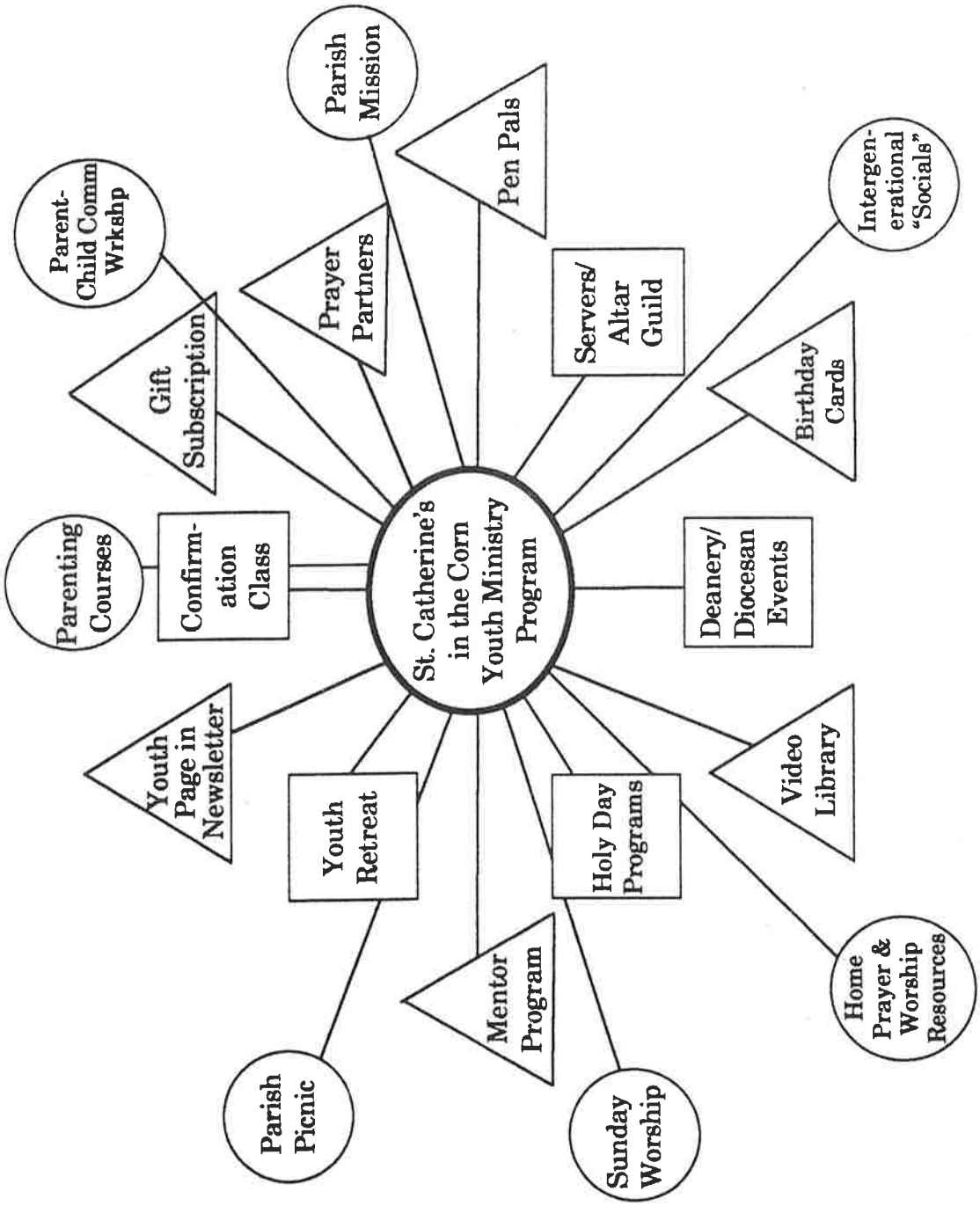
Congregational Planning for Young Adolescent Ministries

The following pages include charts and worksheets to assist you in the planning process. Change and revise them as you think necessary. This process works best with a coordinator and a team of others who are engaged in the ministry. Young adolescents and other youth need to be involved in this process along with adults.

Contact Point Model



Contact Point Model: Sample



Using the Contact Point Model

	Step One
	"Where do we start?" **Analysis of Present**
Who	• Support Team * *ensure involvement of young people, and adolescent families*
How	• Worksheets 1-A, 1-B • Assess the needs of your congregation. See the congregation survey on p. 128
	Step Two
	"Where do we want to go?" **Vision for the Future**
Who	• Support Team
How	• Worksheet 2
	Step Three
	"What are the possibilities?" **Brainstorm Ideas**
Who	• Working Group
How	• Worksheets 3-A, 3-B

Step Four

"What's the reality?"

Plan Action

- Working Group — **Who**
- Worksheets 4-A, 4-B — **How**

* *see sample form for Leader's job description, p. 130*

Step Five

"Let's go!"

Take Action

- Youth and Leaders — **Who**
- Activity Picture — **How**

Step Six

"How did it work?"

Evaluate

- Working Group — **Who**

* *ensure involvement of participants*

- Develop forms for each program — **How**

Step Seven

"Who needs to know?"

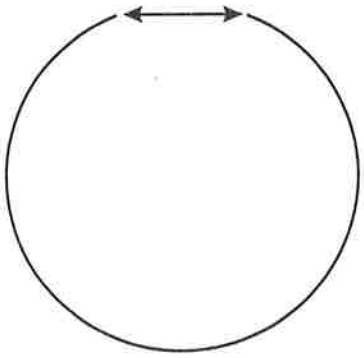
Telling the Story

- Working Group and Support Group — **Who**
- Thank-you cards for volunteers — **How**
- Celebrations in Parish
- Reports in Newsletter
- Oral reports in Parish
- Report to Vestry

Step Eight

"Where next?"

Start Over



Contact Point Model Worksheet

	Gathering	Non-gathering	International/ Family
Christian Education and Catechesis			
Community Education			
Prayer and Worship			
Justice and Peace			
Guidance and Counsel			
Service			

Contact Point Model Worksheet
With Some Ideas to Get You Started

	Gathering	Non-gathering	International/ Family
Christian Education and Catechesis	• classes • mini-courses • speaker series	• newsletters • video library • tape exchange	• parallel • parent/youth education • home study resources • TV guides
	Message: Young Adolescent faith is affiliative		
Community Education	• social events • lock-outs • ski trips • camping	• birthday cards • home visits • T-shirts	• picnic • folk dancing • games night
	Message: Young Adolescents need positive interaction with peers and adults		
Prayer and Worship	• eucharist • seder meal • prayer for exams • rites of passage rituals	• prayer circles • personal prayer resources • crosses	• advent calendars • resources for home prayers • house blessings • lenten programs
	Message: Young Adolescents need opportunities to experience a sense of belonging and membership in the Christian community		
Justice and Peace	• workshops • rake 'n' run • political action	• international pen pals • recommended reading • articles by youth • subscriptions	• fundraisers • peace festival • refugee host program
	Message: Young Adolescents need opportunities to explore and act on global issues		
Guidance and Counsel	• sex education • alcohol and drug education • job skills • baby-sitting course • study skills	• referrals • community information • counselling fund • reading material	• joint education • communication skills • parent support groups
	Message: Young Adolescents need time to learn to apply Christian moral values and utilize decision-making skills		
Service	• volunteer day at shelter • day camp program	• drive for foodbank • Christmas hampers • prayers for homeless	• seniors and youth skill exchange • visiting seniors' home
	Message: Young Adolescents need meaningful participation and are ready to make commitments in community		

Worksheet 1-A

Youth Ministries at _____

Analysis of the Present Ministries

Date: _____

1. (Individual work) Think of all that goes on in the life of your congregation. Now, working quietly on your own, answer the following questions (10 min.):
   a. If you were a 13-year-old in your congregation, what would there be for you?

   b. If you were a parent of a 13-year-old in your congregation, what would there be for you?

   c. If you were a 13-year-old and did not participate in any activities in your congregation, how would you know the congregation cared about you? (e.g., names in the intercessions, sent birthday cards, hear publicity about programs, church involvement in school or community organizations, etc.)

2. Group work (20 min.):
   a. Share your analysis of the present in your congregational group.
   b. What do you notice about what is present and what is missing in your congregation?

Worksheet 1-B

As a group, discuss which of the following six components at youth ministries are present in your congregation. Give examples.

1. *Christian Education and Catechesis*

   Focus: To nurture personal faith development and to share the values, belief and story of the faith community with young people.

2. *Community Life*

   Focus: To build Christian community with young people through programs and relationships that promote openness, trust, respect, cooperation, honesty, responsibility and service; and to create an atmosphere where young people can grow and bring their struggles, questions and joys.

3. *Service*

   Focus: To provide opportunities for community service, through outreach and education.

Worksheet 1-B (continued)

4. *Guidance and Counsel*

   Focus: To provide support, education, resources and counsel for decision-making, crisis intervention and prevention.

5. *Prayer and Worship*

   Focus: To enable young people to grow in their person spirituality and to provide a variety of worship experiences to deepen their relationships in community; to involve young people in the sacramental life of the church.

6. *Justice and Peace*

   Focus: To develop social consciousness and commitment to peace and justice; to provide opportunities for education and action.

Worksheet 2
Vision of the Future

1. Individually and in silence, write your response to the following scenario (10 min.):

   It is now 2000. Your congregation is known for the vitality of its ministries with young adolescents.

   What is happening?
   (This question can be answered by writing or drawing a picture.)

   What did you do to make it happen?

2. *a.* Share your vision of the future with your congregational team. (20 min. for a & b)

   b. What do your visions have in common? Where are the differences?

3. As a group, record a *shared* vision on newsprint with words and pictures. (15 min.)

4. (Individual work) Look again at the vision for young adolescent ministries in your congregation. Is there anything you would like to add, delete or change? Make your revision. (5 min.)

5. (Group work) Have anyone who has made revisions share them with the group. Does your common vision still hold? Make any adaptations you need to. (10 min.)

Worksheet 3-A
From Vision to Reality
Contact Point Model

This can be done individually or as a group.

1. Looking back at the first question, 1-A and 1-B Analysis of the Present, plot out the current activities in your congregation on the model. Fill in the name of the congregation in the center. Add more shapes as you need them.

2. Where is the emphasis of energy going in youth ministries — towards gathering, non-gathering or family/intergenerational activities?

Worksheet 3-A (continued)

3. Given the circumstances of your particular congregation (i.e. size, location, urban, rural, number of youth, adult advisors, financial resources, etc.), how would you re-draw the picture if you could with respect to these dimensions? Try to think in terms of the categories' themes (gathering, non-gathering and family-intergenerational) and not specific programs.

Worksheet 3-B
Contact Point Model Worksheet

Brainstorm as many possibilities as you can come up with on this page. Try for at least one in each area.

Worksheet 4-A
Contact Point Model Worksheet

Return to your Needs Assessment, Vision Statement and your drawing on 3-A. As a group, decide what programs you will work on in the following term. You may decide to continue some existing work and begin some new projects. Be realistic!

Worksheet 4-B

Fill out one for each program.

Program:

Title:

Date:

Component(s):

- ❒ Christian Education/Catechesis
- ❒ Prayer and Worship
- ❒ Guidance and Counsel
- ❒ Community Life
- ❒ Justice and Peace
- ❒ Service

Purpose: Who is it for and why?

Budget:

Coordinator(s):

Volunteers needed:

Who needs to know and how will they know:

What support is needed from the congregation (clergy, vestry, community):

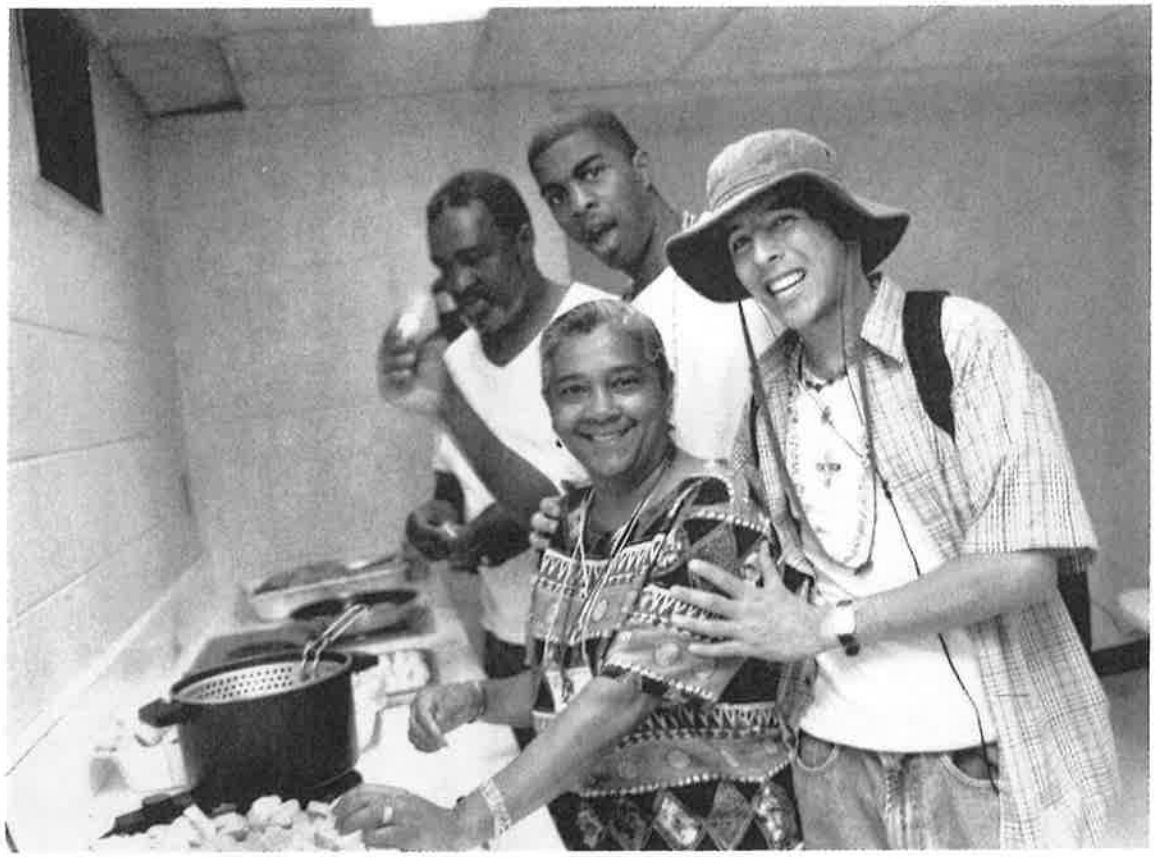
How will the program be evaluated:

How many of the developmental needs are met? How are they met?
Try for at least four:

	How
Physical activity	
Competence and achievement	
Self-definition	
Creative expression	
Positive social interaction with peers and adults	
Structure and clear limits	
Meaningful participation	

Part IV

Family Ministries



Ministry in the Family Context[22]

Families with Adolescents

The task for most families — and it is by no means an easy one — is to maintain emotional involvement, in the form of concern and caring, while gradually moving toward a relationship characterized by great behavioral autonomy.

A key task of families with adolescents is increasing the flexibility of family boundaries to include children's independence and often grandparents' frailties.

The secondary tasks include:

a. Shifting of parent-child relationships to permit adolescents to move in and out of our system;

b. Refocussing on midlife marital and career issues;

c. Beginning shift towards joint-caring for older generation.

Principles of Family Perspective as Applied to Ministries with Youth

A family perspective in ministries with youth seeks to:

1. Sensitize the minister to the realities of family life;

2. Sensitize those who serve individuals to broaden their perspective by viewing the individual through the prism of adolescent household life;

3. Help adolescent families become better partners with the many institutions they deal with regularly, including the congregation itself.

Application

1. **Infusing a family perspective in all youth programming:**

   redesigning existing programming; creatively involving families or connecting with family experiences in new programming.

2. **Bridging experiences:**

   connecting youth program activities with family life; re-entry session for parents of young people who were involved in an intensive experience, such as social action projects, and retreats.

3. **Programs specifically designed for parents:**

   educational experiences that communicate information on adolescent growth, develop skills for communication and for parenting; parent support groups.

4. **Educational programs for parents and adolescents:**

   One way to integrate parents into youth ministries programming is to design certain programs with parent sessions that are incorporated. A course on human sexuality might follow this sequence: a parents-only session, followed by three youth sessions, another parents-only session, then three more youth sessions, and finally a parent/youth closing session. Other possibilities for parent/youth programming include: (a) family activities and programs that build communication, trust and closeness; (b) parent/youth programs that discuss moral values and promote discussion; (c) worship and Scripture resources for use in the home; (d) justice and service projects that involve the whole

family (perhaps at regularly scheduled times during the year); (e) parent/youth retreat experiences; and (f) home-based Advent and Lenten programs (as individual families or clusters).

5. **Parallel programs for parents and adolescents:**

   Parallel programs offer the opportunity for parents and adolescents to experience the same program content but in formats geared to their needs and life stage. For example, parents could take an adult course while their son or daughter participated in an adolescent course on the same topic. For many congregations this is the beginning of an adult education curriculum.

   Another example of parallel programming can be support groups. Youth ministries can provide parent support groups and adolescent support groups on the same topics or crisis situations — for example, in cases of divorce or separation.

6. **Ritual and liturgical experiences:**

   celebrating adolescent rites of passage (life transitions, faith transitions):

   preparing adolescent/family liturgical experiences;

   redesigning Confirmation preparation and celebrations.

7. **Advocacy:**

   combining the efforts of congregations families to organize and advocate around youth issues in the community, such as education, childcare, etc.

Communicating Faith in Families[23]

Being faithful in a place of intimacy can be intimidating, but it can also be an opportunity for growth. And no matter how much we read about it or ponder on it, each of us is always a novice because we can only experience our family at this point for the first time. Having said that, though, I would like to share some principles.

