



SENIOR YOUTH LEADER

*A Leadership Curriculum
for Ambassador and
Young Adult Leaders*

CURRICULUM AND SEMINARS

GENERAL CONFERENCE
YOUTH MINISTRIES
DEPARTMENT





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General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,
Youth Ministries Department ©

***T**he church is facing an alarming depletion of young people. It has often been reported that youth are leaving the church not because of doctrinal issues but relational issues. The reasons for losing them can be studied and researched, but something must be done now. The youth want a say in the development of doctrine, formulation of policy and contribution in ministry. Generally, the youth want to be recognized, listened to, appreciated, and involved. This Leadership Curriculum attempts to prepare youth and young adult leaders to address these important issues.*



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In response to the growing need of leaders, the loss of ambassadors and young adults, the wave of technology and the focus on the Local Church, Senior Youth Leader (SYL) has been written for Leaders who wish to be involved with Ambassadors and Young Adults. Thus, SYL is a leadership curriculum for Senior Youth Ministry.



The one ear-Mickey Mouse model depicts a strange placement of youth ministry. It seems to suggest that the youth department is a stand-alone unit when in fact, it is at the heart of the local church. The aim of this curriculum is to strengthen this reality so that the operations of the youth department are understood in the context of the local church.



Mentor

The subject of mentoring has become popular within youth circles. The curriculum addresses mentorship from the beginning to the end. Each candidate shall formerly be accepted into the program through the local church board and assigned a mentor who will walk them through the course.

OVERVIEW

Senior Youth Leader Curriculum

Technology/Media

This new proposed curriculum will integrate training with the use of technology to bring together the natural inclination of ambassadors and young adults towards media. It also includes the latest terminology and programs/initiatives of the department. Candidates are at liberty to choose between digital (video or audio) recording or physical filing. Most of the materials referred to in the curriculum can be downloaded from our website, www.youth.adventist.org, unless otherwise specified.

Relationship to Master Guide

Both the Master Guide (Junior Youth) and the Senior Youth Leader (Senior Youth) curriculums have some similar requirements and pre-requisites. Candidates can attend some lessons together though each curriculum will dictate the emphasis (junior or senior) thus effecting specialization. Those who already completed the Master Guide program may be exempted from some SYL requirements. The diagram below shows the Youth Ministries structure. Please remember that the SYL and MG are not new levels of the department, they are leadership curriculums for Senior Youth and Junior Youth respectively that complement the structure.



ADVENTIST YOUTH MINISTRIES LEADERSHIP CURRICULUMS

JUNIOR YOUTH



ADVENTURERS
4 - 9 YEARS OLD



MASTER GUIDE



PATHFINDERS
10 - 15 YEARS OLD

SENIOR YOUTH



AMBASSADORS
16 - 21 YEARS OLD



SENIOR YOUTH LEADER



YOUNG ADULTS
22 - 30+ YEARS OLD

PREREQUISITES

1. Be a baptized member in regular standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
2. Have a Written/Recorded recommendation from your local Church Board.
3. Be at least 16 years of age to start the Senior Youth Leader Curriculum
4. Be an active staff member/supporter of an Ambassador or Young Adults Ministry.
5. Complete the 10 Hour Senior Youth Seminars and be involved for a minimum of one year.

ADDITIONAL PREREQUISITE NOTES

1. The Senior Youth Leader curriculum must be completed in a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years.
2. Those completing the Senior Youth Leader curriculum do so under the supervision of the Conference/Mission Youth Ministries Director or his/her designated Pastor or Qualified Youth Ministries Leader.

YOU AND GOD

1. Do the following:
 - a. Discover your Spiritual Gift by taking the test found on youth.adventist.org
 - a. After studying the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy teachings on Spiritual Gifts, write a brief summary (250 words) or recording (5 minutes) of how your gifts can most effectively be used in Youth Ministry.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

2. Read or listen to the book *Steps to Christ* and submit a response (250 words) or a recording (5 mins), focusing on the benefits of reading.
3. Complete the devotional guide *Encounter Series I, Christ the Way*, or complete another year long Bible reading plan that covers the four Gospels.
4. Read or listen to the book *Desire of Ages*.
5. Do one of the following:
 - a. Keep a devotional journal (physical or digital) for a minimum of six months, summarizing what you learned in your devotional time and outlining how you are growing in your faith.
 - b. Complete the *Steps to Discipleship personal spirituality* curriculum.
 - c. Summarize, critique and evaluate (500 words or 10 minutes recording) the eWeek of Prayer of the current year. (Facebook: GC Youth Ministries)
6. Prepare a point form (bullet point) summary (250 words) or recording (5 mins) on each of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs.

YOU AND YOU

1. Do the following:
 - a. In view of Colossians 1:16, develop your own life vision and mission
 - b. Identify three current roles in your life, at least one of which is spiritually oriented, and submit three goals or objectives for each.
2. Teach the following honors:
 - a. Physical Fitness
 - b. Nutrition
 - c. Outdoor Leadership
 - d. Stewardship
 - e. First Aid (A current Red Cross First Aid and Safety Certificate or its equivalent)
 - f. Literature Evangelism
 - g. Other: _____

3. Read or listen to the book *Education* or *Messages to Young People* by Ellen G. White
4. Demonstrate your Leadership Skills by doing two of the following:
 - a. Develop and conduct three creative worship sessions for Ambassadors or Young Adults.

- b.* Participate in a leadership role with your Local Church Youth group in a Conference/Mission sponsored event.
 - c.* Lead Ambassadors through one module to certification
 - d.* Be an active Ambassador, Young Adult or Sabbath School Staff member for at least one year and attend at least 75% of all staff meetings
 - e.* Be a Literature Evangelist for a minimum of 60 hours in liaison with the Publishing Department of the Local Conference.
5. Participate in a personal physical fitness plan by completing one of the following:
- a.* The physical components of the AY Silver Award. If you already have the AY Silver Award, then move on to the AY Gold Award.
 - b.* A College physical fitness program.
 - c.* A personal physical fitness program based on a fitness book of your choice or a workout program in consultation with your Conference/Mission Youth Ministries Director or the designated Pastor/Qualified Youth Ministries Leader.

YOU AND YOUTH

1. Dialogue in Small Groups (for 30 minutes on each topic) and submit a Reaction Paper (1000 words) or Recording (20 minutes) on 10 of the following topics:
- a.* Church's Relationship to Government
 - b.* Music and Worship
 - c.* Sex and Romance
 - d.* Care for the Environment
 - e.* Dating and Marriage
 - f.* Service and Volunteering
 - g.* Ethics
 - h.* Health and Temperance
 - i.* Social Justice
 - j.* Religious Freedom
 - k.* Youth Evangelism
 - l.* Violence and Peace
 - m.* Christian Dress
 - n.* Gossip and Profanity
 - o.* AIDS/Cancer

- p. Recreation and Amusement
- q. Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans-sexual (LGBT)
- r. Unemployment and Entrepreneurship
- s. Prejudice and Racism/Discrimination
- t. Morality
- u. Human Rights
- v. Money Consumerism
- w. Other:

2. Complete a two-page (500 words minimum) or recording (10 mins) research paper about a standard temperament analysis program and complete the affiliated temperament inventory (Module 4, Ambassadors).
3. Attend a Union or Conference Wide training on Safety Planning and Insurance.

YOU AND THE CHURCH

1. Know and understand the 10 iCOR values. <http://icor.church>
2. Enhance your knowledge of Church Heritage by completing two of the following:
 - a. Earn the Adventist Heritage Award.
 - b. Read a book called *The AY Story*.
 - c. Write/Record the history of a local church in consultation with the Conference/Mission Youth Ministries Director or Designated Pastor/Qualified Youth Ministries Leader.
3. Do two of the following:
 - a. Teach the Sabbath School lesson to a group of Senior Youth for a minimum of one quarter within one year.
 - b. Participate fully in the Youth Initiatives of Global Church or the Higher Organization (Global Youth Day, Youth Week of Prayer, Youth Commitment Day, Home Coming Sabbath, etc.)
 - c. Get involved or volunteer in any department of the local church and attend relevant leadership training offered by the local church/conference.
 - d. Other:

4. Do one of the following:
 - a. Plan and direct/co-direct a weekend church or campus Senior Youth retreat or a Spiritual Emphasis week for youth. Where necessary subdivide the group.
 - b. Plan and direct at least two Senior Youth recreational activities covering a total time span for at least six hours. Where necessary subdivide the group.

