



Basics of Youth Ministry

Three Core Elements

What is your “Why” of Youth Ministry?

Based on the book, [*Start with Why*](#) by Simon Sinek, The Penguin Group, 2009

- List three things that are core elements of your congregation’s mission statement.
- How can you incorporate these core elements in your church’s youth ministry?
- What are some activities/events/programs that can help you accomplish your why?

Three Core Elements to Any Youth Ministry

- **Community Building** – that which brings people together, creates shared memories and experiences, and allows for people to get to know each other better.
 - Recreation/Play/Games
 - What kind of games/recreation/play do you typically use in youth ministry?
 - Do any of those games isolate or exclude young people, even if for a short time?
 - How does the game/activity encourage young people to get to know each other better? Get to know the adults better?
 - How does the game/activity allow for young people to just play?
 - Art/Crafts/Creative Outlets
 - Do you plan for young people to explore their creative side through arts/crafts/etc.?
 - What are some ways that your group can be creative together?
 - Care for Each Other
 - What are some ways that you can have your young people in prayer for each other?
 - Are your adults and congregation members praying for your young people?
 - How do you recognize milestones of young people?
 - How are you practicing and modeling self-care as a youth leader?
 - What opportunities are there for young people to engage with other members of the church – children, adults, older adults?
- **Faith Formation** – that which gives youth opportunities to engage scripture, explore their faith, ask questions about what they believe, etc.
 - List the different opportunities for your young people to engage with their faith – Sunday School, youth group, etc.
 - Do youth have the opportunity to ask questions on a regular basis?
 - How are young people involved in congregational worship?

- **Logistics and Administration**

- Communication
 - List the ways in which your congregation dispenses information about what is happening in the church?
 - Ask the youth how often they see the above list of communication?
 - Ask the youth what social media they use the most and how they prefer to receive information. Do this on an annual basis.
 - Ask the parents how they prefer to receive information.
- Planning and Programming
 - Do you include youth in the planning of activities, events, and the schedule of activities?
 - Look at your schedule of youth activities, do they include a relatively balanced list of activities between fellowship/fun, faith formation/worship, service/mission/outreach?
 - Are the activities and events planned allow for a variety of ways to learn and engage with what you are doing? See Howard Gardner's theory on multiple intelligences.
- Risk Management – ensuring the safety of all involved in youth ministry
 - Child/Under 18 Protection Policy
 - Does your church have a protection policy?
 - Have you read it?
 - Have all your adults working with young people read it?
 - If you do not have one, start working on one in conjunction with your children's ministry and session.
 - Church Insurance
 - Do you know what is allowed and not allowed by your church insurance policy? If not find out.
 - Keep a copy of insurance information with your release forms
 - Release Forms
 - Review your release forms for...
 - permission to seek medical assistance,
 - to use photos of young people in church publications and social media
 - for medical information such as allergies, medical conditions, etc.
 - signed by a parent/guardian

For more information and resources to help you in ministry with young people, visit Presbyterian Youth Workers Association www.pywa.org.

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