Worship in the Family

The first principle is that families are families, not little churches. The religious life of the family must be based on its everyday life, and not allowed to become an appendage of congregational programs. The family does not need to mirror the congregation's traditional Sunday morning expression of faith.

Seasonal or program elements are important, but they should not become the major way faith is nurtured in a family. The temptation to let the congregation shape the family's faith expression is particularly strong for those who work professionally in the church (it's another way of taking work home!). But families have their own life; that life should be the basis of prayer and ritual and celebration within the home.

Family worship is best when it feels simply like another aspect of being a family together, and not like a going to church."

It is important, therefore, to take the needs of each family into account. Is it a one or two parent home? How old are the children? Do the parents work outside the home? Are the children involved in outside activities? Is there an abundance of time together, or a scarcity?

An expression of spirituality within the family must help to re-create the individuals and their relationships within that small community. Instead of adding a weekly Lenten evening to an active and over-committed family, for example, that time together might be better spent with a short reading and prayer to begin an evening of simply being with one another.

The style of family is also a key to deciding on a natural expression of faith. Is this a family that likes to sing together? Is reading a chief pleasure? Are crafts something that they like to do? Do they like to dance? Have they a strong commitment to justice issues? Is the pursuit of knowledge a high value? Would they rather go for a hike or watch a video together? Through such questions, a family decides how to express its faith, and how to learn together around its favorite activities. Dramatizing a Bible story and talking about it might suit one family. Another might choose to go skating together, and then sing seasonal songs over hot chocolate.

What the family chooses to celebrate is also important. Unlike the church's calendar, the family calendar can be shaped around family priorities. Birthdays, first days at work or school, holidays, exams, new skills learned — all of these can be made occasions for worship together. Add to that interesting cultural days — Martin Luther King Day, Hiroshima Day, the spring equinox — all are opportunities for a family to explore the meaning of their faith. The family calendar can also incorporate the feasts and seasons of the church year — baptismal days, Epiphany, Pentecost... Family worship can integrate all aspects of people's lives within the contexts of prayer.

Honor the Members of the Family

From the principles of taking family life seriously as the basis for faith expression, the second principle follows easily: Honor the father, or mother, or sister or brother. Whatever combination of people makes up a family, it is

crucial within the family to honor each individual's needs and gifts. Family worship can too easily become an instrument for manipulation or control: "Be quiet! I don't care what you want — it's time for family devotions!"

To truly welcome God's presence into our midst means taking time to hear the smallest child or the crankiest member. If a regular family meal ritual is constantly undermined by children who want to get away to play with friends, or by parents who are too tired to participate properly, it might be better to schedule such a meal once a week, or even once a month, to ensure that it meets its purpose.

So too, if a child or parent is too upset by something to pray. It honors that person to let him or her say, "I don't want to pray right now. Can we just talk instead.?" Such sensitivity to individual needs teaches God's love and compassion.

Honoring the individual also means taking the developmental needs of family members into account. For a family with more than one child, that may mean dealing with a relatively wide age span. Ten- and thirteen-year-olds have different interests! Learning to make decisions together that will meet everyone's needs is a valuable lesson.

Do It Together

Activities need to be designed around the ages and interests of participants. For example, a family that enjoys music could nurture the faith of its members musically. Young people's favorite music (religious or not) could be played for everyone to dance to. A simple, "Let's thank God that we can sing and dance," at the end of the activity might suffice for worship. Youth could pick some of their favorite music for the family to listen to.

Choose Projects That Will Enable Everyone to Participate and Offer Their Gifts

Making an Advent banner, for example, can be a wonderful way to explore symbols. A child who can read might look up the symbols, and explain them to the family. Those who like to draw could work on the design. Everyone can cut and paste. Everyone can join in an Advent litany or hymn to bless the banner.

Remember to give enough time to the project so that it remains family liturgy, and does not become a rush to meet a deadline. The goal is not to produce a perfect banner, but to create something together that expresses the life of the family at that moment in time. In time, these activities will themselves become symbols of the family's faith.

Create Family Symbols and Rituals

Symbols are the key to nurturing faith in families. Each of us, no matter what our age, is moved by the power of symbols. Each of us creates symbols that move us. Some symbols maybe traditional mangers at Christmas, crosses during Lent, doves for Pentecost. Other symbols will be highly individual — souvenirs of a holiday, photos of someone's birthday, leaves collected on an autumn walk.

If we as families can uphold the symbols of our faith and our lives, we can share the meaning of those symbols with each other; those symbols will become carriers of our faith for a long, long time.

Interpreting Scripture

Children, hearing a Bible story, try to understand it. What they do not understand, they supply from their own experience. Adolescents and adults do the same but because their experience is broader, so is their interpretation fuller. That does not necessarily make their interpretation any richer or more insightful than the child's.

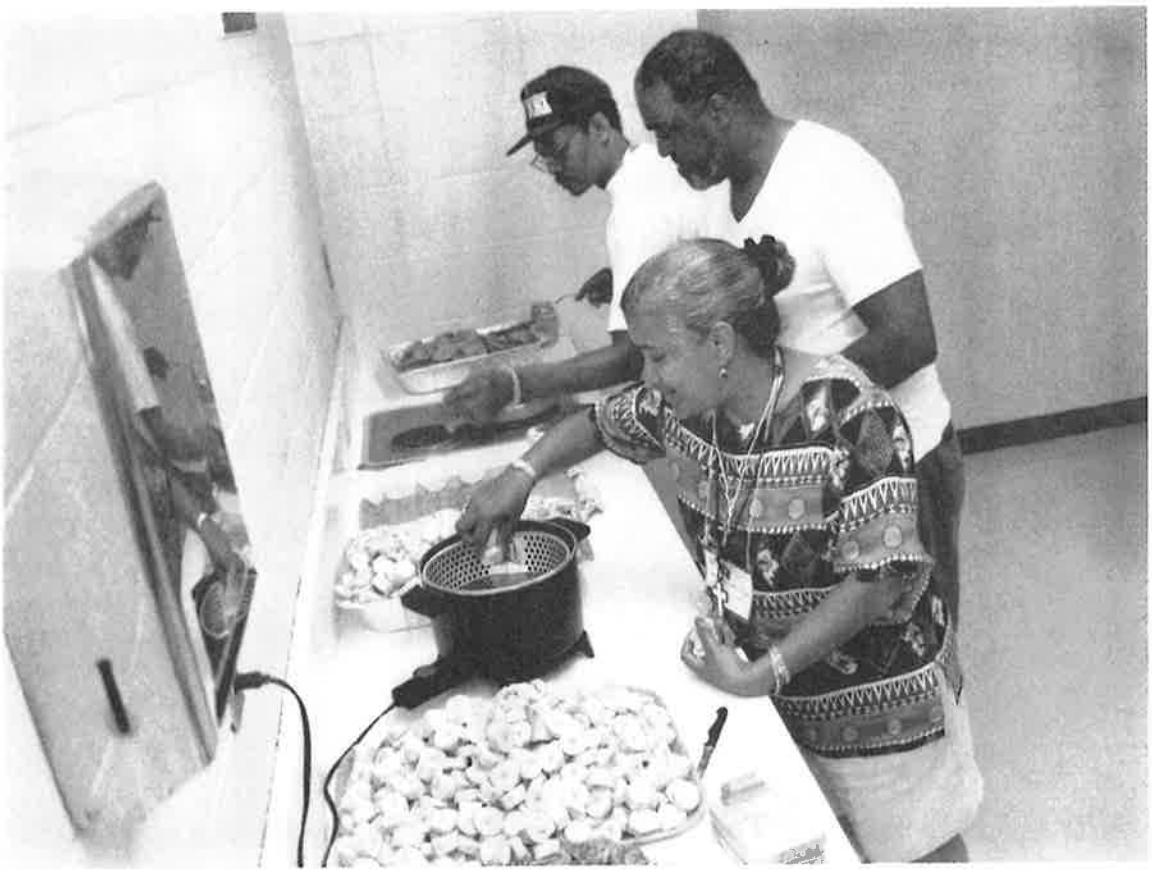
If we understand that we all interact with the stories of our faith, and if we are willing to hear the insights of each person, then telling or reading Bible stories with young people becomes one more way of nurturing faith. If, however, parents are afraid to let their children interpret the Scriptures, from their own understanding,

if parents want to ensure a "correct" interpretation, then it may be better to hold off reading the Bible together. Theological manipulation helps no one.

The biblical story is the drama of our faith, and is given to us as a people. Discussion that allows the insights of each family member to surface will enable that story to take root within us and grow.

Families Are Families, Not Churches

For faith to grow in families, it must express the life experience of that family and of the individuals within it. Symbols, rituals, readings, songs, activities — all are ways to nurture faith. If they are done with joy and sensitivity and freedom, they will shape our lives.



Part V

Resources

Facts about 10- to 15-year-olds[24]

Before you read this page:
Complete the questions in Section I: "Normal Young Adolescent Development: Truth or Fiction?" (p. 4).

Listed below are facts about normal development during young adolescence that youth workers need to know. There are also questions for thought and discussion.

Fact 1

Ten- to 15-year-olds are experiencing dramatic physical, cognitive, social, and emotional changes that pervade their lives and often perplex them and the youth workers who work with them.

Fact 2

Growth in each area (physical, cognitive, social, and emotional) occurs in a somewhat characteristic sequence for most young adolescents. However, growth in the four areas does not occur exactly at the same time. For example, early physical developers do not always demonstrate early intellectual and social growth.

Fact 3

Individual young adolescents change at different rates, according to highly individual internal "clocks." For example, a 13-year-old who looks like a young woman or man is as normal" as peers who are beginning to mature physically, and a 14-year-old concrete thinker is as normal as a 14-year-old who uses formal operations rather expertly.

Fact 4

One look at almost any group of young adolescents provides ample evidence of the normal variation in physical development among the age group. Watching individual 10- to 15-year-olds go through the adolescent-growth spurt and blossom into young men and women within a matter of several months provides evidence of the dramatic and rapid physical changes that occur during young adolescence.

Fact 5

Changes in physical appearance are the most striking aspects of physical development, but invisible changes also take place. Three kinds of physical changes occur during young adolescence: (1) the adolescent growth spurt; (2) the development of primary sex characteristics; (3) and the appearance of secondary sex characteristics.

Fact 6

Adolescence is a period in life when people grow more rapidly than at any other time in their lives except infancy. For girls, this rapid growth spurt usually begins at age 10½, with the peak occurring at about age 12. The growth spurt for boys begins about a year later, at around age 11½ and peaks at around age 14.

Question for Thought and Discussion

Girls usually begin the adolescent growth spurt before boys and on the average, girls hit the peak of their growth spurt two years before boys hit their peak. How does this fact affect the way boys and girls of the same chronological age relate to each other?

Fact 7

It is also during young adolescence that the reproductive system matures, making it possible to conceive and bear children. The changes necessary to prepare girls' and boys' bodies to produce offspring are called primary sex characteristics. For girls, the marker event is the beginning of the menstrual cycle. For boys, the marker events are genital growth and the first ejaculation. There is a wide variation in the ages at which these events begin to occur for individual girls and boys.

Fact 8

In general, adolescent who enter puberty at an early age will also go through the events of puberty more rapidly. Those adolescents who begin their development at a later age will have a more lengthy period of development.

Fact 9

The normal variation in young adolescent physical development means that there may be a six- to eight-year span in physical development between a slowly developing boy and a rapidly developing girl of the same chronological age.

Fact 10

Most young adolescents are excited by the body changes (or the expected body changes) that make them look more adult. At the same time, they are concerned about whether their bodies are "normal" and about how they will look when their bodies mature. It is easy to talk about the events of puberty in an academic fashion until we think back to our own adolescence and remember how a nose that was too big, breasts that would not grow, pimples, or lack of athletic prowess seemed to turn all of life sour.

Question for Thought and Discussion

What should young adolescents be told about the physical changes they and their peers are going through? What content should be included in human sexuality education programs?

Fact 11

Young adolescence is a period of great change and growth, altering the expectations that others hold for adolescents. When adolescents begin to show signs of physical growth, adults tend paradoxically

to expect both mature social and emotional behavior and the rebellion, storm, and stress that our society has come to associate with adolescence.

Question for Thought and Discussion

How do adults' conflicting expectations for both "mature" behavior and rebellion, storm, and stress affect young adolescents?

Fact 12

As they pass through puberty, young people see themselves differently when they experience adults' altered expectations, look in the mirror, and feel their body changes. This alteration in self-image and their increased self-consciousness mean that adolescents view themselves and their relationships to others in a new way.

Question for Thought and Discussion

How do the physical changes of puberty affect the way young adolescents feel about themselves and how they relate to other people? How do these changes affect the way others relate to them?

Fact 13

Adjusting to dramatic body changes and altered (and sometimes conflicting) expectations from others makes young adolescents especially vulnerable to bouts of low self-esteem, moodiness, and intense emotionalism.

Fact 14

Although news media reports, public opinion, and popular songs, movies, and books convey the impression that adolescence is characteristically a period of storm, stress, and outright rebellion, research reveals that the social and emotional problems associated with adolescence have been overemphasized and are misleading.

Fact 15

The myth of adolescence as a time of inherent storm and stress is harmful to adolescents in two ways. First, it fosters the expectation that young people entering adolescence are irresponsible, unresponsive, inactivated crazy and unpredictable. Since adolescents are especially vulnerable to adult expectations, they tend to live up (or down) to what adults expect of them. Second, teenagers who are having excessive difficulty during this period of dramatic change may be written off as "going through a stage" and may not get the professional attention they need.

Fact 16

Approximately 80% of all adolescents make it through these years of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional change without pathological storm and stress. Among these adolescents four broad kinds of normal development emerge:

- about one-quarter experience serene development; they grow and change gradually and with remarkable ease:

- about one-third develop in a manner characterized by surging stops and starts; they are impressively "adult" one day and childish the next;
- about one-fifth experience turbulent development; their behavior is stormy, but is not abnormal or pathological; and
- about one-fifth do not fit into any subgroup, but their tendency is towards continuous growth.

Question for Thought and Discussion

What are the characteristics of some young people you know whose development you would describe as serene, surging, or turbulent?

Fact 17

Approximately same proportion of adolescents as adults — one in five show signs of serious disturbance.

Fact 18

Some seriously disturbed adolescents have severe problems as children. Children who are excessively aggressive and of an unusually great amount of "acting out" tend not to outgrow these tendencies; they exhibit similar behavior as adolescents in the absence of professional treatment. There are some serious emblems that appear for the first time in adolescence, however, such as eating disorders (anorexia nervosa and bulimia), sexual promiscuity, substance abuse, and severe depression leading either to serious contemplation of or attempts at suicide. These problems require professional evaluation and attention.

Fact 19

It is essential for adults who work and live with teenagers to distinguish between behavior that is disturbing or annoying to adults (loud music, messy rooms and behavior that is disturbed and harmful to the child (substance abuse, suicide attempts, depression, harmful risk-taking).

Fact 20

One sign of serious disturbance in young people is the inability to relate to peers and fit into a peer group. The peer group and the peer pressure are often viewed as the pervasive, all-powerful, negative force to which adolescents are totally subject. While the peer group may be a source of negative influence in some situations for some adolescents, involvement with friends is necessary if youth are to become socially competent adults.

Fact 21

It is through the peer group that youth begin to learn how to develop and maintain close, mutually supportive relationships with people their own age. This is a social skill not characteristic of Younger children, whose most significant relationships are dependent relationships with parents, but it is an essential skill for a normal, fully functioning adult.

Fact 22

Friendships are laboratories for learning appropriate "adolescent" and "adult" behavior. Young adolescents learn social skills, such as how far to take a practical joke and how to ask a boyfriend or girlfriend to go to a movie, by trying out a variety of behaviors on their friends. The feedback teens give to each other about behavior may or may not be either sensitive or subtle.

Question for Thought and Discussion

How do young adolescents give each other feedback on their behavior? What do they say and do?

Fact 23

Peer groups exist within community and cultural contexts. Close examination of adolescent peer groups often reveals that the peer group represents not a counterculture, but a less polished, more blatant version of the adult culture that surrounds it.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

What are some ways that adolescent peer groups reflect rather than reject larger adult cultures?

Fact 24

Young adolescents' preoccupation with conformity to others in their peer groups is often troubling to adults, but it is normal for 10- to 15-years-olds. Because an individual adolescent believes that everyone constantly scrutinizes his/her appearance and every act, it is excruciatingly painful to be "different." As they adjust to their own dramatic physical and social changes, and see their friends developing either faster or slower than they, young adolescents' insecurities and uncertainties drive them to look and act like their friends.

Fact 25

There are times when adolescents need some adult-imposed protection from the peer group. Because of their need to be like peers, their collective inexperience, and their belief that "it can't happen to me," situations arise in which young adolescents need to be protected from themselves and one another. In our society, many adolescents are abandoned to the peer group in the adults' belief that they cannot offset peer pressure. Adults who work with adolescents can have an influence on peer groups through the expectations they set, the relationships they build, and the opportunities they provide for adolescent peer groups to function in a constructive, healthy manner.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

Think of situations in which peer influence is positive or negative. What common factors or circumstances are common to situations where peer influence is positive and pro-social? What factors are common to situations where negative peer influence prevails? How can youth workers encourage positive peer influence?

Fact 26

In addition to other close relationships with peers,close relationships with families and other adults are necessary for healthy adolescent development. One researcher asked teenage girls, "Who is the

most important person in your life?" and the greatest majority answered, "My mother." Some of the girls interviewed by the researcher were incarcerated in juvenile corrections institutions. Quite a few of the incarcerated girls named someone else, but added, "I wish it were my mother" Other studies have shown that while peer influence and emotional closeness to peers increase during young adolescence, peer relationships supplement but do not replace ties with parents.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

How do young adolescents let us know that adults are important to them? What do they say and do?