YOU AND THE COMMUNITY

1. Identify 10 needs in your community
2. Develop a plan on how to be relevant for your community
3. Choose any two of from the following, endeavoring to lead one or more people to Christ:
 - a. Identify one young person who has stopped attending church and establish a relationship with him/her
 - b. Prepare and run GYD. Be sure to make follow up after GYD
 - c. Organize or present sermons for an evangelistic campaign (public evangelism, minimum 2 weeks).
 - d. Engage in Personal Evangelism through Friendship Ministry, Small Group Ministry, etc.
 - e. Serve as an Adventist Youth Task Force volunteer for 6 months
 - f. Serve as a Student Missionary or OYIM volunteer for 6 months
 - g. Give a series of Christ-Centered Bible studies covering at least fifteen major doctrines.
 - h. Direct or co-direct a community *Better Living* or *Youth Alive* for a minimum of ten days.
 - i. Other: _____

DOCUMENTATION

1. Compile a portfolio (physical or digital) documenting all of your work related to completing the *Senior Youth Leader* curriculum.

NOTES

1. Seminars should be at least 60 minutes in length. All the seminar facilitators must be approved by the Conference/Mission Youth Director or his/her designee.
2. It would be advantageous for a Senior Youth Leader candidate to have a working knowledge of both Ambassadors and Young Adults Ministries.
3. Choose only one type of filing, Digital (recording) or Paper (writing).

CERTIFICATION

PRE-REQUISITES

We certify that:

has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:

..... Date:

Young Adults Leader:

..... Date:

Elder/Pastor:

..... Date:

Conference/Mission

Youth Ministries Director:

..... Date:



10-Hour Senior Youth Seminars

Attend a 10-hour conference-sponsored Youth Society Seminar addressing the following areas of Youth Ministry:

1. The Senior Youth Leader as a Spiritual Leader, Mentor and Friend
2. The Need for Specialized Youth Ministry
3. Understanding the History, Philosophy, Vision, Objectives and Structure of Adventist Youth Ministry
4. Developing a Purpose Driven Model for Youth Ministry in the Local Church
5. Mentoring, Ownership and Empowerment in Youth Ministry
6. Comprehensive Evangelism
7. Creative Youth Ministry (to include programming)
8. Maximizing the Opportunities Offered by Social Media While Circumventing Its Hazards
9. Spiritual Giftedness and Service
10. Understanding the Youth

*T*he church is facing a serious depletion of young people. It has often been reported that youth are leaving the church not because of doctrinal issues but relational issues. The reasons for losing them can be studied and researched but something must be done now. The youth want a say in the development of doctrine, formulation of policy and contribution in ministry. Generally, the youth want to be recognized, listened to, appreciated, and involved.



Youth ministry today will never be the same as it was yesterday. This statement might sound radical; however, one must consider it as the starting point of a complete rethinking of how we see youth ministry developing and what kind of activities we promote in our churches today.

Throughout the world we are witnessing seeming decrease of youth involvement in church life activities. At the same time, we have countless young people that are looking for a place of refuge, a community that they can identify with, and may proudly call their own. We must celebrate what has been done in the past to nurture our youth and take time to rejoice for those who have remained committed and faithful to their churches.

But today we must react; we cannot sit back and continue doing ministry as usual and watch our youth drifting away from their communities. We need to ask the question of efficiency in reaching our goal with the youth under our care. What could we do differently to help our youth connect with God and develop strong, faith-based convictions?

Curriculum objectives

- The purpose of this curriculum is to create an awareness among the leaders to improve their ministry and mobilize their youth in service.
- Help youth leaders to fully understand the necessity to maintain a specific ministry adapted to the needs of the Ambassador age group and that of Young Adults.
- The leader will commit to outline strategies that will be launched to equip the youth population to face the challenges of this 21st century and develop a strong “faith maturity” and a close relationship with God.

INTRODUCTION TO SENIOR YOUTH LEADER CURRICULUM

1. INTRODUCTION

As a Senior Youth Leader, working with our youth can be the greatest source of joy and satisfaction as we see them grow in Jesus and become disciples of His. *“The greatest sense of achievement in ministry comes when a youth leader sees young people enter onto a life-long relationship with God by inviting Jesus Christ to be Lord of their lives” (GC Youth Ministry Handbook 2005, p xiii).* As the church continues to fulfill its prophetic divine mission from the Bible, the youth leader as well as the youth of the church need a clear understanding of the Adventist mission as it relates to being a prophetic church in these last days. Only then can the senior youth leader understand the prophetic role the youth department plays, in the work and mission of the church, and its prophetic existence in these last days.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This module of study will look at the organizational structure of the Adventist church as a prophetic movement in these last days, and learn the role of the Adventist Youth Society in assisting the church to accomplish its mission. We will learn the history, philosophy, mission, objectives, and structure of the Adventist Youth Society. As a Senior youth leader, it is imperative for you and the youth of the church to understand why we exist as a department, how the department came into existence, and the role of the Adventist Youth Society in assisting the church to fulfill its mission.

3. HISTORY AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

The Seventh-day Adventist church, firmly rooted in Revelation 14, is a prophetic movement called out by God in earth’s last days to prepare a people for the coming of Jesus Christ. In the 1850s, the embryonic denomination wrestled with the concept of how the church should be organized, and in 1861, prayerfully came up with the basic structure we have today, as shown by the diagram below.

1

SEMINAR

INTRODUCTION TO YOUTH MINISTRY

Understanding the History, Philosophy, Vision, Objectives and Structure of Adventist Youth Ministry



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE ADVENTIST YOUTH MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT

The Adventist Youth Department in a very real sense is also a prophetic movement within the church as can be seen in the church's early history—most of the early pioneers and founders of the church were themselves young; Ellen Harmon was only 17 when she began receiving visions from God, and only 34 when the church was organized. The prophecy of Malachi 4, where the hearts of the fathers are to be turned to their children and the children's hearts to their parents, can be seen being fulfilled within the youth department.

Ellen White made a strong plea from Australia, December 19, 1892 to the church at large to begin having separate spiritual meetings for the boys and girls in their local churches. It read:

“ We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. We want our children to believe the truth. We want them to be blessed by God. We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth. Let all be so trained that they may be so trained that they may rightly represent the truth, giving them reason of the hope that is within them, and honoring God in any branch of the work, where they are qualified to labor”

(General Conference Bulletin, January 29, 30, 1893, p. 24).

5. HISTORY OF ADVENTIST YOUTH MINISTRIES

The first youth organization in the local Seventh-day Adventist church began in 1879 when two young boys, Harry Fenner, (16 years) and Luther Warren, (14 years) saw a need to plan missionary work, raise money for literature, and promote temperance in daily living. These meetings took place in Hazelton, Michigan, USA. Soon the girls pleaded to be included in the spiritual meetings and thus began the first Adventist youth organization, which was blessed by the local church. The parents of Luther Warren played an active role in molding and counseling this small group to meet their objectives.

From 1893-1901 youth societies sprung up around the USA, and in 1901 the General Conference officially voted into existence the young people's organization, under the Sabbath school department. At the 1907 General Conference Council at Gland, Switzerland, the church approved the formation of a Youth Department within the General Conference where elder M. E. Kern was elected the first GC Youth Director.

Within the same year (1907) a group of church workers met to select a name for the department and draw up basic guidelines. The name finally agreed upon was "***Seventh-day Adventist Young People's Department of Missionary Volunteers.***" Over the next two decades, passionate youth leaders developed the Junior Missionary Volunteer (JMV) programs and guidelines and youth camp philosophy, which encouraged handicrafts, woodcraft, trailing and camping as strong activities where the young people would connect with nature and spiritual truths from Bible. For more on the history of Adventist Youth Ministries please read the 2005 edition of the GC Youth Ministry Handbook, pages 5-10.

(This whole section below was taken verbatim from the Senior Youth Ministries Handbook (p.124) as it did a great job capturing this section).

History of the JMV Classes

JMV classes were introduced within the department in 1922.

...The first North American Division youth congress, held in San Francisco in 1947 with E. W. Dunbar as world youth director, drew thousands of youth. In 1969 the first World Youth Congress was held in Zurich, Switzerland, with Theodore Lucas as world youth director.

The Character Classics Reading Plan (later changed to Encounter) was adopted in 1946.

John Hancock organized the first conference-sponsored Pathfinder Club in Southeastern California Conference at Riverside, California in 1946. From 1947 to 1950 the Pathfinder program continued to develop in the Pacific Union Conference under the direction of J. R. Nelson, union youth director. Finally, the General Conference adopted the Pathfinder Club organization in 1950. (***Senior Youth Ministry Handbook, also known as Foundations for Senior Youth Ministries (GCSYMH), 2013, p.124***)

(This whole section below was taken verbatim from the Senior Youth Ministries Handbook (p.125) as it did a great job capturing this section).

History of the AY/AJY classwork

As youth engaged in JMV Society activities, some leaders felt the need to help them develop strong Christian characters and prepare for effective witnessing, so they would

know how to do missionary work. The leaders studied the possibilities, including many helpful suggestions in the Spirit of Prophecy writings.

A system of classes developed from that study and through observation of similar organizations emerging at that time. Class requirements included Bible and nature study, homemaking skills, outdoor activities, first aid, personal and home health, physical fitness, community service, and many different avenues of witnessing. These meaningful activities helped youth to find true happiness.

Leaders envisioned an army of youth with talents and energies committed to Christ, an army with ranks filled by those whose hands would be ready to grasp any emergency and turn it to the glory of the great Master Guide.

During the General Conference session in San Francisco, California in the spring of 1922, the work of the Junior Missionary Volunteer Society was greatly strengthened by the addition of what had become known as “progressive classwork.” Two classes were provided at that time, and youth leaders returned to their respective posts throughout the world, bringing new inspiration to the youth of many lands where the program had already spread.

The 1927 General Conference Autumn Council in Chattanooga, Tennessee enlarged the Progressive Classwork to include three classes, Friend, Companion and Comrade, for junior youth and one class for senior youth and adults. C. Lester Bond joined the General Conference MV Department in 1928, and two major programs evolved that year: MV Honors and the Master Comrade Class—developed for senior youth and adults “who desired to prepare for junior leadership.” The first Master Comrade (later called Master Guide) was invested in 1931.

The MV/JMV Classwork (later AY/AJY), designed to help youth physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially, proved to be a definite factor in character building, and has become a blessing in the lives of thousands.

The formation of the MV Society and JMV Society was the beginning of the church’s answer to the inspired call to “do something for youth.” It was also an answer to the need of youth for involvement in spiritually stimulating church activities. (GCSYMH, 2013, p.125)

Name Changes

Over the years, the name of the young peoples’ department underwent various changes as the church saw the need to keep current with our youth who are ever changing in the outlook, goals, needs and values of their present generation.

What began in 1907 as “*Seventh-day Adventist Young People’s Department*” (known as MV – Missionary Volunteers), changed to “*Youth Department of Missionary Volunteers*” in 1972. In 1978 the department name changed to “*Adventist Youth*” commonly known as AY department. Delegates at the 2005 General Conference Session voted the name, “*Youth Ministries Department*” which encompassed all the three age levels of youth ministry (e. g. Adventure Club, Pathfinder Club, and Senior (Young Adult) Youth Society. The 2015 General Conference session further adopted a name change to “*Adventist Youth Ministries*” (AYM).

6. PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION OF ADVENTIST YOUTH MINISTRIES (AYM)

Philosophy

The basic philosophy of AYM is securely grounded in the Biblical revelation of who Jesus Christ is. The Bible reveals a loving God who created humanity in His own image, to have a loving personal relationship with Him. The fall of man brought a broken relationship, not only between humanity and God, but also between each other. God took the initiative to remedy the situation and sent His only Son to die in our place so that we might have a chance to see Him face-to-face again. Through His Son Jesus Christ, who visited earth as a human so that we could see more clearly, we can understand God's love to us (Heb. 1:1-3). Jesus gave a clear picture of God and sent out His disciples to follow after His example, meeting lost sinners where they are, showing them a better life in the Father's love and then making disciples of them to go and do the same, to hasten the soon return of Jesus Christ.

Not only did Jesus show the Father's immense love for humanity through "servant leadership" (Jn. 13:1-17), but He also showed them how to receive power to overcome sin in this world through the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus showed His disciples how to live a life in the Spirit and become disciples of the Kingdom of God in a sinful world. (Gane: 51-52) (Building Youth Ministries-A Foundational Guide). This is emphasized in the AY mission statement that seeks "to lead young people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and help them embrace His call to discipleship". (p.132) "GCSYMH". 2013)

It is Jesus who is our model of "incarnational ministry" (e. g. allowing the character of Jesus and the power of Holy Spirit to be revealed in the life of our young people, thus becoming true disciples of His in this generation). Ellen White endorsed this model of incarnational ministry as a model for our youth to adopt in their Christian walk with Jesus when she said:

“The youth are the objects of Satan's special attacks; but kindness, courtesy, and the sympathy which flows from a heart filled with love to Jesus, will gain their confidence, and save them from many a snare of the enemy... There must be more study given to the problem of how to deal with the youth, more earnest prayer for the wisdom that is needed in dealing with minds... We should seek to enter into the feelings of the youth, sympathizing with them in their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories... We must meet them where they are if we would keep them... let us remember the claim of God upon us to make the path to heaven bright and attractive. (Ellen White, Gospel Workers (Washington, D. C.: Review & Herald, 1948), 207-212, emphasis added.)

Mission/Vision

The AYM mission statement seeks "to lead young people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and help them embrace His call to discipleship". This mission statement has become ultimate goal of the Adventist Youth Ministries department, that seeks to win, train, hold, and commission, young people for Christ.

Barry Gane rightfully captured the very essence of the Vision/Mission of the AYM as stated in his book *“Building Youth Ministries-A Foundational Guide”*:

“Youth ministry built on this model (life and ministry of Jesus) seeks to meet young people where they are, and to offer them pastoral care not only as spiritual guides, but also as counselors and friends, fellow pilgrims on a similar spiritual journey. With Jesus as our model we are called to ministry, a personal and relational ministry, that will involve a good deal of one to one time.”
(Gane: 54-55) (*Building Youth Ministries-A Foundational Guide*).

The AYM continues to work with the local church to fulfill God’s mandate to prepare a people for the soon return of Jesus Christ. “Adventist Youth Ministry is that work of the church that is conducted for, with, and by young people.” (Pastors and Elders Handbook for Youth Ministries, 2002, p. 2) We see that it is the youth themselves that need to be personally involved in fulfilling the mission of the department, displaying what our church leaders expect from every baptized member “Total Membership Involvement” in these times.

In other words, the mission of Adventist Youth Ministries is basically one of: salvation, discipleship, and service, which is grounded deep in the biblical model of the early church’s mission in the book of Acts 2:42-47. There are four dynamic forces that undergirded the growth of the early church: grace, worship, community, service. These four dynamic forces are strongly interwoven into the work and mission of the youth department. It is a biblical ministry where the AYM Pledge is carried out, by the youth, to the youth, for the youth, with the youth.

Objectives of the AYM

As youth leaders plan the work for their youth in the local church, a clear understanding of the objectives of the AYM is of utmost importance. Ellen G. White in the late 1900s spelled out the key objectives for the department in a letter published in the *Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1893. Here she set forth the objectives for the department:

- a) To train the youth to work for other youth,
- b) To recruit the youth to help their church and “those who profess to be Sabbath-keepers”;
- c) To work “for those who are not of our faith”

In seeking to reach these objectives, the youth are called upon:

- a) to pray together
- b) to study the Word together
- c) to fellowship together in Christian social interaction
- d) to act together in small groups to carry out well-laid plans for witnessing
- e) to develop tact and skill and talent in service to Jesus
- f) to encourage one another in spiritual growth

In 1907, at the General Conference Council at Gland, Switzerland, M. E. Kern, the first elected youth director for the department, set out the following objectives, in harmony with those laid out above.

They were:

- a) To raise the level of the devotional life of the young person
- b) To lift up the standard of attainment of the youth
- c) To educate and train youth for service
- d) To provide opportunities for outreach and service
- e) To teach the principles of stewardship
- f) To lead youth to discover their individual worth and develop and discover their spiritual gifts (*GC Pastor's and Elder's Handbook for Youth Ministry*, 2002:13)

In response to these inspired directives and M. E. Kern's expansion of E. G. White's objectives for the department, the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) Department was also organized to give leadership training and to provide resource materials and evangelistic plans covering both the Junior Youth Ministries (JYM) and Senior Youth Ministries (SYM) in the local church. ("GCSYMH" 2013:127)

Structure of Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM)

AYM has two broad age groups that are broken into two dedicated subsets of ministries: Junior Youth, ages 4-15, and Senior Youth, ages 16-30+. These two subsets are further broken down into the following four (aged-related) ministries within the department.

Junior Youth Ministries (JYM): Ages: 4-15 includes:

Adventurer Ministry (ages 4-9)

Strengthens parent-child relationships by providing weekly activities tuned into the psychological needs of this age group and also giving parents opportunities for learning parenting skills and enjoying special activities with their children.

Pathfinder Ministry (ages 10-15)

Assists in the critical years of identity formation and adolescent transformation for boys and girls. Offering intentional activities of service and mission, Pathfinders guides the energy of young people to focus on their community.