Fact 27

Although adolescents report that they look to the peer group for companionship and for guidance in some aspects of behavior, such as dress, music, hair style, and entertainment, they look to their families for affection, identification, social and moral values, and help in solving big problems or making important decisions.

Fact 28

Disagreements between young adolescents and their families are usually related to the family having to reassess its expectations of a child who is growing up. Periods of disequilibrium are typical in families as young teens and parents work out mutually acceptable ways to accommodate the teens' new concerns (e.g., the desire for more privacy and autonomy) and parents' continuing sense of responsibility. Families that can make adjustments in mutual expectations, rules, and the way that members relate to each other emerge from periods of disequilibrium with family ties intact and sometimes strengthened. In ethnic minority families where identification with the traditional ethnic culture and family influence are strong, these periods of disequilibrium take on a unique character. As these young people seek personal autonomy and deal with their feelings of being caught between their traditional ethnic culture and the larger culture that surrounds them, conflict with parents, especially disagreements related to involvement in peer groups, may be intensified.

Fact 29

Most adolescents report good relationships with their parents. They feel their parents are understanding, reasonable, fair, and reliable.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

How can youth workers be most helpful to both young adolescents and parents during periods of family disequilibrium? How can youth workers be most helpful to both young teens and parents in dysfunctional families?

Fact 30

In expanding their social world, young adolescents frequently seek the company of adults other than their parents. These other adults often youth workers, teachers, relatives, neighbors or clergy members serve as crucial role models and advisors. These new relationships with other adults are an important part of adolescent social development. As young people begin to explore what it means to be an adult man or woman, they need positive role models, especially of their same gender, race, and ethnicity, who are "living proof" of what they can become. Other adults also can provide young adolescents with a secure respite from the intensity of peer and family relationships.

Question for Thought and Discussion

Why is it important for young adolescents, especially girls and young people of color, to have close relationships with adult role models of their same gender and race?

Fact 31

Problems in relationships between young adolescents and adults, whether the adults are parents or youth workers, often center on young adolescents' increasing desire for personal autonomy. If adolescents are to move from the dependency of childhood to the interdependency of adulthood; they must have increasing independence and responsibility. Young adolescents' requests (or demands) for more autonomy in some areas, such as dress, curfew, how they spend free time, specific activities they will engage in, and selection of friends, are sometimes misinterpreted by adults as cries for complete independence. While they do need gradually increasing amounts of autonomy as they mature, young adolescents continue to need limits for behavior that are set by adults. These limits should expand as youth mature, enabling young teens to have a voice in determining specific rules and expectations.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

What usually happens when 10- to 15-year-olds are given more autonomy than they can handle? What happens when they are allowed no voice in setting limits and making decisions that shape their lives?

Fact 32

Young adolescents' worlds expand to reflect their emerging capabilities, desires, and interests and to include their peers, adults other than their parents, and their communities. They often become eager to make commitments to people, ideals, and projects. Because they are changing so rapidly, many of their commitments will be short-term but nevertheless intense.

Fact 33

It is during young adolescence that many people begin to develop the ability to think abstractly and reflectively. These new thinking abilities are called "formal operations."

Fact 34

This new cognitive capacity includes the ability to think about "what might be true if..." and the increasing ability to understand metaphors, abstract mathematical concepts, and ideas like justice and love.

Fact 35

The following passage describes the advent of formal operations:

The conceptions of possibilities outside the immediate environment is the central "new" feature of adolescent thinking It is the feature that best distinguishes the kind of thinking found in adolescents from that encountered in young children. Consider the following anecdote:

Only brave pilots are allowed to fly over high mountains. This summer a fighter pilot flew over the Alps, collided with an aerial cable railway, and cut a main cable causing some cars to fall to the glacier below. Several people were killed and many others had to spend the night over the glacier.

When presented with this anecdote, and asked whether or not the pilot a careful person, children respond on the basis of the information given to them:

"Yes, he was brave."
"Yes, the cable shouldn't be there."
"No, he was a show-off."
"No, because he hit the cable."
"No, because if he was careful he would not have cut the cable."

Adolescents, on the other hand, go beyond the information actually given to consider possibilities:

"Yes (no, he might have been), but the weather (or visibility, maintenance of the plane, other aircraft, health problems) may have played a role."

Adolescents go beyond the information given in the sketch to think about what might be true. They reason by taking what is possible as well as what is actually given as a point of departure for their thought processes.... Adolescents are able to reason about physical and social events in terms of the unobserved and the unobservable. They can for the first time reason about justice, for example, and get quite worked up emotionally about other ideals too.

Fact 36

Since changes in thinking ability occur gradually, it is normal for a young adolescent to be able to think abstractly and reflectively in one area and to be tied to concrete thought in another. For example, an adolescent may be capable of mature thought about justice, religion or higher mathematics, but unable to comprehend the risks involved in sexual intercourse or drug and alcohol experimentation. Although frustrating for adults, this is normal behavior for young adolescents. Important skills or information need to be conveyed in a variety of ways.

Fact 37

Another behavior that frustrates adults, the questioning of formerly accepted rules and beliefs, is linked to these more adult like thought processes. This questioning is a sign that young adolescents are using their new cognitive abilities. They are, for the first time, able to comprehend that not everybody thinks the same way they and their parents do about important moral and social issues. They are capable of understanding ideals, such as justice, and of using logical thinking skills to analyze their own and others' behavior in relation to those ideals. They can see and question inconsistencies between the ideal and the behavior they observe. They are capable of understanding the reasons for rules and raising objections to rules that do not appear to be logical. "Because I said so" is no longer an acceptable reason.

However, they often do not understand exceptions to rules. "That's not fair" is a common complaint in response to an adult's efforts to take into account individual differences and extenuating circumstances. As they begin to think about how situations could be different and ask themselves "what if..." questions, they can formulate alternative rules, as well as situations in which the rules may not be applicable.

Fact 38

Young adolescents are often very authoritarian. As they are able to consider ideals like justice and broader social issues, they begin to understand that there is such a thing as a social contract, and that rules and laws are necessary for the greater social good. However, they are not yet able to see the "gray areas" between right and wrong. Their notion of justice is not yet tempered with mercy. It takes time for them to understand the nuances and interrelatedness of different ideals.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

Think about discussions you have had with young adolescents and younger children regarding rules and limits, social issues or values. How does young adolescents' gradual mastery of new thinking skills make it easier to talk to them about such topics? How do these skills make it harder to talk with teens than with young children?

Fact 39

With the advent of formal operations, young adolescents are able for the first time to project themselves into the future. Young children see the future in terms of days; young adolescents are starting to see the future in terms of years. They can begin to relate their present interests, aspirations, and circumstances to vocational, social and cultural roles they will fulfill in the future.

Fact 40

Two special forms of egocentrism are related to these changes in thinking that emerge during young adolescence:

Young people often appear quite absorbed by their experiences, their appearance, and their behavior. They constantly feel that they are the center of attention, surrounded by an ever-present "imaginary audience" that notices and passes judgment on how they look and everything they do. Therefore, every hair has to be in place, every word has to come out light, and most important, they must look and act like their peers. Although this self-absorption is exasperating and amusing to adults who interact with young adolescents, it is a normal and natural reaction to the many changes of adolescence.

The "personal fable" is a story adolescents tell themselves about themselves, a story they believe to be unique and true. The story centers around their supreme importance and the uniqueness of their experience and their feelings. The personal fable finds expression in such statements as "No one knows how I feel," "I can't talk to anybody," "or "You don't understand." It is also an expression of loneliness. Although the personal fable is normal, it may result in dangerous risk-taking behavior by adolescents who believe they are immune to the consequences of their actions and invulnerable to harm. Statements such as "I won't get pregnant," "I won't die in a car accident," and "I won't get arrested for drinking or using drugs, "are examples of what adolescents say to themselves and to others.

Fact 41

Adolescents begin to break out of these forms of egocentrism as they grow and mature. In building close mutual relationships with other adolescents and sharing innermost concerns and dreams. they begin to realize that other people experience life somewhat as they do. As they gain life experiences and observe the harm that befalls others because of dangerous behavior, they begin to realize that they are not immune to the consequences of their actions.

Question for Thought and Discussion

How do young teenagers' relationships with their peers and their daily experiences in school, youth programs, their communities, and society in general reinforce or challenge their thinking about the "imaginary audience" and the "personal fable"?

Young adolescents are a challenging group with which to work because they are so variable, both as a group and as individuals. Any group of 10- to 15-year-olds is likely to include early and late

physical bloomers, concrete and abstract thinkers, and young people with diverse interests, different social skills, and varying levels of emotional maturity. As they grow accustomed to body changes, gradually master new cognitive ability, learn "adult" social skills, and cope with the excitement and confusion that accompanies all of these changes, individual young adolescents may feel, act, and want to be treated like children one minute and grown-ups the next. They are drawn to youth workers who like and respect them for who they are right now and who respond sensitively to both their present joys and confusion and their dreams and worries about the future.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

Think about a group of 10- to 15-year-olds you either have worked with in the past or whom you are currently working. How would you respond to someone who said, "They're all alike"? What would you tell the person to convince him/her that young adolescents are not "all alike"? What common characteristics would you mention?

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Table I
THE EVENTS OF PUBERTY IN GIRLS

	Usual Age Range		*Approximate*
	Earliest Age	*Latest Age*	*Average Age*
1. Beginning of breast development	8 ¾ yrs.	13 ¼ yrs.	11 yrs.
2. Appearance of pubic hair	9 yrs.	13 ½ yrs.	11 yrs.
3. Beginning of most rapid growth	10 ½ yrs.	14 ½ yrs.	12 yrs.
4. First menstrual period (menarche)	10 ¾ yrs.	15 ½ yrs.	12 ½ yrs.

Table II
THE EVENTS OF PUBERTY IN BOYS

	Usual Age Range		*Approximate*
	Earliest Age	*Latest Age*	*Average Age*
1. Beginning of enlargement of testes (become greater than 1 inch long)	9 ½ yrs	13 ½ yrs.	12 yrs.
2. Growth of the penis	10 yrs.	14 yrs.	12 ¼ yrs.
3. Appearance of pubic hair	9 ½ yrs.	14 yrs.	12 ½ yrs.
4. Beginning of most rapid growth in height	11 ½ yrs.	16 yrs.	14 yrs.

These tables, based on data from Sanner (1962) and Tanner and Whitehouse (1975), were prepared by Alan Cross, M.C., Department of Pediatrics, and Anita M. Farel. Ph.D. of the Department of Maternal and Child Health, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Sample Information Card

Information Card

Name _____

Age _____ Birthday _____

Magazines _____

_____

_____

Recreation _____

Favorite After-School Activities _____

_____

Radio Station _____

Music _____

Favorite Books _____

Styles of Learning

The Learning Style Inventory is a frame work for understanding the range of preference in adult learning experiences. It was developed by David Kolb. He sees learning as a four-part cycle. He says that the four parts can be engaged in, in any order, but that we need all four parts.

A variety of learning styles is particularly important for use with young adolescents as they are all over the intellectual map. They are probably stronger in the realm of concrete experience, and novices in the realm of abstractions.

The best learning experiences include all four dimensions.

The four preferences are as follows:

Concrete Experience

Rely on their feelings; rooted in their own experience; usually excited to get in there and participate.

Wants to know, "What are we doing now?"

Ways to Promote Learning:

- give examples
- role-plays
- case studies
- hands-on assignments
- check-in; share what's happening for you outside this group and put it aside to focus on the activities of this session

Reflective Observation

Rely on their own impressions and reactions; attracted to process; more passive in their participation; often on the sidelines.

Wants to know, "What does this mean to me?"

Ways to Promote Learning:

- journal-keeping
- visual images, drawing, collages
- mental images, memories, fantasies, drama
- discussion with others
- poetry
- quiet time for personal reflection

Abstract Conceptualization:

Rely on theory and conceptual models; look for generalizations and patterns.

Wants to know, "What are the implications?"

Ways To Promote Learning:

- lectures, reading materials
- drawing connections between experience and theory
- sounding board for ideas
- build models, diagrams

Active Experimentation

Rely on experience, trial and error; pragmatic; can be self-directed.

Wants to know, "How that I know it, what am I going to do with it?"

Ways to Promote Learning:

- problem-solving
- simulated situations
- experiments
- pilot projects

An example follows of the four kinds of learners:[25]

Suppose I were teaching people to swim. I could go to extremes and teach it according to each one of the styles.

So for the first style, you're standing at the edge of the pool, and I give you a shove. You fall in, and I say, "Okay, you're in, get to the other side the best way you know how." And you go, "Glug, glug, glug" and somehow you get to the other side. And when you hang on the edge of the pool, gasping, I say, "Guess what? You just swam. Now let's tidy up a few of those strokes. . . ."

You've just had a concrete experience.

On the other hand, your friend may also be in that swimming class, and she may say to me, "I would rather not learn that way. I would rather that you swim across, and I'll watch you. You demonstrate, and I'll watch your feet and hands, and how they work together . . . and then I'll try."

That's the reflective-observer. They like to watch what is happening.

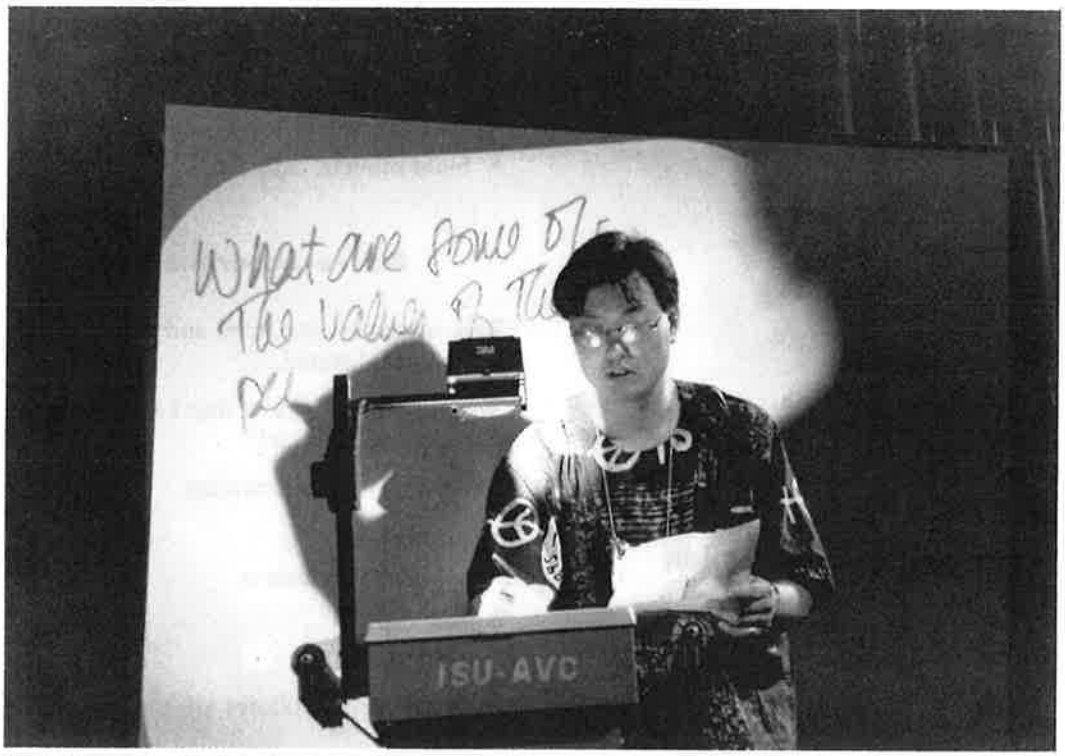
There might be another person in the group. He's probably a bit disdainful, standing off to the side. He says, "Listen Marge, stop all this experiential stuff. I am a serious person, and I want to know the theories about the displacement of water by the body, the ways the different strokes work. . . . Tell me about the physics of swimming, the mechanics of the strokes, and then I'll learn how to swim."

So I trot out my lecture on the theory of aquatics and deliver it. And that person just laps it up, because he's a conceptualizer.

He may still sink when he gets into the water. But hell understand why! And hell only feel secure trying it out when he knows the theory.

Finally there are some other learners and these are very common — lurking around at the side of the pool. When I blow the whistle and say, "Everybody in the pool," they jump in, but they say to themselves, I'm going to do it differently." They're the experimenters; that's why Kolb gave them that name. They always break the rules. They may find out what I said about bending your elbows, or not bending your knees, does work best, but they find out by trying it their own way first!

Those are basically the four kinds of learners.



SAMPLE
A Time to Wonder?!
A Weekend Event for Young Adolescents[26]

The weekend event begins Friday evening and lasts until Sunday early afternoon. In our working situation the time frame is determined by the travel schedule to our diocesan camp, where the retreat takes place. Our program would start about 8:00 p.m. after getting the participants and their gear into the building and dispersed to sleeping accommodation.

On the schedule to follow you will notice The Great Time Change. We gathered on a weekend when the return to standard time happened and we built it into the Friday night program to give us more time and to help with the first-night energy that takes a while to settle. By 11:30 p.m., standard time, almost everyone is ready to sleep and the weekend flow is made easier by making some fun and nonsense out of starting over.

The Design

The weekend is based on small groups and we make some effort to prepare the leaders by distributing the handouts for each small group session and by spending some time in each small group doing community building there and paying attention throughout to group maintenance by having a few minutes in each session to see how participants are doing. It is possible to include in the icebreakers some games that require teams, in which case we would have them in their small groups for those games.

The weekend is also done in short blocks, taking into account the attention span, energy level and the need for movement of young adolescents. We try to provide a variety of activities that are not highly competitive but energetic. We also try to include some hands-on arts and craft events that can be done in groups. As this weekend was held close to Halloween we had a pumpkin-carving time as one activity. Full-rotation volleyball requires you to rotate across the net and diminishes winners/losers. We also try to balance the activities so that there can be hikes and other self-initiated activities that are a form of controlled free time.

Weather is a big factor and we always have several possible activities with both indoor and outdoor options. The smugglers game has proven to be very popular with this age group as a wet weather special. We work hard to see that as much as possible small groups can work together on activities, knowing that friendship and positive peer interaction are critical aspects of a good experience for young adolescents. A few suggestions and game designs are included in this outline at the end.

Theme: A Time To Wonder?!

The story of Jesus in the temple at the age of 12 is the beginning point for the weekend. The story is read and then translated into a modern event of some kind The presenter must be able to make the story come alive and connect to the family conflict in it. Jesus' parents do not understand (See Luke 2:41–52.) The focus of the first small group discussion is to try to create a list of possible questions that Jesus might have asked of the elders. Following you will find detailed instructions for each of the group leaders, for each session. With their registration forms, there is a (blue) sheet called

"information sheet" that includes some blanks to be filled in. If the participants do not bring the sheet, they are given a new copy and asked to fill it out and return them to their group leader Saturday morning.

The small-group leaders are provided with copies of various biblical texts on handout sheets. The texts usually emphasize God's love for us and God's knowledge of us. Psalm 139: 1–18, 23, 24, John 15:1–17, 1 John 3: 1–3, 1–24, Romans 8:31–49.

In addition to the small-group work on themes that draws on their questions and concerns, we use these texts to underline the embracing, inclusive and accepting nature of God's love. We always take time before a meal to slow everyone down with a couple of songs, quieting ones, and then spend a few minutes listening to one of these texts and reflecting on them in the context of our questions that have begun to decorate the wall of the gathering space. It becomes critical to remind them of the 12-year-old Jesus seeking truth and understanding for his life and being involved in a questioning, wondering process that grows out of the assurance of God's love. The small groups also meet first thing in the day for a group fellowship that is the responsibility of the small group leader. It may be prayer, discussion of one of the texts, a reading or a check-in and time of quiet. We always repeat instructions for the small-group time to the whole group and as much as possible re-gather with the whole group after small-group time to report back and to gather comments, new questions and to ascertain the direction and central themes that are developing in their small-group discussions. It has been our experience that each year there seem to be one or two ideas or questions that catch on and have to be addressed in order to meet the participants' needs.

We also try to meet together as group leaders at several points to discuss what is happening, what sort of responses, difficulties, and the directions are happening. It allows us to adjust what is being said as well as being able to design worship and sessions to address what seem to be critical questions. We try to have open, flexible worship that allows for participation and shared leadership, including those young people who respond to invitations to take part.

For the closing worship, we ask participants to bring (written down on small pieces of paper) one thing they think they learned, and/or one thing they wonder enough about to keep thinking about. During the offering these are gathered in a basket and during a quiet following are thrown into the fire and offered as prayers: an offering of self to God.

A questions box and a "wonder sack" are available for their contributions and on the Saturday evening these are opened and the questions or amazements are read and discussed in a hot-seat format, with three or four leaders fielding and responding to questions and discussion.

Late Saturday evening a block of time is spent focusing on wonder as awe and amazement. This will include a meditative worship and, if the group is able, might include an extended period of silence (long by their standards, short by ours over 10 minutes, under an hour). It might also include, if the weather is right, some heavens-gazing or time around a fire with stories of being amazed by life and the presence and possibility of God. This piece depends on the leaders available and their skills.

Special Activities

One of the special activities that we do together to encourage both creativity and to further the small group identity is. The challenge. This is a variation on skit night in which a theme word or phrase is picked; for example, bubbles or starlight or pumpkin. After the theme is announced, each small group draws from the hat a slip that designates the style that there skit must be in. It could be a song, a TV commercial, a melodrama, an opera, a classroom scene, a talk show, a sermon, whatever. They are given 20 to 40 minutes to actually prepare their skit. They are then presented with songs and a good energetic MC leading the event. It prevents seeing the same ten skits from last year's summer camp repertoire and produces some great results.

As we do this at Halloween, we have done a variety of things, like pumpkin carving or a costume meal (remind them to bring a costume). We aim for activities that encourage

involvement and participation. Group pumpkin carving is great fun if each group has two or three pumpkins and they make "statements" with them.

We do icebreakers on the opening evening that are whole group and small group. Large group sign-up sheets (sample included), birthday circle (by birthdate, in order from a starting point.) This is fun tried in silence and hand signals only. Tallest to shortest circle, both ways around. Think about it! We also try to have a designed game to get people into small groups. If we have pre-chosen the groups, then it is usually marked on the name tag. That becomes part of a game to find your group. If they get to make their own name tags, then we use some other method to group them. We also try, once they are in groups, to have games that require group work (another sign-up game) for points by shoe size, distance travelled, birthday numbers, etc.

In the small groups we try to have about eight or nine participants with two leaders, one of whom is usually an older teen who has a variety of other tasks, including assisting with nighttime supervision and other activities. We have found that there is a lot to be gained in terms of role modelling, energy levels and so on with this shared responsibility.

This has been a fun and productive event for us, producing different results the several times we have tend it but always releasing an immense amount of dialogue and searching towards the meaning and significance of our faith and the nature and identity of God, Jesus, and our Place in the world.

A TIME TO WONDER?!

Friday Night

8:00 p.m. Introduction and welcome
Room assignments

8:45 p.m. Re-gather
Songs
Program introduction
The Great Time Change

8:00 p.m. Start again
Icebreakers and songs
Forming of groups
Introduction to theme

9:00 p.m. Mug up

9:15 p.m. First small groups
Getting acquainted
Task

10:00 p.m. Re-convene and report
Questions Box/Wonder Sack
Song and worship

11:30 p.m. Lights out and quiet

Saturday A.M.

7:15 a.m. Wake-up bell

7:45 a.m. Small-group worship

8:15 a.m. Breakfast and clean-up

9:00 a.m. Songs
Outline day and assign task
Small groups

10:15 am. Activity

11:30 am. Re-gather
Songs and food before food

Saturday P.M.

12:01 p.m. Lunch and clean-up

12:45 p.m. Activity

1:30 p.m. Small groups: working on your own questions

2:30 p.m. Break

2:45 p.m. Re-gather and check in
Questions

3:45 p.m. Activity

5:00 p.m. Re-gather
Songs and food before food

5:30 p.m. Free time

6:00 p.m. Dinner and clean-up

6:45 p.m. The Questions Box/Wonder Sack/ Hot Seat

7:15 p.m. The Challenge
Campfire preparation

8:00 p.m. Campfire

9:30 p.m. Mug up

9:45 p.m. Re-gather
Songs and AWE/Wonder

11:00 p.m. Lights out

Sunday Until We Go

7:45 a.m. Wake-up bell

8:15 a.m. Small-group fellowship

9:00 a.m. Breakfast
The big clean-up
Packing

10:15 a.m. Gather for worship

10:30 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. Freshmen and photos

12:15 p.m. Pick-up lunches

12:20 p.m. Leave for the church

Small Groups
First Session (Friday 9:15)

Take 10 to 15 minutes to find out about each other. Names, interests, something that gives each person a chance to talk about themselves or someone else (e.g., have them talk in pairs; then introduce their partners; participate in this process). Stress the confidentiality of the group discussion: "What is said here stays here. when we report in, only what is agreed to will be reported."

Story

What questions did Jesus ask?
About what areas was he concerned?
Questions about identity

- his
- Gods
- connection

If nothing happens, try to provoke something

- about Israel, worship, religion
- about meaning, purpose
- about how religious people act

Each group will be asked to report one question from their list — one that the other groups haven't come up with.

Small Groups
Second Session (Saturday 9:15 am.)

As a group, discuss the list of questions we created for Jesus. Are they real questions? Are they like our questions? Can they be answered? How? Are they important? Why did his questions/answers at age 12 amaze everyone? Can we learn anything about him that is relevant to us? Why is asking questions so important? What about answers?

The above is simple a list of questions to provoke the group to talk If they are Jesus, we are the elders and scribes how can we listen to encourage their questions and insights.

Always take a few moments at the beginning to check in with the group are they here? How are they doing? etc.

Small Groups
Third Session (Saturday 1:30 p.m.)

The group will be asked to look at some of their own questions from the blue sheets. What are they? What are they about? Can we begin to answer them? What does it mean to know that God knows us, that our hard questions are part of his knowing of us? Is there a limit to our understanding our ability to know/figure out?

Which of these questions can we work on?

The group will be asked to make some report either stating some of the questions raised and answers or questions with no answers or questions that need time but haven't gotten any.

Other Instructions

The group leaders are also asked to meet each morning with their groups in their meeting space for a few moments of prayer, discussion, readings. Short, low-key and sensitive. It is also an important time to check in to see who needs additional attention. It will be optional. There may be unfinished business on Sunday. It will be important to note it and to make some choices about what to do with it: How will it be attended? Who will be concerned?

SAMPLE
A Time To Wonder?!
Information Sheet

Please bring:

- suitable clothing
- indoor and outdoor footwear
- some wet weather gear
- sleeping bag or bedding and pillow
- a Bible and pen and paper
- a sense of wonder
- some questions (see below)

Do not bring:

- gum
- radios, Walkman, etc.
- unnecessary stuff

Please be at the church at 6:45 p.m.
We will return at 2:00 p.m.

Transportation will be provided for all who would like to attend.

Detach and return your answers to the following questions with your application.

The following questions are ones I sometimes wonder about:

1.

2.

3.

- I am amazed by...
- I think a lot about...
- What I think about God is...

SAMPLE

A Time to Wonder . . . Getting to know each other

You have to get someone different to sign their name in each blank.

I have never been to camp before _____

I was born in a country other than the United States _____

I am taller than my mother _____

I have a brother/sister here this weekend _____

I do not like pizza _____

I like cats and have more than one _____

I ride horses regularly _____

I can see the salt water from a window in my house _____

This is my favorite time of year _____

I am good at computer games _____

I am actually a shy person _____

I am on a sports team at school _____

I like reading books _____

I am glad to be me _____

Dear Diary[27]

Diaries teach the value of reflection and privacy. They allow a young person to develop a personal voice, at a level that can surprise parents and teachers. University of Toronto professor Johan Lyall Aitken notes: "They feel free to use any word in their thinking vocabulary, even if they wouldn't use it in a speech or school assignments. You often find a level of literacy, vocabulary and complexity of sentence structure that doesn't show up in their school work."

Although there are exceptions, few young adolescents are ready to spend time alone each day trying to tease out an entry. At the beginning, the best form is a responsive or dialogue diary, somewhat like the journal many young people now keep for their teachers at school.

This means the parent uses space in the diary to add or respond to what the child has written. Since even very young children need some privacy, you should work out a code — a marker, a corner of the page turned down for entries the child does not want you to see.

To ease the task of learning to record events, one expert recommends using the diary as an album. If an adolescent writes that her friends are raving about the movie, the parent's response could include a date to take her, written under a clipping of the ad for the film. Later on the ticket stubs can be added.

There are rules to be followed. The diary is never the place for lessons in spelling and grammar, no matter how glaring the errors. Try to establish a set time for diary writing — perhaps once a week, rather than every day. The book's chance of use and survival are greater if it is attractively bound, and an enticing artifact in itself.

For the adolescent the role of the parent is much smaller than with a child, but, in compensation, the range of literary models is greater. A 12- or 13-year-old is ready for more demanding books, such as *The Diary of Anne Frank* (various publishers) or Budge Wilson's *Thirteen Never Changes* (Scholastic-Tab Publications, 1989), in which a contemporary teenager is bequeathed her grandmothers diaries.

For teenagers, privacy is the key issue. Aitken believes some kids deliberately leave the diary out in the open as a form of tacit permission, but most experts disagree. "Maybe they're testing to see if they can trust you," says Lynda Pogue. Hands off is the safest rule for parents and brothers and sisters.

There is little parents can do to encourage an adolescent to keep a diary; personal writing cannot be assigned by someone else. Your best hope is to write one yourself and share parts of it.

Programming Principles for Young Adolescent Ministries[28]

New research on adolescent development and the impact of social and cultural trends challenges the church to re-examine the types of programs offered for young adolescents. To guide the work of program developers in young adolescent ministries, the following principles are offered. They form the basis of a well-grounded, comprehensive approach to programming with young adolescents.

1. **Young adolescent ministries** are multifaceted ministries that include community building, Christian education and catechesis, prayer and worship, justice and service, and guidance.

2. **Young adolescent ministries** integrate young adolescents into the congregation through involvement of young adolescents in community worship and celebrations.

3. **Young adolescent ministries** acknowledge young adolescents as valuable members of the church and reaches out to them through personal contact (like home visits) and personal communication (like newsletters and birthday cards), as tangible signs of the church in their lives.

4. **Young adolescent ministries** respond to the needs of parents and families of young adolescents. Parents should have input into program planning, and there should be programs where parents and family members can attend with each other. Special efforts must be made to assist parents in the role of parenting young adolescents.

5. **Young adolescent ministries** are a year-round effort and should not be based on a school-year calendar.

6. **Young adolescent ministries** provide opportunities for young adolescents to gain a sense of confidence and competence by performing meaningful tasks in their church and in their community.

7. **Young adolescent ministries** promote positive relationships: youth to youth, adult to youth, parent to child, and church to member.

8. **Young adolescent ministries** are concerned with the total personal growth of the young person: spiritually, intellectually, physically, morally and emotionally.

9. **Young adolescent ministries programs** are planned with and not for young adolescents in order to develop a sense of ownership and insure greater support.

10. **Young adolescent ministries** programs occur in a variety of settings, employ a variety of formats, and allow young adolescents the freedom to choose their own level of involvement.

11. **Young adolescent ministries programs** reflect each of the seven developmental needs of young adolescents: physical activity; competence and achievement; self-definition; creative expression; positive social interaction with peers and adults; structure and clear limits; meaningful participation.

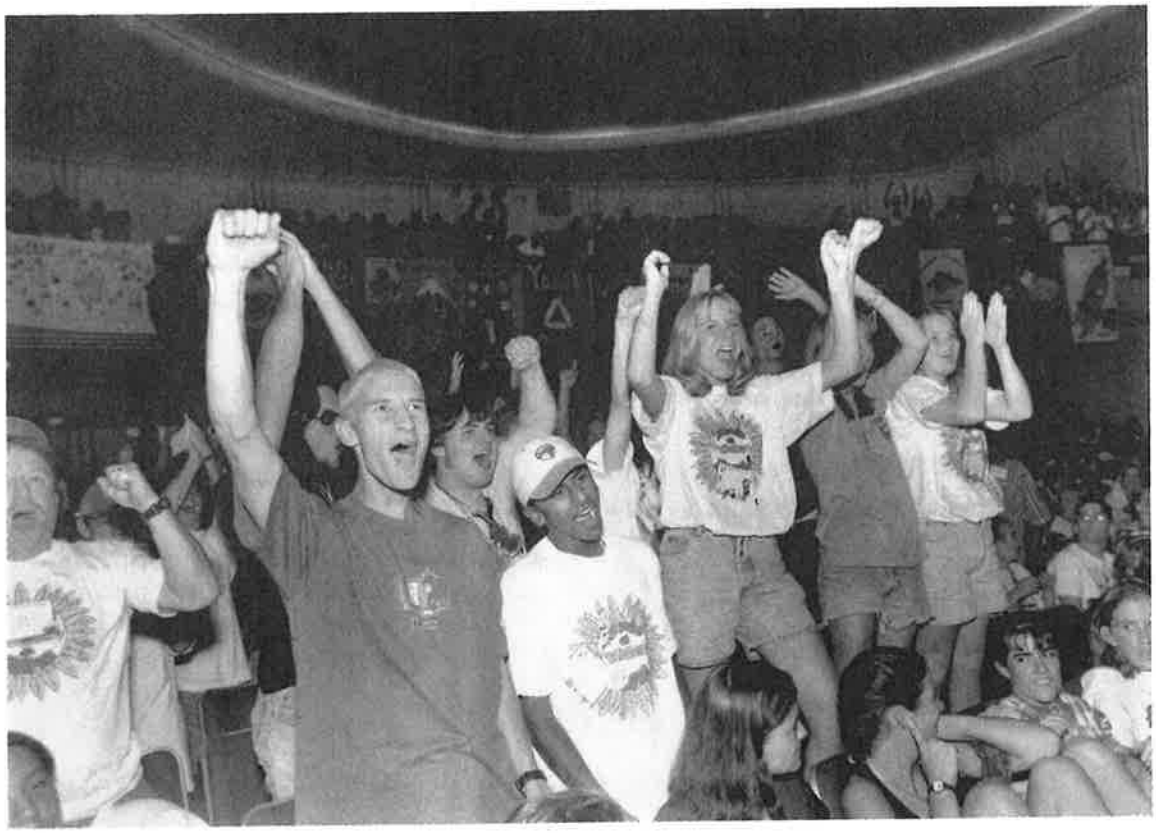
12. **Young adolescent ministries programs** are organized by a team of leaders (adults and younger adolescents) responsible for planning, implementation and ongoing evaluation.

13. **Young adolescent ministries programs** are guided by mature adults who are comfortable with young adolescents and are willing to share their lives with them.

14. **Young adolescent ministries programs** promote a sense of security for young adolescents through clearly articulated rules that participants appreciate and accept.

15. **Young adolescent ministries programs** balance time for laughter, high spirits and physical activity with time for reflection and individual work.

16. **Young adolescent ministries programs** encourage collaboration over competition, promoting equality and fairness among youth.



Principles for Recruiting Leaders

We must be attentive throughout the year to those people who may have gifts and time to offer.

We must match a person to a task. This takes care and time, but the specific is more successful than the general.

Public relations is an ongoing responsibility and we have to let people of all ages and all circumstances know that service is possible. This needs to be a year-round concern, not a last-minute one.

We must keep track of those who offer and respond to them. A simple record system can do this.