Senior Youth Ministries (SYM): Ages: 16-30+ includes:

Ambassador Ministry (ages 16-21)

Designed to strengthen the current senior youth ministry of the church. It challenges them to experience and share a personal relationship with Jesus; helps them develop a lifestyle that is consistent with their belief system; provides training in diverse vocational interests; and provides them with a safe environment for the wholesome development of lifelong friendships. (GCSYMH, 2013, p.9)

Young Adult Ministry (ages 22-30+)

Engages the vitality of a generation sharing their living relationship with Jesus in work and life, recognizing the diverse demographic from those in education or work, married or single, and possibly parents. This critical ministry embraces empowering young adults for leadership, mentoring, evangelism, and healthy lives.



ADVENTIST YOUTH MINISTRIES LEADERSHIP CURRICULUMS



These objectives still form the major objectives of the AYM today, and while each ministry above has adapted these objectives to suit their age-related ministry, any local church AYM that consistently endeavors to attain these objectives will reap success and become a mighty influence in the local church and its territory around.



ADVENTURERS

Our colors represent our mission. We're bold, bright, and confident.

Blue represents Heaven. Blue is the color of the sky and a reminder of the heavenly realm

Scarlet in the Bible represents blood and redemption. The life of man is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11) and Christ's blood atonement is necessary for the redemption of man.

Green represents growing and blooming where one is planted. It is representative of a Christian life that produces good fruit and finds rest in Christ.

White represents righteousness because of its purity of color and light. It points to the Righteous One and the righteousness He imputes to all who come to Him in faith.

PATHFINDERS

Red reminds us of Christ and His sacrifice. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Rom. 12: 1).

Three sides represent completeness of the Trinity -- Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Tripod of education: Mental Crafts and Honors, Physical Campouts, work bee, health focus Spiritual Outreach and personal spiritual development.

Gold represents excellence "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich" (Rev. 3:18). The Pathfinder Club has high standards to help build strong character for the kingdom of heaven.

Shield represents protection. In the Scripture God is often called the shield of His people. (Protection) "Fear not... I am thy shield" (Gen. 15:1) "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (Eph. 6:16)

White represents purity. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment" (Rev. 3:5). We desire to have the purity and righteousness of Christ's life in our lives.

Blue represents loyalty. It is the purpose of the Pathfinder Club to help teach us to be loyal to: Our God in heaven. Our parents. Our church. Loyalty is defined as a reflection of the character of our True Master Guide.

Sword represents the Bible. The sword is used in warfare. A battle is always won by offense. We are in a battle against sin, and our weapon is the Word of God. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. (see Eph. 6:17)

Inverted Triangle represents the order of importance Jesus taught which is contrary to that taught by the world. Sacrificing of one's self by placing the needs of others ahead of our own.



AMBASSADORS

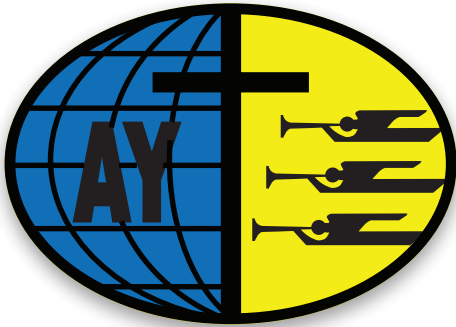
The cross in the logo points to the fact that Jesus' sacrifice is the center of a relationship with Him.

The cross on the earth is symbolic of His sacrifice, giving us hope of a new and better life both here on earth through the concept of servant leadership and through an earth made new at His return.



The open book is the Word of God, the foundation for our faith, knowledge, and lifestyle. It is open because it's a message for us to internalize as our constant guide and companion. It is also for sharing with all who will freely receive it.

The graded colors of yellow to orange represent the dawn of eternal life that follows the darkness of our temporal experience on this sinful earth.



YOUNG ADULTS

The gospel of Jesus represented by the cross is at the center of Young Adult Ministry. Colossians 1:17

The three angels message of Revelation 14:6-12, represents an urgent plea to the world. A message to be carried by the Young adults to all the world in their generation.

The half globe represents the world field that should receive the three angels message. The message is for every tongue, nation, kindred. NO discrimination.

Blue represents loyalty. It is the purpose of the Young Adult Ministry to teach loyalty to God, the mission and the church. Loyalty is defined as a reflection of the character of Jesus.

Yellow is the color of sunshine. It's associated with joy, happiness, intellect, courage and energy.

The Ideals of the Adventist Youth Ministry AYM

While the senior AYM church youth leader endeavors to fulfill the AYM key objectives laid out above, the ideals of the AYM find their expression and fulfillment in living out the senior AYM Aim, Mission, Motto, and Pledge of the department.

Aim

"The Advent message to all the world in my generation."

Mission

"To lead young people in a saving relationship with Jesus and help them embrace his call to discipleship."

Motto

"The love of Christ compels me."

Pledge

"Loving the Lord Jesus, I promise to take an active part in the work of the Adventist Youth Ministries, doing what I can to help others and to finish the work of the gospel in all the world."

(For a detailed explanation of Ideals of the senior AYM see page129-133 in the book, *Foundations for Senior Youth Ministries*)

7. CONCLUSION

The senior youth leader in the AYM who remains in constant harmony with AYM mission statement, and ideals as expressed in the aim, mission, motto, and pledge, will reap success and become a mighty influence in the local church and its territory around the world.

Ellen. G. White expressed it well when she said:

“*To save from sin and guide into service:*” this true and only motive, so complete and impressive, was adopted during the 1926 General Conference session. To obtain the salvation of the youth it is necessary to give them every possible opportunity to participate in all Adventist youth activities. By keeping youth actively preparing for more efficient service, they are protected from evil. It is necessary to place them in some activity as soon as they are ready. “*Seeking the good of others is the way in which true happiness can be found.*”

(Counsels on Stewardship, p. 24)

8. ACTIVITIES

Individual:

- A. What are the Six Key Objectives of the youth department as outlined by M. E. Kern in 1907?
- B. List the AYM organizational chart (Written/Recorded)

Group:

- C. In partners or small groups, discuss specific ways what you have learned in this module can be translated into your local youth ministry. How closely does your ministry adhere to the AYM philosophy, mission, and ideals?

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 1:

INTRODUCTION TO YOUTH MINISTRY

We certify that:

has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:

..... Date:

Young Adults Leader:

..... Date:

Elder/Pastor:

..... Date:

Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:

..... Date:



1. INTRODUCTION

The youth of today live in a world different from that of their parents and the adults of the church when they were the same age. All youth—from time immemorial—dream, but today our youth live in a society that digitally makes their dreams seem “real,” and transports them into a virtual world full of vision. The fact that they live in a virtual world encourages them to develop a lifestyle in accordance with the great mutation of this world. This way of living is often decried and misunderstood by the adults of the church. As a youth leader, the time has come to seek a better understanding of the mentality of today’s youth in order to make them feel understood and feel that they belong to God’s family. This will in turn help them to improve their spiritual growth.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

In this module we will study to understand Jesus’ example with regards to cultural accommodation, discover the challenges faced by young people, understand the world in which they live, and know the steps in the process of being acquainted with the youth environment and entering into it with them.

3. RECOGNIZING THE DIFFERENCES

First we must realize this important point:

“Teen brains aren’t finished yet. The frontal lobe of the brain – the part responsible for decision-making and reasoning – isn’t fully developed until a person’s early-to-mid-twenties.

“According to Abigail Baird of the Laboratory for Adolescent Studies at

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2 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Understanding Youth

Dartmouth, the human brain continues to grow and change into the early 20s. 'We as a society deem an individual at the age of 18 ready for adult responsibility,' she states. 'Yet recent evidence suggests that our neuropsychological development is many years from being complete' (Grossman, Lev, "They Just Won't Grow Up," Time, January 24, 2005, p. 42-53).

"As a result of this physical reality, your teenager is caught between two worlds: that of being a child (with simple, incomplete thinking and a minimal data bank of experience), and that of being an adult (with more complete, mature thinking and a bigger data bank).

Youth can and do act like adults at times. This is normal. And they can and do act childishly at times. This is also normal."

The entire above section, including the Baird quote, was taken from <http://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/teens/letting-go-of-your-teen/why-parents-want-to-control-their-teens>

Given this important fact, youth tend to think that they've got it all taken care of, but things such as rightly perceiving the world and managing their emotions are also things that they're still working on and are a consequence of their brains' not being complete yet. Knowing this will help us keep patience with these creative, lovable, but often frustrating young humans.

Next, we must understand that youth culture and societal systems really are different and distinct in important ways from the adult or mainstream culture around them. Today, even in remote regions of the world, the digital age is creeping in, and in all developed nations, youth have more autonomy, at least in a digital sense, than ever before. Many of their parents, particularly in nations where the digital age has come more recently, do not understand computers, the internet, social media, cell phones, and newer forms of entertainment as well as their children do. They may not completely realize that their children are inhabiting a different world than their own. Getting inside that new world is a necessity for today's youth leader. We must see, and encourage them to see, that youth and adult cultures are both independent of each other, and at the same time inseparable. We need them, and yes, they still need us.