When we recruit leaders or helpers, the following principles are effective:

1. It should be in person, not apologetically, and with an appropriate level of care and enthusiasm.
2. Introduce yourself and the nature of your visit as well as finding out from them what they know of your program.
3. It is useful to outline clearly and concisely the task they are being asked to do; its limits and time frame. It is also important to clarify if it will involve contact with youth.
4. Clarify the support available.
5. Answer their questions and let them assist in redefining the job if only part of it suits them.
6. Affirm the benefit to them and your hope in selecting them.
7. Never insist on an immediate decision, but allow time for consideration and reflection.
8. Make sure that you set a deadline for notification about their decision and be prepared to make a follow-up telephone call.
9. It may help to hand the person a written job description.
10. Always say thank you.
11. Notify the person by letter of your agreed conclusion.
12. It may also be helpful to include a second person in the interview with you, especially a young person who may be part of the program concerned.
13. It is important to conduct the interview at an arranged time, not haphazardly, in a space comfortable for the person being asked. Formality will serve to underline the importance of your request.

When Programs Don't Match the Facts[29]

When attempting to construct a program for the young adolescent, one realizes the wide disparity between the data we have on youth that age and the programmatic responses we have devised Here are some of the aspects of the young adolescent we know through developmental research and the common response of most schools.

Fact: Young adolescents vary enormously (as much as five years) in physical, mental and emotional maturity and capability.

Response: In schools, chronological age is still the overwhelming method used in grouping students.

Fact: Young adolescents need to try on a wide variety of roles.

Response We classify them in a few general roles to make them more manageable.

Fact: During young adolescence, the development of control over one's own life through conscious decision-making is crucial.

Response: Adults make all meaningful decisions for almost all young adolescents almost all the time, giving the young people the "freedom" to make only safe (read meaningless) decisions.

Fact: In young adolescence, all-natural forces (muscular, intellectual, glandular, etc.) are causing precipitous peaks and troughs.

Response: We demand behavioral consistency enforced through punishment.

Fact: Young adolescents are preoccupied with physical concerns.

Response: We operate with them each day as though this was not even a minor matter in their lives, but as though such concerns did not exist.

Fact: Young adolescents need a distinct feeling of present importance, a relevancy in their lives.

Response: We place them in "junior" high schools, whose very name implies a subordinate status, and then feed them a diet of watered down "real stuff."

Fact: Young adolescents, up to the age of 15, continue to show wide variance in skill and conceptual areas, strictly due to developmental variances.

Response: We have used our counseling apparatus to lock children before age 15 into four-year programs that will dictate in large part the child's future occupational horizons.

Curiously, it appears that in the face of what we know about young adolescents, we act quite oppositely to that knowledge in most schools. The following recommendations do not demand new,

massive, expensive programs to make them work. They are conclusions born of a life time of work with adolescents that anyone can put to work tomorrow in their dealings with young people of this age group.

Conclusion: Since young adolescents don't fit into neat classifications, don't classify them. At all. Ever. For there is no need to and there is harm in trying.

Conclusion: Since we don't know how best to place young adolescents in groups, let them place themselves in groups. Since we do know that peer friendship is of prime importance, that at least can be maximized.

Conclusion: Since we know so little about young adolescents, we must ask them questions, listen and formulate programs from that dialogue.

Conclusion: Since young adolescents need wide intellectual, affective, emotional and role experience, we must provide an environment that allows them these experiences.

Conclusion: Since young adolescents are newly aware of the intensity of life, we must live openly with them. It keeps alive the trust that they can weather their turbulent times, for they recognize and trust the fact that we did.

Conclusion: Be wary of locking young adolescents into roles that you, not they, are comfortable with. They need to experience a wide variety of roles, acceptable and not acceptable, before they can wisely decide in which direction they wish to venture forth.

Conclusion: Take them seriously, but keep yourself balance. If an young adolescent hurts you, it is a childhood nettle, not an adult thorn.

Conclusion: Some young adolescents are verbal and articulate; most are not. Provide varied opportunities for expression and study the results. These acts of expression do speak louder than words.

Conclusion: For young people newly perceiving a world filled with terror, while at an age of special vulnerability, a emoting of loving adults makes that world bearable and teaches the efficacy of love.

Conclusion: Openness to the freshness and challenge of youth adolescence thwarts adult tendencies towards ossification. It also legitimizes the thrill of growth when such growth is shared by an adult and a youth.

Games[30]

Most youth ministries already incorporate games in one form or another — as ice breakers, community building exercises, free-time activities, workshops, program-related experiential learning, or just as fun time fillers. For those of us leaders who are less musically confident, games may even replace singing as an inclusive large-group experience. An effective, responsible game leader is much more than an entertainer or a rule enforcer. The questions I want to address are why, what, and how. Why do we play games? What makes games work? How can we lead games effectively? (And yes...I have also included instructions for almost forty recommended games.)

For the purposes of this article "game" will mean a planned, theologically sound, interactive experience that safely achieves one or more of the following: fun, information exchange between participants, cooperation or team building, appropriate levels of contact or touch, and communication. This means games may include, but will not be limited to: board games, competitive sports or even just ice breakers. It also assumes that the choice of games depends on the particulars of the situation. No one game will work under all conditions, and more importantly what is ideal for one setting may be utterly inappropriate for another.

Why Do We Play Games?

Life is a gift which deserves to be taken seriously and also to be celebrated! Fun, laughter and discovery are indicators that life is being valued and enjoyed. We play games to share in life, to experience life through our senses and to discover the richness of relationships. As Christians we believe that it is possible to experience the Good News of Jesus Christ through the honesty and substance of relationships modeled after his life. So if games are intended to bring us closer to one another and to God they should emphasize participation, affirmation of others and building self-esteem over competition or winning. Games for ministry should leave players feeling worthy and valued — that they have participated in something that had a positive effect.

A by-product of healthy game playing is community building. Community forms gradually, in an ongoing manner. It is by definition never static. We can not make community happen. It is hugely dependent on the movement of the Holy Spirit and our readiness to receive it. We can, however, set up situations in which participants have the best possible opportunities to build healthy relationships, to experience the presence and meaning of God, and thus to be moved from superficiality towards authenticity and transformation. Games present a problem to be solved by the players. "How will I participate?" "How will I be included?" The full potential of any game is realized through the necessary problem solving and working out of details that leads players towards meaningful connection, true community. Think about the fun players have when they develop their own strategies to achieve the identified goal. Games also allow participants to learn through experience. Second only to first-hand experience, created or simulated experiences such as games or role plays communicate content more effectively than any other educational method. The right games at the right time can communicate more about being incarnate people made in God's image than any sermon, video or even song, because one's whole self, body, mind and spirit, is involved.

What Makes Games Work?

In general, well planned and carefully led games work well. Too little structure can be frightening for some players and too much will feel oppressive. The challenge is to find a balance between responsible management and controlling every dimension of the game.

To achieve this it is essential to know something about the group for which you are being asked to lead games. Games which are planned taking into consideration as wide a range of factors as possible will work best and will contribute more effectively to the process of community formation. Factors to consider:

- Purpose of the gathering — expectations of the group and its leaders;
- Age — age range of group; developmental and energy levels; verbal skills;
- Gender balance — ratio of female to male players; appropriate levels of physical contact; strength, speed or training differentials;
- Range of physical ability — mobility of players; coordination; stamina; knowledge of left & right;
- Terrain or facility — indoors or outdoors? open or closed? flat or hilly? natural obstacles or breakable materials; lighting; acoustics; furniture?
- Numbers — how many expected? how many with experience? how many leaders? how will you organize teams if needed?
- Strong personalities — who's expected that is a natural leader or trouble maker?
- Pressing issues — Are there critical issues facing this group or unfolding in the world that should be considered?
- Time of day and duration of program — how long are you expected to lead games? *What will the group have come from and be going to? Will they be hyper? sleepy? hungry? relaxed?
- Time the group has spent together — what is their common history? How many are new? returning? anticipated levels of trust? ability to risk?
- Economic, cultural or racial backgrounds — many gatherings today are multicultural and many games assume that all players will be comfortable with Euro-centric forms of communication. Examine assumptions about eye contact, touch, intimacy, sharing, lifestyles etc.
- Language — English may not be everyone's first language; learning; disabilities may affect reading, speech, memorization.

When these factors are ignored games may still be fun, even worthwhile, but the risks of offending or alienating are higher and the outcome is less predictable.

If you enjoy the game you are leading, chances are that you will communicate your enthusiasm to the participants and run it well. It never works to lead a game you dislike or feel stupid. It is hard to lead a game well if you have never played it. This is because game leading is more about group process than rules. You have to be familiar enough with a game to recognize when it is working, when players need additional instruction or when a new "twist" needs to be introduced to keep the excitement level high. The more you practice leading games the more natural your style will become.

There are endless possibilities for creative and fun game playing. Keep searching or adapting until you find a collection of games with which you are completely comfortable. Children's games are a great source. How might they be adapted for teenage or adult use? Keep focused on your purpose. Remember: the game is simply a vehicle to assist with the transportation toward that purpose. It does not have to, and probably couldn't, be played perfectly.

Games that are consistent with the leader's values and theology work best. I, for example, believe that we are all called to be responsible stewards of the earth's resources. Waste bothers me tremendously. So I do not encourage the playing of games which waste food or any other valuable resource. I am also not rigid. Several years ago at a Junior High camp session, in the middle of a serious California drought, I had emphasized the importance of water conservation. One day the temperatures soared to 110 degrees and the campers were

begging for a water fight. I could just imagine every hose in the place running at full capacity. Rather than say, "No!" on principle I compromised and told the campers that they could do anything they wanted with two large garbage cans of water as long as they played over grass or soil that would absorb the moisture. The campers came up with an ingenious game that involved every imaginable water carrying device! (An added note: When a game leaves a mess of any kind, I automatically create an additional group activity around the clean up tasks in order to emphasize our shared responsibility and to get the job done.)

How Can We Lead Games Effectively?

Put safety first. One preventable accident can ruin your whole day.

Plan your games well ahead. Plan alternatives and be willing to use them. Plan to move from playful non-threatening (low vulnerability) towards deeper interactive games (higher vulnerability). Plan games you enjoy. Try to balance thinking/feeling, doing/being.

Have all equipment and space prepared in advance. Mark off any necessary boundaries.

Be sure the game leader can be seen and heard. Stand on a wall or chair if necessary. Stand in a circle of players, not inside it, to give instructions. Be willing to model anything you will ask the group to do. This will reduce anxiety about the unknown.

Start positively and with energy. Trust your plans and your discretion. Do not ask, "Do you want to play a game?" Do say, "We are going to play a game now!" Identify yourself as the game leader and not the judge. Watch closely, pick up clues.

Put the group into game playing "position" before explaining the instructions. Divide into teams, lines, circles, pairs etc. first. This reduces confusion and allows the group to start playing sooner.

Make instructions brief and straightforward. Give just enough information to start the game. Do not try to anticipate all possible situations. Allow players to do their own "problem solving."

Remember that the game leader may always stop the game and modify the rules if the need arises. Encourage people to ask for clarification, but avoid "what ifs. . . ."

Demonstrate more and talk less. Choose games with simple rules.

Always allow people to choose to observe and identify them as participants too.

Encourage players with positive feedback. Communicate honest acceptance.

Timing is important. End the game before it reaches its peak. Signs that it is time to end: people's attention wanders, they modify the rules on their own, they break the rules. (Note: Teenagers often like to play games over and over and over. Try not to let one become stale or habitual because the element of discovery is central to community formation.)

Make the game as fair as possible. This is particularly important for active games that require physical coordination. If there is extreme variance in ability or experience try to adapt the game to compensate. Ice hockey can become broom ball on ice wearing tennis shoes. Water polo can become inner tube water polo. Use water balloons for volleyball or a big rubber ball for softball. Teaming stronger players with new players, or creating an adjusted scoring system or adapted rules for the players with more experience can work well and build community. For example ask participants who are familiar with a problem-solving exercise to play in silence, thus emphasizing their non-verbal communication skills.

There are times when well planned, well executed games do not work. Be willing to acknowledge a flop and move on. If it's not fun or meaningful, stop! Postpone evaluation until the appropriate time. Remember that the games are a vehicle for growth, not a task to be accomplished.

Watch out for:

- "Hot seat" games that will produce group enjoyment at the expense of an individual;
- Players' feelings if they have to be eliminated or set apart; (Suggestion: adapt the game to include them in some way. See Musical Chairs in next section.)

- Blindfolds — never require them, ask for volunteers;
- Any game that does not reflect your personal theology or values;
- Games that are culturally biased and may alienate players. If you do not know whether a game is culturally biased ask people whose cultural backgrounds are different from your own how they might respond;
- Games that require expertise and may divide the group into those who are confident and those who are not, or may embarrass less experienced players who are sincerely trying to participate.

Above all else, don't take yourself or your games too seriously. Have fun! Celebrate life as the enormous gift that it is.

OLD FAITHFUL GAMES—TO BE USED IN NEW, FAITHFUL WAYS

Information Exchange

Theological Foundation:

- Each person is created in God's image. (Genesis 1:27)
- God calls each of us by our name. (Isaiah 45:3–4)
- We, the people of God have a story.

Rationale:

- Each person is unique. We have our own stories to tell.
- We are curious about the world and want information.
- We all want to belong, to find out that we are "normal."
- Information gives us power.

1. Map of the World (recommend 10 or more players, works well with adults)

Ask participants to stand on an imaginary map of the world relative to one identified point and direction, according to a) where they were born, b) where they would most like to travel if money & time were not an issue etc. Sample some of their locations by asking volunteers to introduce themselves and say "where" they are standing & "why."

2a. Confusion Bingo (recommend 20 or more players)

Prepare by drawing a 5 square by 5 square grid on a piece of paper. Fill in each square with a fact e.g. likes chocolate, can speak Spanish, has a dog, wears size 11 shoes; or with an action e.g. did 10 jumping jacks, curled his/her tongue, made a scary face. Try to pick facts or actions that are relevant to the group you expect. Make enough copies for everyone. Hand out one grid and one pencil to each person. Instruct the group to move through the room finding people who match each square. If player A finds player B who for example has size 11 feet, s/he initials player A's paper in the appropriate box. Set a limit about how many squares one person can sign on one sheet. Set a goal — one full line of bingo, or two, or blackout.

2b. Signature Hunt (adaptation for 10 or more)

Give participants a pencil and a list of experiences, talents or qualities such as: climbed a mountain over 10,000 feet, basketball player, creative, ate snails once, never had chicken pox, can curl tongue, and so on. Ask them to collect signatures of other people in the group who have those characteristics. The first person to have a signature beside each item or the person who collects the most in a given time period wins.

3. Shoe Chart (any number, but people need to be wearing name tags)

Make up a simple chart with columns for people's names, type of shoe, color of shoe, kind of material. The object of the game is to mingle around the room and, *without talking,* write down on the chart everyone's name and shoe information. This game could also be

done with other categories, like hair color, eye color etc.

4. Clumps (10 or more; the larger the group, the more options there are)

A caller tells participants to mingle around the room and to "clump" in a group of the size called out. As they mingle the caller shouts out a number, or bangs a spoon on a pot, or blows a whistle that many times. If the players hear "5" they must try to get into groups of five people and await further instruction. The caller then gives the groups an assignment appropriate to the participants, e.g. untie and tie everyone's shoes in your group; tell each other how you got here; stand in height order. Then the caller repeats the "mingle, mingle" instruction and the game is repeated with a different group size and task.

5. Fruit/Vegetable Name Game (any number)

Each person picks a fruit or vegetable that begins with the same letter as his/her name. Sit in a circle. Go around the circle and say your name and your fruit/vegetable. You can ask each person to repeat all the combinations before her/him, or for a less pressured experience chant the combinations as a whole group each time. You can also put a person in the middle with a pillow. A player in the circle begins by saying a 2nd person's name and fruit. The person with the pillow tries to swat the named 2nd person before that 2nd person says a third person's name and fruit. If the swatter succeeds the 2nd person takes over with the pillow.

6. Zip/Zap/Boom Name Game (any number)

Everyone sits on chairs in a circle. Each person must learn the name of the person to his/her LEFT (ZIP) and RIGHT (ZAP). One volunteer stands in the center of the circle and points to someone, saying, "Zip" or "Zap." The appointed person must say the correct name of the person in the zip or zap position depending on what was requested. The rest of the group can determine what is a correct and timely response. It is good to have a few trial runs. If correct the pointer points again. If the receiver was wrong, s/he takes over the position in the center. The center person has a third alternative, "Zip, Zap, Boom!" which means that everyone must get up and change seats. The center person tries to grab a seat, making someone else "it."

7. How Did You Get Your Name? What Does It Mean? (in small groups)

Ask each person to respond to these two questions. A good follow up is often to talk about the nicknames a person has had over the years, and what s/he prefers to be called today.

8. I Like People Who... (15 plus)

Everyone sits in chairs in a circle. Ask for a volunteer to stand in the middle. S/he says very loudly, "I like people who _____" filling in the blank appropriately. All players in the seated circle who have done/are/like what is named must get up and find a new chair, at least two spaces away from their original seat. The person in the middle tries to grab a chair which leaves a new caller and the game is repeated. You can ask people to shake at least two or three people's hands as they cross the circle and introduce themselves to increase the get-to-know you stuff.

9. Walk through the Wallet (small groups)

Ask people to take out their wallets, purses or to empty their pockets and share the contents with one another. Make it clear that players can choose what they share and what they do not. Tell each other what meaning certain things have and why.

10. Unfinished Sentences (even number, 10 plus)

Prepare a set of unfinished sentences e.g. My favorite food is...; The last movie I saw was...; What I like best about church is.... Pair players up and position them in two concentric circles with partners facing each other (inside

circle faces out, outside circle faces in.) Read the first question and have them both respond. Then play music while the circles move in opposite directions. When the music stops, read another question for the new pairs to answer, and repeat.

11. I Have Never... (groups of 5–15)

Give each player one piece of wrapped candy, peanut in the shell, or playing tokens for every player. So, if there are 15 players everyone needs 15 pieces of candy or playing tokens. Sit in a circle. Go around the circle and complete the sentence "I have never..." with a true statement, trying to name things that you suspect other people in the group have done or been. If other players have done the thing named they must give the person a piece of candy/playing token. This is a great way to learn interesting facts about people while rewarding the players who might have had the less exciting lives.

12. Brown Bag Collage (any number)

Give all people a paper lunch bag. Have lots of old magazines and newspapers around, with scissors, pens and glue. Tell people to cut out words and pictures that show things related to their "outer" life e.g. that they do/are interested in/like and stick them on the outside of the bag. They can also draw on the bag. Then cut out pictures and words that represent their "inner" life, their dreams/fears/hopes/disappointments/secrets, etc. and stick them on the inside of the bag. When ready break into small groups and share your bags with one another. It must be clear that the inside of the bags is confidential and participants may share as much or as little as they choose.

13. Group Up (20 plus)

As everyone mills around the room the leader yells out a qualifying characteristic like "Same first initial!" Quickly, the group members try to find others who have the same first initial as they do and stick together. Whoever is the largest group wins that round of the game. Possibilities for qualifying characteristics are endless. They can be informative or a little silly, e.g. same favorite TV show; same age; same birth month; same brand of shoes, same eye color etc.

Contact/Touching

Theological Foundation:

- God created us and we are good. (Genesis 1:31)
- Physical touch is important to confirm reality. (Mt 9:21, Lk 24:39, Jn 20:27)

Rationale:

- We are flesh & bones people, incarnate.
- We need to discover ways to move from isolation & self-consciousness to other-centeredness and community.
- Our fragmented world desperately needs healthy, loving touch to invite people out of isolation, into community.

1. Face to Face/Back to Back (odd number, 10 plus)

Ask people to find a partner. Instruct them to stand front to front and introduce themselves. One person should be without a partner and will begin as the game leader. The leader calls out "front to front" or "back to back" at varying paces and the players move accordingly. When the caller says "Change!" the players must find a new partner and the original caller tries to find one too, which should leave a new person to be the next caller.

2. Human Knot (8 to 10 per group)

Have each group stand in a circle facing each other. Tell them to put their arms out in front of each other and to hold hands with people across the circle. They must not hold the two hands of the same person or hold a hand of either person beside them. Once all hands are paired under these conditions the group tries to untie the know without letting go. It is possible.

3. Ear to Elbow (even number, the more the better)

Have everyone find a partner. Make two concentric circles with the inside partner facing the outside partner. Tell that each circle is to walk clockwise (i.e. in opposite directions) until the leader calls out two body parts. At this point the partners must scramble to find each other and connect the tow body parts as quickly as possible. Once players "get it" the last pair to find each other and connect the right parts will be eliminated by the leader. The object is to survive to the very end. If eliminated, ask players to become assisting judges and callers. Example of calls: knee to back, head to stomach.

4. Lap Sit (15 plus)

Have each player sit on a chair in a circle. The game leader will say a series of "If you..." sentences and if the sentence is true for players they must get up and move the number of chairs in the direction the leader has specified. E.g. If you go to high school, move six chairs to your left. All high school students would get up and move. They may find someone already sitting in their new chair. If so, they are instructed to sit carefully on top of them. The piles will grow.

5. Elbow Tag (10 plus)

Ask for a volunteer "cat" and "mouse." Position other players in pairs linked at the elbow around the room/area. Cat begins to chase the mouse. Whenever the mouse attaches him/herself to one of the standing pairs it launches the person at the open end of the pair to become the mouse. If the cat looks tired, ask for a new volunteer and continue.

6. Reconnect Palms (any even number)

Find partners. Eyes closed, partners face each other and touch palms. Feel the energy and then on an instruction drop their arms. Instruct them to take two steps back, turn around three times and try to reconnect palms. Invite brief reflections on the experience.

7. Palm Dancing (any even number)

Find partners. Sit on the floor facing each other with palms connected. For practice: one person in each pair begin to move hands freely, creatively and partners follow movement keeping palms connected. Reverse roles. Then leader ask participants to close their eyes, listen to the music and allow paired palms to move freely in response to it. Leader play a piece of taped music, preferably meditative in nature. If there are lyrics choose words that communicate affirmation or basic Christian theology.

Cooperation/Team Building

Theological Foundation:

- We are one body in Christ with many parts. (1 Cor. 12)
- We have diverse gifts, all necessary for bringing about the Kingdom of God.

Rationale:

- We all yearn to belong, to feel needed and trusted.
- Life is a gift to be shared and celebrated.
- Together we can accomplish so much more than alone.
- By experiencing the love and acceptance of others we can know God's love.

1. Human Tic Tac Toe (at least six)

Divide into two equal teams. Give each team a tube of colored zinc oxide to put a mark on their faces to differentiate the teams (or use colored stickers etc.) Set up nine chairs in a 3 X 3 grid. Each team takes turns putting one player into the grid just like tic, tac, toe.

2. Rock, Paper, Scissors (large number, with ample space to run)

Divide into two teams. Identify a mid line and two home bases equidistant on opposite sides of that line. Tell the teams to huddle and select rock, paper or scissors for their sign on the count of three. The teams line up along the mid

line. The leader counts, 1,2,3 and then the players show their sign. The losing team runs as fast as it can back toward its home base. The winning team chases and players tag members of the opposite "losing" team as quickly as possible until they are safe across their home line. Anyone who was tagged switches teams and the procedure is repeated.

3. Sound and Motion (6 or more)

Players are divided into three approximately equal groups. Each group decides on a sound and motion combination that will be their teams contribution to the game. Each group teaches the other two groups their sound and motion combo. Then the groups huddle and each group decides which combination it will do when the leader counts to three, not necessarily their own. The object of the game is to see how many rounds it takes for all three groups to do the same sound and motion combo.

4. Making Rain (any number, the more the better)

Ideally have participants sit in a circle or semi-circle more than one person deep. Leader begins at one point and tells the group to do whatever motion s/he is doing when s/he makes eye contact with them, and to continue making that motion until the leader returns and changes the motion by example.

- Sound one — rubbing hands together.
- Sound two — snapping fingers, alternating hands
- Sound three — patting thighs, alternating hands
- Sound four — stomping feet (if floor not carpeted) or hitting hard surface with palms
- Build up the storm and then reverse the motions to end with a quiet, light rain.

5. Putting Together the Puzzle (any number, with preparation)

Prepare pieces of paper with words or phrases that go together to build a familiar passage (Scripture, hymn, prayer etc.) or that make up a total object (car, machine, books of the Bible) Put one piece of paper on each person's back and instruct the group to get into appropriate positions *without talking*.

6. Yarn Web (5 or more)

Have players stand in a circle. The leader holds the end of a ball of yarn/string and tosses the ball across to another player who pulls the suspended piece of string tight, holds on to it and tosses the ball across the circle again to another player. This action is repeated until the ball of yarn has been passed to every player in the circle and there is a unique web pattern connecting everyone. This is an opportunity to talk about being One Body of many parts, about each person's unique and important contribution to the whole life of the group. What would happen if one person let go? The process can also be used as an affirmation or thanksgiving exercise. As the yarn is tossed the thrower may say something s/he appreciates or values about the receiver, or the receiver may say something for which s/he is thankful, or something s/he has learned during the program.

7. Back-to-Back (even number up to about 20)

Have everyone pair off with someone about their height and sit on the floor, back to back. Next tell them to lock arms and try to stand up together at the same time. Now have each pair join with another pair and try it again with all four people sitting back to back. When these groups have been successful at standing up, combine larger and larger groups until the entire group is all in one big circle trying to stand up together in the locked-arm, back-to-back position.

8. Shuffle Your Buns (15 plus)

Ask players to make a circle sitting on armless chairs. Ask for one volunteer. S/he will stand and leave one empty chair. It is then his/her goal to sit down in the empty chair. Tell the seated participants that their goal is to keep the volunteer from sitting in the empty chair by

shuffling their buns around the circle in a clockwise direction. Whenever the chair to a player's left is empty it will be his/her responsibility to slide into it as fast as possible. Then the next player will slide over etc. On "Go!" the player to the right of the empty chair slides into it and the volunteer races towards it, trying to sit down. If the volunteer gets tired or discouraged, ask for a new volunteer, or two, or three at once depending on the size of the group.

9. Rhythm Group (5 or more)

Sit in a circle. One person starts to make a sound and continues making it at a regular rhythm (e.g. snap, clap, wind sound.) The next player adds a new sound and rhythm to the mix. Go all the way around the circle adding new sounds, rhythms and discovering your very own performance band. If you have a small group the players change their sound each time it is their turn.

Communication

Theological Foundation:

- There is a time for silence and a time for talk. (Eccles 3:7)
- You will know the truth and the truth will set you free. (John 8:32)
- Go then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples. (Matthew 28:19)

Rationale:

- Telling the truth & being consistent matters as Christians.

1. Charades (6 or more)

There are many ways to play this game. Divide the group into two teams. Each team prepares a number of titles (books, TV, plays, songs) for members of the opposite team to act. Each player has up to 3 minutes to act out one title in front of his/her own team. When the team guesses the correct title the time is recorded. The team with the lowest total time scored is the winner.

2. Telephone (any number in small teams)

Whisper a sentence in one player's ear. That person repeats what s/he heard into the next person's ear and so on down the line. What comes out at the end is often good material for laughter and a discussion about how the truth gets twisted in our daily lives.

3. Gossip Game—Drawing on Backs
(equal teams of up to 4 players each)

Prepare one set of several simple drawings for each team (e.g. a house, a tree, a dog, a star.) Have the teams line up behind a captain, facing the front of the room. Then have them sit on the floor. Put blank paper and pens in front of each captain. Give the last person in each line a copy of one of the pictures (the same one for all teams). Tell the last players to draw the shape they have been given on the backs of the people sitting in front of them. Those people draw what they feel on the next backs and so on, until each front person draws a picture of what s/he receives on his/her back. The final pictures rarely look like the original. How is this process like gossip?

4. Emotions with Adjectives (any number)

Prepare signs with a noun in large letters on the top and an emotion on the bottom e.g. Hippopotamus/Anger; Homework/Passion. Ask players to find a partner and sit on the floor facing their partner so that one of them is facing one end of the room and the other is facing the opposite end. (This means all pairs are facing exactly the same directions.) Then the leader will go to one end of the room and hold up one sign. The players (half) who are facing the leader will read the sign and by saying only the one noun on the top of the page must communicate the emotion below it. Body language is fine. Other words are not OK. See who of the guessing partners gets it first. Then walk to the other end of the room and repeat the process with a new sign. Afterwards talk about what we communicate with our bodies and voices that often has little to do with our words.

5. Count Off! (any number up to 20ish)

Know how many people are playing. Tell all players that the object of this game is to close their eyes and see if they can count up to the number of players with each player only saying one number once. Close eyes and begin. Someone just says, "One" and someone else, "Two" etc. If more than one person speaks at a time go back to the beginning.

6. Peepers (8 plus, in pairs)

This is a fun and more tasteful version of "Murder." Ask people to find a partner. Then everyone sits in one large circle on the floor directly across the circle from his/her partner. Close eyes and put heads down. On three each player is to lift his/her head with eyes open and look in one of three directions: (1) straight ahead into the eyes of his/her partner, (2) directly at the person on the left, or (3) directly at the person on the right. If two people are looking directly at each other — they DIE! and are eliminated. (Encourage dramatic deaths.) Looking at someone's ear is safe. Rearrange the reduced circle to be sure everyone has a partner & repeat. Last pair remaining are the winners.

7. Forced Choices (any number)

There are many versions of this activity and it can easily be adapted for a range of program themes. Gather group in the center of the room. Tell them that you are going to read a list of paired items. For each pair, they must choose the item that is most like them and make their choice by moving to one end of the room or the other. You, the game leader, must designate which end of the room is for which item. Once the group is divided you may want to ask for opinions from both ends. Examples: night/day, spectator/participant, giver/receiver, mountains/ocean, dog/cat.

Miscellaneous Games

1. Musical Chairs (15 plus)

Set up a long row, or several rows of chairs with alternate chairs facing the opposite direction. Start with at least one less chair than there are players. Play music, and move around the chairs in one direction. When the music stops grab a seat. If a player does not find a seat s/he must occupy a seat for the rest of the game. Chairs will fill up and it will be harder and harder to find a vacant seat. The "out" players will begin to develop their own defensive strategies!

2. Mrs. Mumble (any number)

Sit in a circle. Cover all teeth with your lips. The first player turns to his/her neighbor and asks "Is Mrs. Mumble at home?" That person also with teeth covered replies, "I don't know. I'll have to ask my neighbor" and turns to the next player to repeat the first question. The goal is for no one to see your teeth.

3. Magazine/Newspaper Pictures— Seeing God

Let individuals or pairs pick a magazine picture that speaks to them. Then ask the following questions and provide paper and pencils for the prayers. What do you know about this picture? Where do you see God? Write a prayer for the picture.Share the picture and the prayers as a part of your worship together.

4. Zap! (any number)

Stand in a circle. Close eyes. One person begins a low buzz. People join in. Let it build. Count to three and all shout, Zap! Then silence for 30 seconds and close in prayer.

Responsive Religious Youth Programs

How can religious institutions meet the need of young adolescents for worthwhile activities?

Many families who are considering joining a new church make their choice on the basis of what the particular congregation can offer young people. Youth ministries is of concern and interest to prospective members. Although formal Christian education programs provide essential grounding for an individual's religious heritage, effective religious youth programs respond to a broad range of young adolescents' needs.

What are the characteristics of strong, exemplary religious youth programs? Successful religious youth programs are those that respond sensitively and effectively to the varied needs of young adolescents.

The program provides a comfortable setting in which young people can explore the basis of their religious faith.

The nature of the program's physical, social and emotional setting conveys a congregation's attitude towards the way young people learn and grow. The setting should reflect the congregation's support for a strong youth program that has an integral, important relationship to formal Christian education and the total life of the congregation. Ideally the physical setting for the program should be designated for use by young people, but not segregated from the congregation. In other words, it should be distinct but not disconnected. Youth groups should have social activities of their own, but they should also be a part of the congregation's social life. The youth group should foster a sense of autonomy in the exploration of religious life, without sacrificing a feeling of being supported and valued by the congregation.

The program connects religious traditions with varied opportunities for self discovery and self-definition.

Young adolescents want to know how to express religious beliefs in their own lives. Some may gain that knowledge through study, others through service, and still others through social contact. An individual may thrive on meditative study one day and may be restless for social activity the next. Thus, although the traditional formats may sometimes suit some adolescents, many young people also learn to value religious beliefs by developing friendships with others of their faith, by participating in youth activities, by singing in a choir or by helping a shut-in. Others may learn through more solitary activities that allow for personal expressiveness, like designing a banner or keeping a journal.

A good youth program should relate religious traditions-worship, study and service-to the need for self-discovery and self-definition that is characteristic of young adolescents. Effective religious youth groups recognize, respect and support the strengths in individual differences, and plan activities that accommodate this diversity.

The program involves both young people and their parents to foster mutual understanding.

Young adolescents' continuing need for parental affection, support and help can be met in part by a religious program that involves parents. The time parents spend driving, preparing meals or supervising specific activities reflects one level of their commitment and involvement. But parents are in a special position to support the spiritual growth of their adolescent children in other ways as well. The kinds of questions young people often raise about religious beliefs or religious observances can be disquieting for many families. Opportunities

for young people and their parents to come together in a supportive environment to discuss religious values strengthen parents' ability to continue to guide and nurture spiritual growth.

Youth leaders can be helpful to parents who want to understand this special time of life. With appropriate training and insight into the vicissitudes of mid-life and adolescence, youth leaders can help families grow towards mature adult relationships.

The program is guided by mature adults who are comfortable with young people and are willing to explore sensitive issues with them.

Although friendships with peers become important during young adolescence, adults are important sources of values and guidance. Adults who work with young people must enjoy the age group, be sensitive to their concerns and be willing to discuss the issues that are crucial to their changing identities.

However wide the "generation gap" may seem at times, young adolescents essentially like and respect adults. They want to build relationships with adults, now instead of, but in addition to, their parents. New adult friendships give young teenagers some perspective on the variability of adult lifestyles, careers and beliefs.

Religious youth workers can be uniquely helpful to adolescents and their parents. Often trusted and admired by both groups for their religious values and their maturity, youth workers can help bridge the gap between the gradual loosening of family ties and the development of relationships in the larger community. A youth worker can be a trusted adult friend in whom a young person can confide or with whom it is safe to discuss questions about human sexuality, faith or ethics.

Mature adult leaders are also aware that they cannot solve all problems or be the only source of guidance for a young person. They should be able to identify and suggest other community resources that are valuable to teenagers, such as counselling services, tutoring programs, health clinics, libraries or recreation centers. Knowing what is important to young adolescents, how to communicate with them and how to earn their respect make the adult leader an important part of their lives.

Ceremonies such as Confirmation, which acknowledge the completion of a phase of Christian education and entrance into adult status in a congregation, frequently take place during young adolescence. For many religious youth, these ceremonies represent a commitment to a particular religious heritage and the ability to assume more responsibility within the congregation These ceremonies mark the rite of passage that. They can also demonstrate both occurs through adolescence. They can also demonstrate both achievement and competence.

An effective youth program should build on such congregational ceremonies by encouraging participants to regard them as the beginning of an active role in community life. Some congregations offer young people the opportunity to take a leadership role in community worship, as acolytes, readers, intercessors, or chalice bearers. No matter what the task, it must be one that fulfills a genuine need in the congregation.

A striking characteristic of young adolescents is their spirit, their energy, sensitivity and humor. Young people need to channel their high levels of energy through both organized and spontaneous physical activities. These activities also help the participants overcome shyness or self consciousness. Although examining and understanding religious beliefs requires time for contemplation, serious and concentrated attention, programs should also provide opportunities for play and laughter.

The program encourages mutual acceptance and friendship among the young people.