As we seek to understand the challenges and feelings of youth, it can seem like a daunting task. Can we adequately generalize youth and their culture in a way that makes sense to us and to them? Has the negative media attention affected the way youth and young adults are treated...do they have a chip on their shoulder?

In this seminar we are seeking to find methods and ways to help us honestly explore their values and concerns in the context of the church and a developmental relationship with God and the church. We must find ways to re-engage the youth and provide a productive social bond between youth and adults in the church. We must find ways to show them that they are taken seriously and keep them (or pull them back) into the larger church community.

4. EXAMPLES FROM THE BIBLE

The Bible teaches that to win people, it is important to understand their environment and their lifestyle and enter into that environment and lifestyle with them.

A. The best example of this is Jesus Himself.

In order to understand the situation of humanity and to demonstrate His love for us, Jesus first left the unimaginably different environment of heaven to come to earth and live as a human in a specific society and time, wearing their clothes, eating their food, listening to their music, and learning their trades. He came down to meet our situation and lived in the context of fallen mortals overwhelmed by the consequences of sin. This not only allowed Him to understand human suffering, it also made it possible for Him to demonstrate His love for humanity. This is well explained by Paul in Philippians 2: 5-7:

“*Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*”

While here, Jesus mingled with people in order to understand them. He then taught them new things that were opposite from what they had been taught. For instance, He broke the local social codes (based on a narrow understanding of actual Bible passages) in spending time with people Jewish society deemed unacceptable.

“*As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him. And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners” (Matt 9: 10-13).*”

In Luke 15, the result of mingling is clear. It is said that those whom the Pharisees called “sinners” were drawn to Jesus because he stooped low to their level and understood their situation. Only then could He begin to pull them up to His level.

“*Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them” (Luke 15:1, 2).*”

B. To win people and make himself understood, Paul also mingled and integrated with the culture of people.

“*To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being*

myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some” (1 Corinthians 9:20-23).

It could be noted that many Christians would feel better becoming “as one under the law” than “as one outside the law.” They might face less opposition and rebuke, too.

In verse 23, Paul gives the reasons why it is important to mingle and adopt the culture of people. “I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”

5. COUNSELS FROM ELLEN WHITE

Ellen White gives the successful method Jesus used to save souls. This method applies equally well in the context of youth.

“*Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” (Christian Service, p. 119).*

This method of understanding the mentality of youth requires a genuine sympathy.

“*The youth are objects of Satan’s special attacks; and the manifestation of kindness, courtesy, tender sympathy, and love, will often work the salvation of those who are under the temptations of the evil one” (Pastoral Ministry, p. 275).*

She urged that we adapt religion to the youth in order to attract them.

“*...They should make their religion attractive to the youth who come within the sphere of their influence” (Christian Education, p. 24).*

A good understanding of youth culture can lead them to use the potential God gave them in the service of the church.

“*The minds of many of the youth are rich in talents which are put to no available use, because they have lacked opportunity to develop them. Their physical powers have been strengthened by exercise; but the faculties of the mind lie hidden, because the discernment and God-given tact of the educator have not been exercised in bringing them into use. Aids to self-development must be given to the youth; they must be drawn out, stimulated, encouraged, and urged to action” (ibid., p. 30).*

6. PRACTICAL METHODS

A. Understand the youth's environment

Young people have a capacity of rapidly adapting to the social climate in which they are immersed. This is how God created them—intending that they be surrounded by a positive, godly environment and that they soak it in and then add their own creativity to enrich it. But today's world has twisted this capacity of youth. With young people, things change according to the economic and social transformations of their environment. These affect their desires, their needs, their sensibilities, their relationships, their way of dressing, their appearance, and their understanding of spiritual lifestyle. They tend to build their identity in conformity with the world around them.

Today, the younger generations are characterized by their use of modern communication technologies, bringing what is commonly called “the virtual world.” This environment provides access to many opportunities that previous generations did not have, and undoubtedly affects the moral and emotional lives of young people. It shapes the concerns and the needs of young people, making them different from those of adults.

In many churches, young people have the strong impression that the church does not know what to do with them. It is not uncommon to find young people isolating themselves from the group and raising critiques about what is being done. For instance, they complain about the way the music is played, the way programs are run, and so on. In short, today's youth live in a world different from that of adults. Even though the latter feel they are doing well, the young people do not see things this way.

A journey into the world of the youth is necessary in order to understand, accept, and guide them. This will allow the church to detect and satisfy the needs they may have so as to integrate them and make them feel part of the church family.

B. Understand the youth's sources of influence

1. **Family.** From babyhood on, especially as long as the youth is at home, the family remains the first source of influence. This influence is marked by two main things: the training given by parents and, especially, the impact of social life at home.
2. **School.** The school exerts an impact on the life of young people. They are transformed by what they learn, by their teachers, and also by their friends. The kind of school they attend can make a difference in their behavior.
3. **Community.** The young person is influenced by his or her community; and since their tendency is to be in groups, they are bound to find one in their environment. The neighborhood, friends and everything that come into play in their relational life has an impact on the young person's life. This can vary by how deeply a given country's life is community-oriented, but it is true in all countries.
4. **Mass Media.** Today, mass media, and especially television, internet, and smartphones, are influencing young people and transforming their way of seeing things and apprehending the world.

C. Understand the desires of young people

It may not always seem like it, but young people are looking for adults capable of responding to their moral, social, and spiritual needs.

1. Young people are seeking recognition as part of the family of the church
2. Young people are looking for adults and leaders with whom they can confidently communicate the realities of their lives
3. Young people are looking for framework and opportunity in which they can say what they think without being punished or disqualified
4. Young people have visions and ambitions that are often different from what is usually done. They look for new ways and innovations and seek out leaders capable of bringing changes that take their opinions into account.
5. Young people love their church and want to see it evolve and grow. They are willing to defend her in their environment so far as the actions of the church are worth being proud of.

D. Entering in the Youth's universe

To be able to understand the youth culture, there is a need of entering into their world. Here are some ways:

1. Organize frequent meetings to discuss the problems they face while asking their opinions. Do not taboo their ideas and points of view. Also arrange one-on-one time with each youth.
2. Tolerate young people's language and behavior. What they say and how they say it must be tolerated. Give them the opportunity to freely express themselves while gradually drawing their attention to any improper conducts they may exhibit. This allows you to understand their world while at the same time allowing them to ponder their deeds.
3. Allow young people to express their emotions and feelings. Generally, negative ways of acting and reacting stem from internal resentments they have.
4. Make space for listening-based dialogue. Make it a habit to find time to listen to young people instead of talking to them.
5. Organize informal programs and activities with the youth. Find time to just play. It's important to them, and it's still important to adults, too.

It is necessary to know that young people, in general, are not interested in hearing adults' experiences of yesteryears especially when these experiences have nothing in common with the present. Rather they yearn to see condescending adults and leaders ready to understand and accept them in the context of their world. It is all about seeing leaders identifying with the struggles and hopes of young people to better understand and minister to them. If you listen to their stories, they may listen to yours, if you find relevant ones and learn to tell the stories "in their language."

E. Creating a framework for youth involvement

Once immersed in the culture of young people, it is necessary to create space for them to feel at home. You will need to:

1. Create an environment where young people feel accepted and important. This will allow them to take ownership of the church.
2. Encourage young people to create informal meetings. They feel more energized when they create their own groups.
3. Organize forums for exchange and conversation where young people are called upon to make decisions. Preach less and put them into exchange groups.
4. Create diverse experiences where young people have the opportunity to bring their ideas to life with youth-oriented music and other arts.
5. Frequently allow young people to lead programs. This allows them to take initiatives. When young people hear and see other young people in action, they will know there is room for their age group.
6. Create intergenerational activities. This allows for a crossroads of cultures for mutual understanding of both adult and young people's world. Everybody will learn from each other and appreciate one another.

7. CONCLUSION

If Jesus was able to come close to us in order to understand us in the context of our world, we can also do the same with our youth.

- ***Learn to be compassionate*** in your dealings with youth so as to express authentic sympathy and kindness to the young people around you.
- ***Ask the Lord for wisdom*** and passion for youth work so as to minister to the hearts of the young
- ***Remember the goal*** is to help them develop a close relationship with Christ.

8. ACTIVITIES

Part 1

Today at the seminar, try answering the questions below. Keep your answers in a safe place at home or in your office; you will need them when completing Part 2 later.

1. Two factors that most influence the youth of your church

2. The musical trend of the youth in your church

3. The value placed on the church by the youth

4. The leisure activities of the youth

5. Their favorite media

6. The influence of church leaders have on them

7. To whom they talk about their problems with confidence

8. The main complaints about the life of the church

9. The heroes they would like to resemble

10. Their understanding of Christian living

Part 2

Next, use the methods outlined above to get involved with the youth of your church for a quarter. During this time, find out how close you were in your original answers to the statements--without interrogating the youth. The aim is to crosscheck the depth of your knowledge vis-à-vis youth-adult relationships. If you were mostly correct with your **Part 1** answers, congratulations. If not, you know what you need to work on, and no doubt you have come much closer during the quarter of learning what your youth really think about and how they feel.

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CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 2: YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

We certify that:

has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:

..... Date:

Young Adults Leader:

..... Date:

Elder/Pastor:

..... Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*

..... Date:



1. INTRODUCTION

Biblical basis for specialized youth ministry

During our research for a biblical basis for youth ministry, our attention was drawn to two elements that could be considered as biblical anchors for youth ministry.

- a. The first one is to “*Love the Lord Your God...*” (*Deuteronomy 6:5*) as a foundational element of personal spiritual growth. It was to be taught in Israel by parents to their children from birth until adulthood. It is considered in the New Testament as the greatest commandment (*Matthew 22:37, 38*) with “*love your neighbor*” as second to it.

The outcome should then be a good connection with the Creator and respect for other human beings. It is important to grasp that youth ministry starts with the home in partnership with parents and is extended to the church family with other leaders.

- b. The second element is found in *1 Corinthians 12:12-26* where the Apostle Paul highlights the importance and value of every part of the human body, describing the church as the body of Christ. Paul uses this metaphor to indicate that there is a need for diversity in the body which is the community of believers. He goes on to say that there is also a need for interdependence among

3

SEMINAR

CURRENT ISSUES

The Need for Specialized Youth Ministry

the members and that all members are important to the proper function of the body. Everyone is needed and has something important to share.

We should be comfortable advocating specialized youth ministry because Paul's metaphor of "human body" gives us room to value and integrate all parts of the body irrespective of age, income, social status, family structure, gender, and physical characteristics. This is a challenge for the church as a community and for the leaders, but isn't this exactly what the church is all about, the body of Christ?

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This module of study will seek to gain a basic understanding of why we need specialized youth ministries and how they have functioned up to now. We will seek ways to further develop our youth ministries today with models based on growing awareness of the developmental needs of youth, intergenerational dynamics, and an understanding of cultural and societal trends that are impacting youth.

3. PRINCIPLES OF SPECIALIZED YOUTH MINISTRY

Over the years, the leadership of the church has sought to accommodate the youth and establish new structures and protocols to answer to the need wherever it was possible. But it did not manage to slow the lack of interest of young people in church life. This recurrent situation that is affecting youth ministry all over has caused some youth professionals to engage in serious analysis to understand the reasons our youth are drifting away. In the process, the leadership of the Adventist church in North America has come up with a study that was conducted by the BARNA GROUP and that we must take seriously into consideration.

They estimated that 80 percent of those reared in the church will be "disengaged" by the time they are 29. Barna Group president David Kinnaman describes the reality in stark terms: *"Imagine a group photo of all the students who come to your church in a typical year. Take a big fat marker and cross out three out of every four faces. That's the probable toll of spiritual disengagement as students navigate the next two decades."*

We must be alarmed by such a result and adopt a course of action to try to reduce or reverse the trend and create a safe environment where our youth can grow and learn to develop a close relationship with Christ.

How can we make the youth ministry more relevant to our young people today?

We agree that the main goal of youth ministry should be exactly what it is for the adult in the community. Therefore, Adventist Youth Ministry which is a specialized ministry of the church should (1) seek to address expressed needs of young people in their own environment and respond to them as they are, and (2) incorporate them into the fellowship of the church as a caring Christian community. But when we do a reality check we are faced with some troubling facts among our youth community. It is very important to undertake diligently a course of action to alert the leaders worldwide to make youth ministry a priority on their strategic planning.

Let us take time to read an excerpt of what *Ministry Magazine* (an international journal for pastors) reported about the survey of Adventist millennials done by the BARNA GROUP in 2014.

“ In his book “You Lost Me,” Barna Group’s president, David Kinnaman, details six perceptual grievances that millennials in general tend to harbor against “the church” (meaning any church of any denomination) as a cultural institution. These grievances hold that the church is intolerant of doubt, elitist in its relationships, anti-science in its beliefs, overprotective of its members, shallow in its teachings, and repressive of differences.

In surveying of Adventist millennials in particular, these grievances hold true to an even greater extent when it comes to the Adventist young adult perceptions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The percentages of respondents who say their experiences fit these descriptions are higher than the national norms—for all six perceptions. For example, while one in four of United States (U.S.) millennials with a Christian background say that Christianity in America is repressive of differences, almost four in ten of Adventist millennials say this is true of Adventist churches.

Doubtless	U.S. 10%	Adventist 28%
Exclusive	U.S. 22%	Adventist 34%
Anti-science	U.S. 25%	Adventist 47%
Overprotective	U.S. 23%	Adventist 36%
Shallow	U.S. 24%	Adventist 29%
Repressive	U.S. 25%	Adventist 37%

Data: Comparing U.S. millennials with a Christian background to Adventist millennials, percentages of respondents who “agree strongly” that each descriptor describes their church experience.

- Reason #1 Churches seem overprotective.
- Reason#2 Teens’ and twenty-somethings’ experience of Christianity is shallow.
- Reason #3 Churches come across as antagonistic to science.
- Reason #4 Young Christians’ church experiences related to sexuality are often simplistic, judgmental.
- Reason #5 They wrestle with the exclusive nature of Christianity.
- Reason #6 The church feels unfriendly to those who doubt.

4. WAYS TO CHANGE THE STATUS QUO

Henceforth, Youth Ministry should be a place of choice to engage the youth in conversation, debate and open study, to tackle those issues and help them see how they can connect their faith in Christ to the reality they live daily. Our youth need a safe haven where they can voice their concerns and challenges and express their doubts and questionings without the fear of being judged or rejected.

In the book *Education*, page 17, Ellen White says: *“Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought”* (emphasis added). This can occur only when youth leaders are intentional about creating that safe zone where the youth can be challenged in their thinking and exposed to a sound biblical worldview in a positive, open, and welcoming way.

It is important that youth leaders do not limit themselves to a unique way of doing ministry but explore different avenues and approaches more adapted to the millennials.

Dr. Tim Elmore in his book *iYGeneration* identifies today’s youth as an “over-connected, overprotected and overserved generation” and gives some practical solutions to their greatest challenges. Based on his experience leading millennials, he has created an acronym that summarizes and identifies what makes this generation so unique. He calls them **EPIC generation**. These are four characteristics that any youth leader should be familiar with if they want fully and effectively lead the millennial workforce of the future at all levels. EPIC generation stands for:

E---Experiential

Millennials are experiential in their learning. They aren’t looking for a polished and professional speaker with an impressive PowerPoint in a classroom to learn from. They want to learn from someone walking alongside them who has experience in what they are doing.

P---Participatory

Dr. Elmore brings up a good point with this characteristic. He reminds us that this generation has grown up in an age of entertainment and technology that is interwoven together. When a millennial can see how their action affects an outcome, they get fired up and motivated to make the outcome even better.

I---Image rich

Between Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat, millennials have images every time they look at their phone. They have also grown up with music videos, websites, digital cameras, and cell phones. Special attention should be placed on that specific trend that has become a vital part of millennials’ lifestyle. As leaders, if we are not on social media or not able to communicate with simple “smiley face icons”, better known as emojis, we are missing out on a connection with the largest generation in communities today.

C---Connected

More than any other generation in the past, millennials are connected. They are connected socially and technologically. With their cell phones, they have a constant connection with the world around us and their circle of friends. These generations understand the immense power of connection. They know that with one tweet or one snapchat they could go viral. Anything they say or do could be viewed by millions upon millions of people across the globe.

The question that comes to our mind should be, how can we work efficiently with this EPIC generation in our churches, in our local youth ministries?

Primarily, we need to recognize that while this social media is an awesome technology at the core of our youth culture today, there is a great responsibility that is attached to it and which must be emphasized in our activities. Secondly, as youth leaders, we can use this age of connection to bring about a movement of Christ's disciples and fellowship across the globe in which youth reach out to other youth in any part of the world, where they are facing challenges of all kinds. *"God wants the youth to become men [and women] of earnest mind, to be prepared for action in His noble work and fitted to bear responsibilities"* (Messages to Young People, p. 21).

5. INTEGRATED OR SEGREGATED YOUTH MINISTRY?

Finally, let us remember that the church is the body of Christ and that each part plays a vital and unique role in its functioning. That takes us to the idea that as a church we should be intentional in integrating every specific group within our church family. The word family is pivotal in our understanding of Christian faith. As a family, the focus should be on developing healthful relationships amongst the different generations that are intermingled in the composition of our community. We should make it a priority to pay attention to our youth and put our emphasis on their spiritual development and their integration in the community.