A youth program can help young people learn to make fiends. Within the supportive atmosphere of the group, they can test social behaviors and learn what is acceptable to others. They can develop poise and comfort in social situations, learning when it is right to go along with the group and when it is important to act independently.

Retreats[31]

Retreats need to embrace and promote a holistic understanding of the Christian faith.

Adolescent faith has three dimensions: trusting, believing and doing. Too often retreats emphasize only the trusting or affective dimension of faith, neglecting the believing (cognitive) and doing (lifestyle, action) dimensions. The trusting or relational dimension of faith is very important. However, an over-emphasis on the affect can easily lead to over-emotionalism on retreats, thereby inhibiting critical thinking on the part of the adolescents. Young people need to able to express what they believe and what they have learned through the retreat experience. They need to be able to envision concrete ways they can lead lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. Retreats that do not promote these outcomes are not serving young people very well.

Developmentally, Socially, and Culturally Appropriate

Retreats need to be planned around the developmental, social and cultural needs of adolescence, respecting the changing developmental and social characteristics of the various stages of adolescence. This means providing a significantly different content and approach for younger and older adolescents. Too often retreats are not grounded in a solid developmental, social and cultural foundation. This can lead to poor selection of appropriate themes or inadequate design parameters. Programs need to be designed and conducted in light of the ability and readiness of young people. This affects topic selection, as well as learning activities, program intensity, amount of sleep, etc. Planners must ask the question, "What is developmentally, socially and culturally appropriate for these particular young people?"

A Thematic Approach

As significant part of comprehensive youth ministries programming, retreats could be offered each season or year as both an alternative scheduling format for young people and as a way to deepen evangelization retreats. Consider the following faith themes on overnight or weekend formats at least once over several years of youth ministry programming. This will provide young people with attractive options for their involvement in youth ministries.

Faith Themes for Young Adolescents

Church — understanding and experiencing the Anglican/Episcopal Christian story and mission and becoming involved in the Christian community.

Jesus and the Gospel message — helping younger adolescents follow Jesus, develop a more personal relationship with him, concentrate on the person and the teaching of Jesus, discover what a relationship with Jesus means, and respond to Jesus from a growing inner sense of self.

Human Sexuality — learning about sexual development and orientation, understanding the dynamics of maturing as a sexual person (including gender) and discussing sexuality with parents and peers. Any responsible discussion about sexuality needs to include the dimension about sexual violence and abuse.

Personal growth — helping younger adolescents develop a stronger and more realistic

concept of self by exploring who they are and who they can become.

Relationships — developing mutual, trusting and loyal relationships with peers, parents and other adults by emphasizing skills that enhance and maintain relationships.

Morality and moral decision-making — applying Christian moral values as maturing persons who are becoming increasingly capable of using decision-making skills to make free and responsible choices.

Service — exploring Jesus' call to live a life of loving service, discovering that such a life is integral to discipleship, developing a foundation for a social justice consciousness, and participating in service that involves, relationships and concrete action.

The Gospels — understanding the historical and literary development, structure and major themes of the four Gospels; and learning how to interpret the Gospels.

Hebrew Scriptures — understanding the historical and literary development, structure and major themes of the Hebrew Scriptures and learning how to interpret the Hebrew Scriptures.

Justice and Peace — developing a global social consciousness and compassion grounded in social vision and solidarity.

Prayer and Worship — developing a personally held spirituality and a rich, personal and communal prayer life.

Methodology

Retreats needs to utilize an effective educational process. All too often retreats embody a deductive methodology. Recall the retreat programs that begin with a talk given by an adult or peer leader, followed by a discussion of the main points of the talk, followed by a creative activity to express what has been learned through the talk and discussion. Such a methodology begins with the Scripture and theological teachings to be impressed upon the retreat participants and then continues to reinforce these teachings through discussion and activity. This deductive methodology does little to draw out the lived experience of young people. It also runs the risk of suppressing the freedom of the young people by channeling their responses to agree with or adopt the teachings presented. Educational retreats need to use a different methodology.

The process of adolescent faith development involves discovering the relationship among the Anglican Christian tradition; God's present activity in the life of the adolescent, family, community and the world; and the contemporary life experience of the adolescent This process is a dialogue between the life-world of the adolescent, with its joys, struggles, questions, concerns and hopes, and the wisdom of the Christian tradition. Effective Christian education is in tune with the life situations of youth-their language, lifestyles, family realities, culture, and global realities.

One approach, developed by Thomas Groome, includes these steps:

Focussing Activity

The purpose of the focussing activity is to bring the attention of the group to bear on the theme of the lesson or session so that the young people can begin to identify it in their own life, their family, culture, society and church.

The focussing activity can be programmed in a number of ways. For example: group activity, story, poem, rock music and videos, a project, Scripture reading, role-playing, field trip, movie/video, simulation game, creative art, case study, demonstration, reflection or questionnaire.

Movement One: Experiencing Life

Movement One enables the young people to express their own life activity (knowing, action, feeling) or that of their community, ethnic culture, youth culture, dominant culture or society on the topic or concept of the learning experience. Young people are encouraged to express what they already know about the topic/concept, or how they f eel about it, or how they understand it, or how they now live it, or what they believe about it.

This maybe accomplished in a variety of ways: presentations, reflection questionnaires, drama/role-playing, making and describing something, symbolizing or miming. Helping young people express their present action needs to be done in a non-threatening way. Always make it clear that the young people should feel free to share or simply participate by listening. Be sure to leave time for silence.

Movement Two: Reflecting Together

The purpose of Movement Two is to allow the young people an opportunity to reflect together on what they have expressed in Movement One about their own experience/activity. This will sometimes be intuitive as well as analytical. Movement Two engages reason, memory and imagination. This is often one by sharing an actual story of their experience or an action they have taken. Young people are invited to reflect critically on the meaning of their own experience-share the consequences of their present experience/action and implications for the future. An important element of Movement Two is engaging the young people in interpreting their life experience in the broader picture of their families, ethnic culture, youth culture, dominant culture and society. Through critical reflection, young people are able to name the impact on their life.

Movement Three: Discovering the Faith Story

Movement Three presents the Story and Vision of the Christian community in response to the topic or concept of the learning experience. The Story is a metaphor for the whole faith identity of the Christian community. Here the young people encounter the Story of faith that comes to US from Scripture, tradition, the teachings of the church and the faith-life of Christian people throughout the ages and in our present time. The Vision is a metaphor for what the Story promises to and demands of our lives. It is God's Vision of God's Reign. We engage young people in exploring how we are called to faithfully live God's Vision, individually and as a community-at the personal, interpersonal and social/political levels of human existence.

Sharing the Story is accomplished through a variety of means: presentations, guided study (of the Scriptures), media (film, filmstrips, music), reading, discussion, research, field trip, group project, demonstration or panel presentation. We seek to involve both the teacher and the learner in sharing the Story and exploring the Vision. Young people need to be actively involved in Movement Three. We should not encourage passive reception of the Story and Vision.

Movement Four: Owning the Faith

Movement Four provides the young people with an opportunity to compare their own life experience and faith with the story and Vision of the Christian community. Through this dialogue, young people can test their experience and their experience can be informed by the Christian Story and Vision. The Story will confront, challenge, affirm and/or expand the faith of young people. The purpose of Movement Four is to enable the participants to take the Story and Vision back to their own life situations, to appropriate its meaning for their lives, to make it their own. It attempts to promote a moment of "aha" when the participants come to know the Story as their own, in the context of their lives.

There will be as many responses to this dialogue as there are young people. It is vitally important at this step to allow young people the freedom to come to their own answers and conclusions. With this freedom, young people can be guided to see the "why" of the Christian Story and Vision.

Movement Four can be accomplished in a variety of ways: reflection questionnaire comparing Movements One and Two responses with the Movement Three Story; creative expression of one's learning by writing, creating a role-play or a dramatization or a case study; creating an audio-visual presentation (video,

slide show); creating a symbol or poster; group activity/discussion; imagination activities where young people envision how they can live the learnings from the session.

Movement Five: Responding in Faith

The purpose of Movement Five is to help bring young people to a lived faith response. By inviting young people to decision, the fifth movement aims to help them translate their learning into a lived faith response. Once again, applying the learning from the learning experience must be a free response. Some young people will be changed by the learning experience and motivated to concrete action, while others will need time to ponder its meanings and implications, and still others will not be affected by the learning experience. We must provide an environment that invites a faith response, a decision for living more faithfully as a Christian, but respects the right of young people to choose their own response, even if it is not the response we had hoped for.

Responding in faith will affect the three levels of human existence: the personal, the interpersonal/communal, and the social. To help young people respond in faith, we need to probe the implications of their learning for all three of these levels of life. We can engage them in developing concrete plans for the coming week (personally, interpersonally, socially); in individual or group action projects that involve them in living their faith (action in the faith community, school, family, community/society); in prayer experiences that celebrate or draw young people into reflection on their response; and in journaling activities where they can reflect on how they are living their faith.

Action for Justice[32]

Ten Approaches to Evolving Young People in Action for Justice

1. Expanding Awareness

Paradoxically, sometimes the best step in moving from awareness to action is to recognize our need for greater awareness. This may involve learning more about the issues personally or helping members of our local communities become more aware of justice issues.

Gathering

- Study programs
- Training peer educators
- Resource speaker

Non-gathering

- Commitment to closer reading of news
- Subscription to justice-oriented publication
- Justice-awareness messages in newsletters, posters,
- T-shirts (graphics from young people)
- Fact sheets
- Listing of local resource centers
- Resource libraries
- Articles for newspapers

Family/Intergenerational

- Workshop for adults led by young people
- Family subscriptions

2. Creating or Joining a Justice Support Group

Groups are most often formed around a specific issue or concern. They generally provide a setting where members can explore the issue from a variety of perspectives: growing in awareness, sponsoring action and education, and integrating justice into one's own lifestyle.

Gathering

- Meal and study in rotation of homes
- Prayer services
- Join Amnesty International or form local unit

Non-gathering

- Computer network
- Membership lists
- Letter-writing links
- Prayer concerns from justice group in Sunday worship

Family/Intergenerational

- Childcare at Justice group meetings
- Explore "Hospitality" as a family
- Join/form Parenting for Peace and Justice Network

3. Advocacy

Advocacy involves concerted action aimed at addressing and changing the structures that allow injustice to exist and grow. Advocacy assumes a knowledge of how systems work and of how structures impact on people and can be changed.

Gathering

- Orientation before political meetings
- Workshops: "use of purchasing power," letter-writing to legislators
- Protest/demonstrations/symbolic actions

Non-gathering

- Written information about systems (government, church, school) and how policy gets made
- Organize a boycott
- Articles in local papers, church and community
- Letters to the editor

4. Support for Change Groups

Groups that are out to change the status quo, that call for a shift in spending priorities or advocate for those treated unjustly, or work to develop programs to give the poor more control over their own lives, offer an effective action approach.

Gathering

- Organize a fund-raiser

Non-gathering

- Write to organizations for information
- List of advocacy groups (i.e., anti-poverty, handicap access, development agencies)
- Promotional support of existing groups, information, prayer support, financial support

Family/Intergenerational

- Proposals for congregational budget
- Families volunteer

5. Lifestyle Change

Changing our lifestyles as individuals and as community groups offers an opportunity to identify more closely in our daily life with justice issues, and frees up more resources for sharing. Issues such as hunger, homelessness, international debt and concern for the environment lend themselves to a lifestyle change approach.

Gathering

- Bible study programs
- Recycling drive
- Community living project

Non-gathering

- Fasting
- Personal stewardship commitment

Family/Intergenerational

- Inventory of family resources, practices
- Plans to simplify living
- Develop "rule of life"

6. Direct Service

Involvement in programs of direct service helps people to better understand the impact of poverty and injustices on others' lives. They are most effective when preceded by education and training and followed by reflection and evaluation

Gathering

- Volunteer as a group at a food bank

Non-gathering

- Refugee host program
- Food/clothing drive

Family/Intergenerational

- Family-to-family projects

7. Immersion Experiences

An immersion experience is an extended program designed to allow participants to experience day-today life, and understand the history and causes of injustice in another culture or country, as well as those factors which contribute to it. Social analysis is an integral part of immersion experiences.

Gathering

- Social action program

Non-gathering

- Reading and preparation
- Follow-up presentations

Family/Intergenerational

- Support and re-entry

8. Career Direction or Tradition

Helps people to actively explore the connection between their job and their faith.

Gathering

- Ritual celebration of young people's work

Non-gathering

- Journal reflections

Family/Intergenerational

- Career mini-course with members of congregation reflecting
- on their own vocations
- Career groups explore together how skills can be used in community, or the ethics of the profession

9. Mentoring Relationships

An approach of mentioning relationships works from a consciousness of the skills and abilities of members of the community and attempts to match partners in the congregation.

Gathering

- Joint meeting of youth and social action group to brainstorm connections

Non-gathering

- Phone and address lists of people who share interests/issues

Family/Intergenerational

- Joint justice/service projects between youth and adults

10. Growing a Spirituality of Justice

This approach concerns itself with the interaction between prayer, worship and action for justice.

Gathering

- Vigils
- Homilies
- Good Friday/inner-city walk

Non-gathering

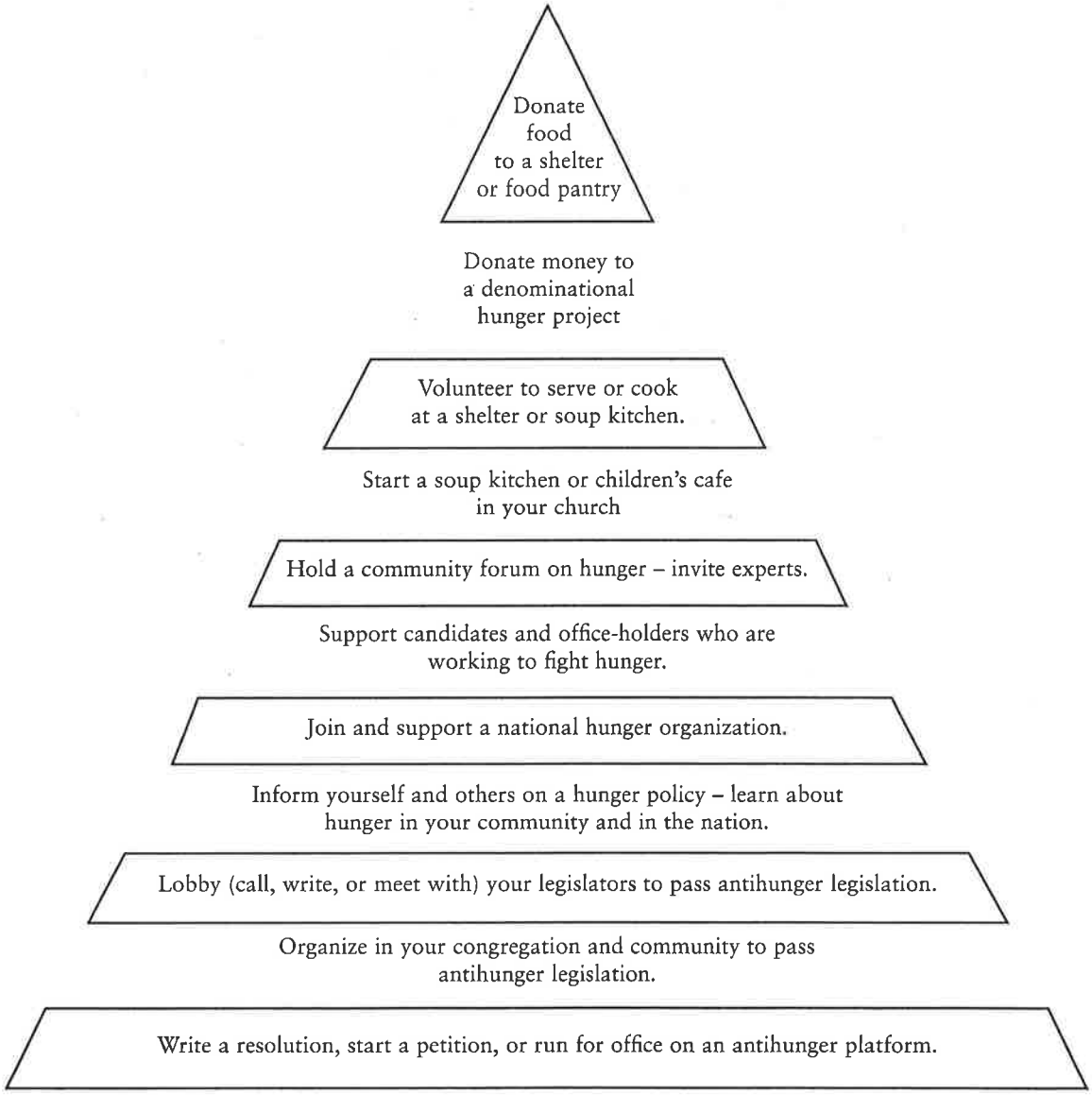
- Prayer lists
- Journaling
- Artwork, music

Family/Intergenerational

- Family liturgies
- Prayers for home use
- Companion diocese partners

To determine which approach would be most helpful to your congregation, reflect on the "Pyramid of Action," on the next page. The "Pyramid of Action," can be found in *Stand for Children: Pray, Speak Out and Act: National Observance of Children's Sabbaths, 1996.* The Children's Defense Fund, 25 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001; 202/628-8787.

Pyramid of Action



Reprinted from Children's Defense Fund, Children's Sabbath, 1996.

Additional Resources

Listed below are a limited number of the resources available for adults who work with young adolescents. The list is not exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each congregation to select, review and determine the resources best suited to meet the needs of its youth ministries program.

Benson, Peter and Eugene C. Roehlkepartain. *Beyond Leaf Raking: Learning to Serve/Serving to Learn.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.

Benson, Peter, Dorothy Williams and Arthur Johnson. *The Quicksilver Years.* New York: Harper and Row, 1987.

Called to Teach and Learn: A Catechetical Guide for the Episcopal Church. New York: Episcopal Church Center, 1994, 1996.

Clapp, Steve and Sam Detwiler. *Peer Evangelism.* Elgin: Brethren Press, 1991.

Coles, Robert, *The Spiritual Life of Children.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990.

Daley, Shannon and Kathleen Guy. *Welcome the Child: A Child Advocacy Guide for Churches.* Washington: Children's Defense Fund and Friendship Press, 1994.

Edelman, Marion Wright. *Guide My Feet: Prayers and Meditations on Loving and Working for Children. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995.*

Finn, Jerome. *Building Youth Ministry in the Parish.* Winona: St. Mary's Press, 1993.

Fortune, Marie. *Sexual Abuse Prevention: A Study for Teenagers.* New York: United Church Press, 1994.

Foster, Charles and Grant S. Shockley. *Working with Black Youth.* Nashville:

Fowler, James. *Stages of Faith.* New York: Harper and Row, 1981.

Gilligan, Carol. *In A Different Voice.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

Gleason, Kenneth T., et al. *Ministries Growing Together: Resources for Integrating Adolescent Religious Education and Youth Ministry.* Winona, 1992.

Grenz, Linda, ed. *In Dialogue with Scripture.* New York: Episcopal Church Center, 1993.

Hefling, Charles, ed. *Our Selves, Our Souls and Bodies: Sexuality and the Household of God.*

Karnes, Frances A. and Suzanne Bean. *Girls and Young Women Leading the Way.* Minneapolis: Free Spirit, 1993.

Kujawa, Sheryl A. and Lois Sibley, eds. *Resource Book for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults in the Episcopal Church.* New York: Episcopal Church Center, 1995.

Lewis, Barbara A. *The Kids Guide to Social Action.* Minneapolis: Free Spirit, 1991.

Lewis, Barbara A. *The Kid's Guide to Service Projects.* Minneapolis: Free Spirit, 1995.

McCarty, Robert J. and Lynn Tooma. *Training Adults for Youth Ministry.* Winona: St. Mary's Press, 1993.

McGinnis, Kathleen. *Educating for a Just Society: Grades 7–12.* St. Louis: Institute of Peace and Justice, n.d.

Michno, Dennis G. *A Manual for Acolytes.* Harrisburg: Morehouse Barlow, 1981.

Myers, William. *Black and White Styles of Youth Ministry.* New York: Pilgrim Press, 1991.

Ng, Donald. *Asian Pacific American Youth Ministry.* Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1988.

Pipher, Mary. *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls.* New York: Grosset/ Putman, 1994.

Prophets of Hope Editorial Team. *Hispanic Young People and the Church's Pastoral Response* (I); *Evangelization of Hispanic Young People.* Winona: St. Mary's Pres, 1995.

Reid, Kathryn Goering. *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse, Ages 9–12.* New York: United Church Press, 1989.

Reynolds, Brian. *A Chance to Serve: A Leader's Manual for Peer Ministry.* Winona: St. Mary's Press, 1993.

Roberto, John, ed. *Early Adolescent Ministry.* New Rochelle: Don Bosco Multimedia, 1991.

Roberto, John, ed. *Justice.* New Rochelle: Don Bosco Multimedia, 1990.

Roberto, John, ed. *Liturgy and Worship.* New Rochelle: Don Bosco Multimedia, 1990.

Robinson, Gene and Thaddeus Bennett, eds. *Episcopal Guide to TAP (Teens for AIDS Prevention.)* Episcopal Church Center, 1994.

Roehlkepartain, Eugene C. *Youth Ministry in City Churches.* Loveland: Group Books, 1989.

Roehlkepartain, Eugene C. and Peter C. Scales. *Youth Development in Congregations.* Minneapolis: Search Institute, 1995.

Russell, Joseph, ed. *The New Prayer Book Guide to Christian Education.* Boston: Cowley, 1996.

Shelton, Charles M. *Adolescent Spirituality.* New York: Crossroad, 1989.

Shelton, Charles M. *Morality and the Adolescent.* New York: Crossroad, 1989.

Silberman, Mel. *Active Training.* Toronto: Lexington Books, 1990.

The Stand for Children Yearbook 1996. Washington: Children's Defense Fund, 1995.

Stephens, Lois A. *I Love to Tell the Story: An Episcopal Handbook on Christian Education.* Ed. Linda Grenz. New York: Center for Christian Formation, 1994.

Strommen, Merton. *Five Cries of Parents.* New York: Harper and Row, 1985.

Strommen, Merton. *Five Cries of Youth.* New York: Harper and Row, 1988.

Warren, Michael. *Youth, Culture and the Worshipping Community.* Rahwah: Paulist Press, 1989.

Curriculum Resources for Youth

All Saints Curriculum. All Saints Episcopal Church, 6600 The Plaza, Charlotte, NC 28215; 704/536-4091. Lectionary-based curriculum. Lesson plans are arranged in four volumes and cover nursery through grade 12.

Episcopal Curriculum for Youth. Center for the Ministry of Teaching with Morehouse Publishing, PO Box 1321, Harrisburg, PA 17105; 800/877-0012. Biblically based curriculum. Sessions focus on biblical content and scriptural themes. Supplemental materials available. Junior high materials available, with plans to expand to senior high. Prospectus available on request.

The Journey to Adulthood. LeaderResources, 149 Dewberry Dr., Suite 101, Hockessin, DE 19707; 302/234-8237. A congregational program of spiritual formation for young people between the ages of 11 and 17 that follows the imperatives of the Baptismal Covenant. The curriculum includes materials for both leaders and young people. Included in this curriculum are materials related to Confirmation preparation for older youth.

Living the Good News. 600 Grant Street, Suite 400, Denver, CO 80203; 800/824-1813. Lectionary-based curriculum, covering nursery through grade 12. Includes teacher preparation and supplemental materials. Sampler available on request.

The Whole People of God. Logos Productions, PO Box 240, South, St. Paul, MN 55075-0240; 800/328-0200. Based on the Revised Common Lectionary, with a supplement for Episcopal congregations. Designed for all ages — birth to adult — for the whole year. Includes reproducible activity sheets.

Word Among Us. United Church Press, 700 Prospect Ave. east, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100; 800/537-3394. Ecumenical curriculum, based on the Revised Common Lectionary, with an Episcopal supplement in preparation. Includes materials for planning worship. Available in units for youth ages 12–14) and older youth (ages 15–18).

Resources for Confirmation Preparation

All of the resources listed below are available through Morehouse Publishing; 800/877-0012.

Carlozzi, Carol. *The New Episcopal Way. A Guide to the Episcopal Church and The Book of Common Prayer.* Provides the essential facts on the teachings and structure of the Episcopal Church. Teacher's book and student workbook.

Cunningham, Steven L. *Confirmation — A Workbook Based on The Book of Common Prayer.* 10-unit workbook that can be used as a supplement to any Confirmation course.

Foxworth, George M., Carl G. *Grow in Grace: A Confirmation Workbook.* 10-session course based on the Catechism, with materials for parents, sponsors, teachers, and confirmands.

Molrine, Ronald C. and Charlotte Molrine. *Encountering Christ in the Episcopal Church.* 15-active, experiential sessions, for ages 11 through adult. student's workbook, leader's guide, and copy masters available.

Parker, Andrew. *Keeping the Promise: A Mentoring Program for Confirmation.* 9-session program organized in two books — one for the mentor and one for the confirmand.

SAMPLE
Congregation Survey

Greetings! Your congregation is very interested in learning more about its teenage members. A Youth Ministries planning team has been formed to develop a strong program for all youth the congregation.

We need your help. Would you take a few minutes to answer the questions below? Your ideas are very important to our planning process. You do not have to sign your name.

Thank you.

1. If you have teenage children, what are their ages?

2. How do your teenagers spend their time?

3. What are some of the needs you think teenagers have?

4. How can the congregation help?

5. Do you have particular suggestions for a youth ministries program?

6. General comments:

Note: If you have a list of the young people in your congregation, a similar survey should be designed for them, or they can be gathered and asked similar questions.

SAMPLE
Youth Ministries Interview

Name _____

Interviewed by _____

1. In your opinion, what are the particular needs of the youth in the community?

2. How could these needs be fulfilled?

3. What do you think a social group or congregation group could do to help fulfill these needs?

4. What are the positive characteristics of youth?

5. How could these characteristics be expanded, reinforced, supported?

6. Do you have any ideas for projects for youth?

7. Do you know of any youth group programs that have worked in the past, in this congregation or in other places?

8. General comments:

SAMPLE
Leader's Job Description

1. Component of Youth Ministries:

_____

Program _____

Job title _____

2. Leader Tasks to be Performed:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

3. Abilities Needed:
(skills, attitudes, understanding)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

8.

9.

10.

4. Involvement:

Other commitments:

Additional responsibilities:

Additional meetings:

5. Length of Commitment

Service: from _____ to _____

Meetings:

Training:

6. Supervision

Who provides:

When:

Support:

Who provides:

When/meetings:

7. Training Required

When and how training can be secured:

8. Benefits of the Position to the Leader:

9. Responsible to:

Completed by _____

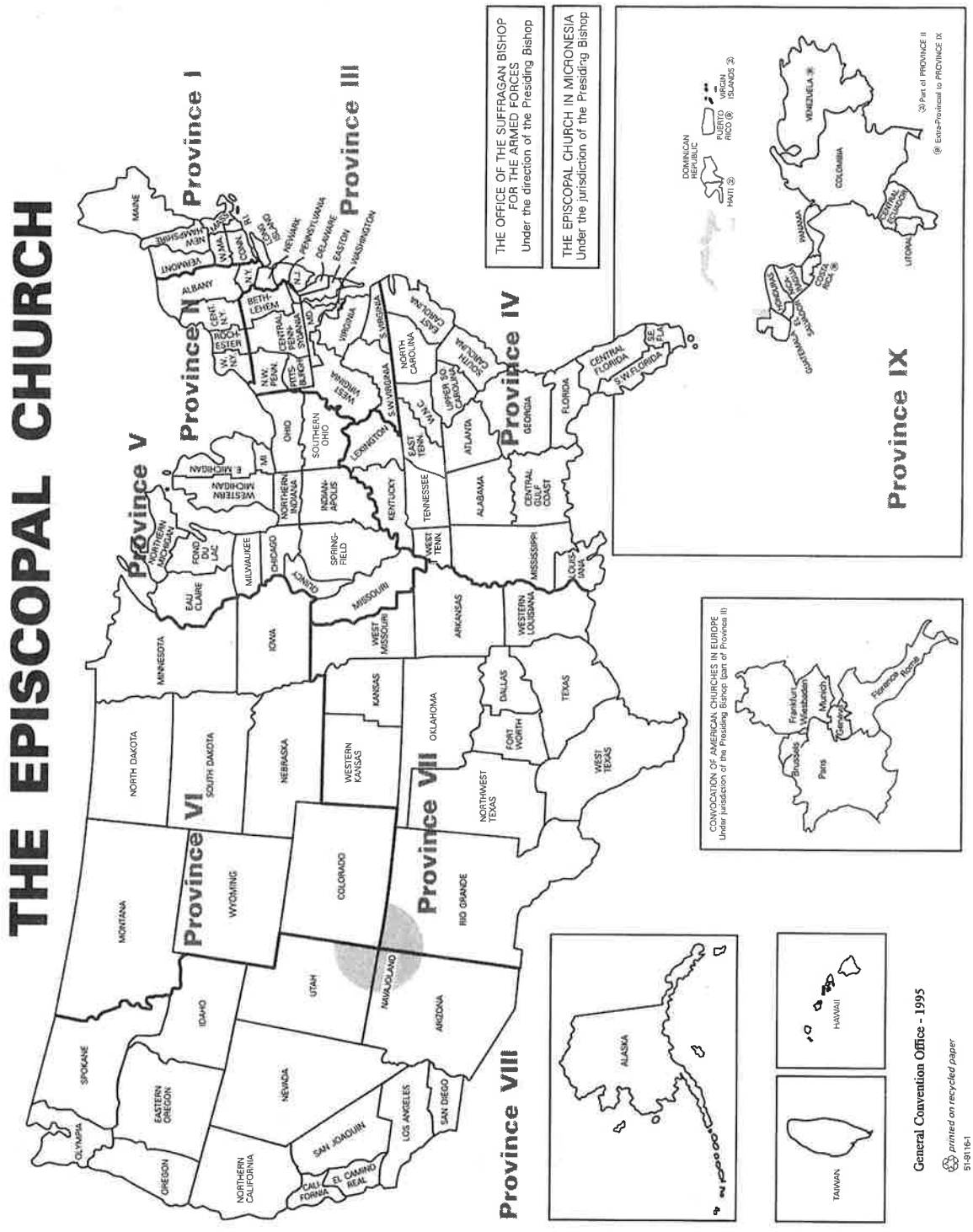
Date _____

Youth Ministries and the Episcopal Church Center

The Youth Ministries Office of the Episcopal Church Center is part of the Ministries with Young People Cluster. The office offers resources, consultations, training, and programs for young people and adult youth advisors in the Episcopal Church through the Youth Ministries Network. The Youth Ministries Network operates through a system of diocesan and provincial contact persons to deliver services to congregations.

Young people active in congregational youth ministries also benefit from the broader picture and variety of opportunities available through youth ministries efforts on other levels of the Episcopal Church. Part of the richness of the Episcopal Church is our diversity, and our national and international relationships through our membership in the Anglican Communion. Diocesan youth ministries programs vary in their extent, as do other diocesan-level ministries, yet all dioceses in the Episcopal Church express a formal concern for youth ministries, whether through a diocesan committee or commission, a paid staff person and diocesan program, or through a diocesan camp program. Most dioceses sponsor their own diocesan youth events and many will offer adult training programs, as do some Episcopal seminaries. Many dioceses continue to affirm the importance of youth ministries by appointing young people to diocesan committees, including search committees, and diocesan councils. Added to these efforts are the contributions of Episcopal camps and conferences centers, and Episcopal schools, many of whom sponsor programs for young people and adults who work with them.

Each province within the Episcopal Church also supports youth ministries programming, planned and developed through representative young people and adults from dioceses. Most dioceses participate in their provincial youth ministries network, and all provincial youth ministries sponsor at least one network meeting and/or youth event annually. Provincial youth ministries programs are funded through the partnership between the Youth Ministries Office and the provinces. In addition, the Youth Ministries Office sponsors the (inter)national Episcopal Youth Event every three years, and the General Convention Youth Presence.



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Notes

1. Portions of this article adapted from "Approaches to Youth Ministry," by Dan Scott, diocese of British Columbia, August 1989.

2. Brian Reynolds, "Dispelling the Myths," *RTJ,* September 1988.

3. Bibby and Posterski, *The Emerging Generation.* Irwin, 1985.

4. This metaphor was created by Paulo Freire, and used by Bruce Baumgarten in his article, "Catechesis with Early Adolescents: effective Teaching," *Access Guide to Youth Ministry.* Don Bosco, 1991.

5. From: Gayle Dorman, *3:00 to 6:00 PM: Planning Program for Young Adolescents.* Center for Early Adolescents, 1985.

6. From: Gayle Dorman, *3:00 to 6:00: Planning Programs for Young Adolescents.* Center for Early Adolescents, 1985.

7. Adapted from Brian Reynolds, "Dispelling Myths," *RTJ,* September 1988.

8. John Roberto, *Early Adolescent Ministry.* Don Bosco, 1991.

9. Virginia Hoffman, "Birthing the Church of the Nineties," *Network Papers, #43.* Don Bosco, 1991.

10. Peter Benson, et al., *The Quicksilver Years.* Harper and Row, 1987.

11. James Fowler, *Stages of Faith.* Harper and Row, 1981.

12. Hoffman, "Birthing the Church in the Nineties."

13. Adapted from an article by Cheryl Kristolaitis, *The Practice of Ministry in Canada,* September 1992.

14. Adapted from William Kerewsky and Leah M. Lefstein, "Young Adolescents and Their Communities: A Shared Responsibility," in *3:00 to 6:00: Young Adolescents at Home and in the Community.* Center for Early Adolescence, 1982.

15. Adapted from a resource of the same title by the Center for Youth Ministry Development.

16. Adapted from a table by Leah Lefstein, from the Center for Early Adolescence, 1983.

17. Adapted from *RTJ,* September 1988.

18. Adapted from: Raymond S. Fant, "Child Care and Foster Parenting Skills," in *3:00 to 6:00: Planning Programs for Young Adolescents.*

19. Statistics provided by the Sexual Assault Recovery (SARA) Program, 1992.

20. Adapted from: Marie Fortune, *Sexual Abuse Prevention: A Study for Teenagers,* United Church Press, 1984.

21. The Contact Point Model was developed by the Center For Youth Ministry Development.

22. Adapted from work by John Roberto, of the Center for Youth Ministry Development.

23. Adapted from an article of the same title by Cheryl Kristolaitis. Originally published in *Practice of Ministry in Canada,* November 1990.

24. From: Gayle Dorman, *3:00 to 6:00: Planning Programs for Young Adolescents.* Chapel Hill: Center for Early Adolescence.

25. Marge Denis, *Exchange,* Fall 1991.

26. Adapted from a model by Dan Scott, diocese of British Columbia.

27. Adapted from: Susan Kelman, *Canadian Living,* December 1991.

28. Adapted from: John Roberto, *Early Adolescent Ministry.* Don Bosco, 1991.

29. Adapted from: Don Wells, *A Treatise: Educational Plight of the Early Adolescent.* Carolina Friends School, Durham.

30. This article is by Lisa Kimball, and is reprinted from the *Resources Book for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults in the Episcopal Church* (New York: Episcopal Church Center, 1995).

31. Adapted from an article by Susie Henderson.

32. Adapted from: Thomas Bright, "Moving from Action to Awareness to Action on Justice," *Network paper #45,* Don Bosco.