It is urgent for our leaders to pray and seek God's guidance in creating bridges between the youth and the adults that will help pass on experience, knowledge, and expertise. At the same time, we must initiate an authentic intergenerational dialogue, give them room to express creativity, and facilitate access to leadership positions within our communities in a meaningful way. The outcome for our youth would be a greater sense of belonging and ownership of their community and an active part in the great commission.

“*In order that the work may go forward in all its branches, God calls for youthful vigor, zeal, and courage. He has chosen the youth to aid in the advancement of His cause. To plan with clear mind and execute with courageous hands demands fresh, uncrippled energies. Young men and women are invited to give God the strength of their youth, that through the exercise of their powers, through keen thought and vigorous action, they may bring glory to Him and salvation to their fellow-men*”

(Gospel Workers, p. 67).

How?

David Kinnaman, President of the Barna Group, in his study of millennials has identified the following five areas as key elements that contribute in helping young adult stay connected to their communities.

1. ***Make room for meaningful relationships:*** Those who stayed were twice as likely to have a close personal friendship with an adult inside the church (59% of those who stayed report such a friendship versus 31% among those who are no longer active)
2. ***Teach cultural discernment:*** A second important ministry outcome for today's millennials is helping them develop discernment skills—especially in understanding and interpreting today's culture...
3. ***Make reverse mentoring a priority:*** Young people want to be taken seriously today—not for some distant future leadership position. In their eyes, institutional church life is too hierarchical. And they're not interested in earning their way to the top so much as they're wanting to put their gifts and skills to work for the local church in the present—not future—tense. Mrs. White addresses this, too: *“The youth must be impressed with the idea that they are trusted. They have a sense of honor, and they want to be respected, and it is their right”* (Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 114).
4. ***Embrace the potency of vocational discipleship:*** Teach them a more potent theology of vocation or calling. Millennials who have remained active are three times more likely than dropouts to say they learned to view their gifts and passions as part of God's calling (45% versus 17%).
5. ***Facilitate connection with Jesus:*** Church communities can help millennials generate a lasting faith by facilitating a deeper sense of intimacy with God. The version of *“Jesus in a vacuum’ that is often packaged for young people doesn’t last long compared to faith in Christ that is not compartmentalized but wholly integrated into all areas of life.”*

“Millennials need the help of faithful believers from older generations if they are to make sense of it all and move meaningfully forward in their life and faith.”

These new elements in addition to previous curriculum in youth ministry could equip leaders with more tools and reflection tracks to minister to the needs of our youth across the globe. The youth leaders should see that:

- Young people should be involved more often in intergenerational activities that are intentionally inclusive and participative
- Always keep in mind the essential needs of youth in your strategic planning
- Empower them and meet them where they are in terms of their personal issues and spiritual growth
- Create opportunities to mobilize their skills in useful projects for their local communities as well as abroad.

- Encourage interaction between generations; it will help create synergy, mutual enrichment, and spiritual fellowship.

“Young men should have broad ideas, wise plans, that they may make the most of their opportunities, catch the inspiration and courage that animated the apostles” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 24).

6. ANOTHER STUDY AND ITS INSIGHTS

During another study conducted with a sample of young adults, three positive fields were identified and should be considered as relevant to improve the development of relations and help the youth better connect with the rest of the community.

1. **Intergenerational relationships.** The first key is intergenerational relationships. For so many of our respondents, their relationship with the church was determined by their relationship with older members. It was noted that most local churches do not need to figure out how to make intergenerational relationships happen; they are already happening. However, it is important to note that these intergenerational relationships can work both ways—both negatively and positively.

The goal for local leadership can be to create a church culture that reinforces the positive interactions and reduces the negative interactions.

2. **Forgiveness and acceptance.** Nothing drives teenagers and young adults from the church faster than being rejected, and nothing draws them in faster than being accepted. Both are currently happening in spades in Adventist churches around North America. Unfortunately, this issue is not exclusive to the USA. It is present in various continents and regions of the world including developing countries. Luke 6:36 defines Matthew 5:48's admonition to be “perfect as God is perfect” as “be merciful as your Father is merciful.”
3. **Platforms for sharing.** There is a power in experiencing God's love and strength. There is a power in sharing that experience with others. And there is a power in hearing the story of another person's encounter with God. We need to remember as well that developing connections with a younger generation can help older adults feel a greater sense of fulfillment. In fact, linking older adults with youth can provide advantages for both groups.

7. CONCLUSION

We live in a society in crisis; our youth are facing great challenges and a significant number of them are leaving the church. Nevertheless, youth ministry is still relevant today and can play a decisive role in their spiritual growth. Leaders should be open to address the issues and the needs of the youth from an intentional, inclusive, intergenerational perspective. This generation needs to be embraced through authentic relationships, generous mentoring, and a strong connection with Jesus

The various studies mentioned in this presentation, and the issues raised, may not fully correspond to the experience of all communities throughout the world church. However,

it is interesting to take note of it and to continue the reflection according to the cultural specificities and challenges of your own region.

The influence of social media is gaining ground more and more and providing access to countries that are difficult for the gospel to enter. I humbly invite all youth leaders to initiate diligently a conversation with the leadership of their local churches to create an awareness that is paramount to the development of our youth ministry. Youth leaders should also engage young people in open discussion to encourage them to put God first in their lives and become active witnesses of Christ in everything they do.

8. ACTIVITIES

Individual:

- A. What are the Six reasons identified in the survey about the millennials launched by the BARNIA GROUP
- B. Name and explain the acronym used to define this Generation

Group:

- C. Discuss how youth ministry leaders can engage their youth in networking with other youth across the globe using social media to impact the world with the Gospel.

9. RESOURCES

- Stuart Tyner, 2000. The ABZS of Adventist Youth ministry, Advent Source
- Jim Fieldbush & William Hurtado, 1999. Seven Principles for Youth Ministry Excellence, NAD
- David Kinnaman, 2011. You Lost Me, Bakers Books
- Tim Elmore, 2010. iY Generation, Poet Gardener Publishing

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 3: CURRENT ISSUES

We certify that:
has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:
Date:

Young Adults Leader:
Date:

Elder/Pastor:
Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*
Date:





LEADERSHIP

*The Senior Youth Leader
as Spiritual Leader,
Mentor and Friend*

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the key point to note: as a Christian who influences other Christians, the Youth Ministry Leader will lead not just through speech, but essentially through the whole life. In following the example of Jesus, he or she becomes an example to young followers.

For a leader, this connection takes place in the concept of discipleship. We are all disciples of Christ. Besides Lord and Savior, He is our example. We are not called “Christians” by mere grammatical distinction. To be a Christian is to follow Christ. To be a Christian leader is, first and foremost, to follow the example of Christ so that those who follow us may be automatically following Christ. Paul’s invitation to his readers to be his imitators, just as he was an imitator of Christ (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1), gives us the exact dimension of the leader’s relationship with Christ.

The Youth Ministry Leader needs to be a human language translation of what Jesus is.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This module of study will look at the youth leader, first as a student and follower of Christ—the foundation of all Christian life and especially of leadership, then as a spiritual leader, mentor, and friend to the youth under the leader’s guidance. We will consider some parameters necessary to maintain both respect and compassionate friendship.

3. THE YOUTH LEADER AS SPIRITUAL LEADER

Youth leadership in a church setting does not include the classic, earthly concepts of leadership alone, but transcends these concepts, living out the biblical model of godly leadership as exemplified for us by Christ and by the human leaders He trained while He was here.

The first commitment of a youth leader, therefore, must be to Christ. Before we lead, we must follow. Every leader is a sheep of the supreme Pastor, following the guidance of the Great Shepherd.

Yet we are also more than sheep. When we analyze all the beings created on planet earth, we find that general sociability is a relatively common feature of created beings, animals included. We as humans can be friends with people, and we can also love our pets. However, spirituality is a distinctive feature of human beings. We can have relationship not only with created beings, but also with the Creator. Our pets may love us, but when we stop to pray, we will not find our pets praying.

So, as Christian leaders we do not act like a feline leading a pack of other felines. In the words of God, "Not by force, nor by violence, but by my Spirit" (Zech. 4:6). We subordinate our social relationships to the biblical principles of Christian spirituality. And the Bible is very clear in determining that our spirituality is about our connection to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the leader must be a follower of Christ first.

Fundamental commitment to Christianity must guide the life of the youth leader. Only then will we be able to develop leadership in the right context. A true Christian leader will naturally develop a Christ-like leadership style.

It is interesting to remember that when God established the Hebrews as a nation, He said that the Hebrews would be "a holy nation, a kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:6). The apostle Peter, in 1 Peter 2:9, repeats this concept to Christians, calling us a "royal priesthood." Paul recalls throughout his writings that this priesthood/ministry is "all believers." It should be remembered that one of the functions of priests was, through the whole ritual of the sanctuary, to bring to human understanding the reality of God's Plan of Redemption. The priest translated into human language the realities of what God was doing for His people, thus revealing the character of God.

We do this translating in the context of wholeness as healthy human beings.

Spirituality drives the rhythm and quality of our social interactions.

We are human beings, and the Bible understands the human being as a total, complete being. A biblical approach to anthropology considers the human being holistically: we are physical, mental, and spiritual. All these layers of our being are interdependent. They do not function properly if they are not well equalized, supplied, and interconnected.

All of them are important, but there is an order of factors that changes the final product: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:33). When Jesus spoke these words, He was establishing the supremacy of spirituality as fuel for all areas of our lives. The success of our spirituality is the ballast to the success of everything else. For a Christian leader, spirituality is the driving and regulating agent of all the other layers in our nature. They are the fruits of a balanced spirituality that will produce balanced relationships.

4. THE YOUTH LEADER AS MENTOR

However, it is not enough to be a Christian leader; you need to be aware of whom you are intending to lead. When we speak of the young, we are talking about those who are at the forefront of the greatest social changes today. It is the young who receive the greatest burden of influences different from those of the church. Whether it is in the university environment, in relationships, or in the work environment of the first job. Everywhere, a “brave new world” unfolds before their eyes. It is the privilege of the youth leader to be a guide for this phase of life. But this privilege brings with it a responsibility: to have a contextualized awareness of the needs of the young, providing them the opportunity to experience a real Christianity relevant to the time and context in which they live.

The youth leader needs to understand that providing a real and relevant experience does not mean falling into the trap of giving the youth only what they want. As the Bible and our own experience remind us, the human heart is not always trustworthy. It is necessary to provide what youth really need: a satisfying spiritual experience. We often turn youth groups into mere entertainment when we forget that helping the young to create real connections with God can only take place in a context of contagious spirituality.

The youth of today are constantly searching for models.

There are those who think that the greatest difficulty in leading youth lies in the fact that there is a natural challenge of youth to the proposed models. Indeed, since youth and young people represent the greatest expression of change in society, it is not surprising that in the context of an individualist, relativistic, postmodern society, in which any absolute imposed truth is questioned, the young tend to question everything and everyone. But whoever understands this understands that it is also a complete proof that the young are not willing to follow just any kind of leadership.

The basic fact is that young people are pragmatic, that is, they tend to believe not in what someone says to be true, not in what someone says works. They tend to credit what they see that works.

Maybe this is the true issue. In fact, Adventist Christianity is very beautiful in theory, but only works in practice. The youth’s experience with the church must be permeated with something real, practical, and effective. Otherwise, mere theory (however beautiful, interesting, and logical) produces no change in life.

Let’s look at a culinary example: The youth leader can be seen as a “chef” in the kitchen. Imagine a chef in front of hungry clients. If he starts discoursing about the nutritional value of food, it will inform his clients, but it will not solve the hunger issue. If he tells a testament about when he has tasted a particular food, and how tasty that food was, he will surely create the desire for it in his customers, but it will not satisfy their hunger. No matter how much you discourse, the reality is that the chef will only solve the hunger issue of his clients if he goes into action and prepares the proposed food.

So, it is with the leader. We need to materialize our concepts. Make your whole theory of leadership a practice that nurtures your followers. The young need to feel the real benefits of what the leader is proposing. If they realize that it works in the leader’s life, they will believe that it can work in their lives.

Be honest about the questions you had when you were their age, and the questions you still have now. Let them understand that God doesn’t answer every single question,

take away every doubt, or “fix” every situation. God’s promise is to be here—to be God with Us, and to help, support, and strengthen us through every challenge. Help them to begin to look at the complex problems and challenges and excitements of this “brave new world” as possibilities in God’s plan for their own personal lives. They need not either turn away from every new thing (as they sometimes see older folks do), nor run after it (as their friends might). They can stop and ask, “Is this a new thing God can use in my life and help me use to benefit the lives of others? And if so, how?” Take time with them, talking out the practicalities of the bright ideas they have.

They are also willing to follow leaders who are real

Now it is understood: For Christianity to be seen to function well in the life of the leader does not presuppose the perfection of the leader. One need not be perfect to be followed; as a matter of fact, young people are far less likely to follow someone who is supposedly perfect. They know very well that nobody is. Idealizing perfect leaders is idealizing the humanly impossible.

A leader who inspires a young person is not one absolutely immune to errors, failures, and misunderstandings. What inspires a young person is, rather, one who has the wisdom, resilience, and perseverance to learn from one’s own mistakes, and find biblical solutions to practical issues. Sometimes the very fact of seeing a leader falter and then tell the truth about it, including asking forgiveness if necessary, is the turning point for a youth who is having trouble committing to Christ. It wasn’t Peter’s failure that qualified him to feed Jesus’ lambs, but it was most assuredly his recognition of his failure, his sorrow over it, and his humble repentance. (See John 21.)

If you can succeed in modeling all of life—not every personal detail, just a well-rounded honesty in presenting all sides of human life with its struggles, dilemmas, and the solutions that the Bible proposes. If you can show that you are using what you are “selling,” you will surely inspire the young to follow your example. Not because you are perfect, but because you are able to present, in genuine practice, a solution path to issues, dilemmas, and challenges that are common to all.

When the young can identify with the story of a leader, with the failures of a leader, with the struggles of a leader, with the dilemmas of a leader, they will identify with the solutions found by the leader.

“Be my imitators as I am the imitator of Christ,” said the apostle Paul, a royal leader of the early Church who never concealed the reality of his struggles, nor did he hide the way to his victory.

When we read Paul’s affliction in Romans 7 (“The good that I want to do, I cannot do it, but the evil that I want to avoid, that, when I see, I have done it ...”), who is alive who cannot identify with this fight? But at the same time, when Paul states his conviction that he can do everything in the one who strengthens him (Phil. 4:13), when he says that which he used to consider valuable he now regards as rubbish compared to the sublimity of the knowledge of Christ (Phil. 3:8), when he says that he learned to be happy and satisfied in whatever situation he faced (Phil. 4:11-13), Paul inspires us all to the certainty that if he succeeded, we can succeed as well.

Paul was a real leader. And real leaders inspire their followers. Young people will follow real leaders.

5. THE YOUTH LEADER AS FRIEND

It is true of all leaders that those whose followers see them as friends, also, will follow more willingly, but nowhere is this truer than among young people. Remember that (though they may not think so) they are still children in some important ways. Their brains are still developing, their judgment is still inconsistent, their attention spans are still shorter than they will be. A leader who is their friend will have far more influence over them.

However, this can enter some tricky territory. Some youth leaders, in an attempt to be a friend and to be liked, go far beyond true godly leadership, entering into youthful high spirits to a point that loses respect and does not give them the well-rounded example we have seen so clearly laid out above.

The young already know what constitutes a true friend. They know a friend who really cares, for instance, will not only refuse to join them in activities that are unwise, but will seek to prevent them from doing them, too. A true friend will not cover up or lie for a friend and will tell the truth in love in a way that superficial friends—or aloof leaders—never can. They are not seeking those who are in authority over them to be their “buddies.” But they are seeking loving friendship.

Ellen White has this to say:

“*The true teacher can impart to his pupils few gifts so valuable as the gift of his own companionship. It is true of men and women, and how much more of youth and children, that only as we come in touch through sympathy can we understand them; and we need to understand in order most effectively to benefit. To strengthen the tie of sympathy between teacher and student there are few means that count so much as pleasant association together outside the schoolroom. In some schools the teacher is always with his pupils in their hours of recreation. He unites in their pursuits, accompanies them in their excursions, and seems to make himself one with them. Well would it be for our schools were this practice more generally followed. The sacrifice demanded of the teacher would be great, but he would reap a rich reward. (ED 212; this is in the chapter, “Recreation,” which would be helpful to read in full).*”

Most youth programs include some form of recreation and activity, and those that do not, should. Any wholesome physical activity and recreation is good for youth, and good for strengthening the ties between them and their leaders. But best of all is a physical activity which is actually tied to the lesson at hand. Young people learn deep truths far more easily, and the lessons stay in their minds longer, when the lesson is attached to physical activity. This is the way to embody—literally, to put into the body—God’s truths.

Seek out their company, enter into their interests, learn what this particular group already enjoys. Recognize and honor differences in interests and seek to help them also learn to enter into each other’s interests. Then use these interests to embody the lessons you wish to impart. You can often find good resources online using keywords like “team building activities on [faith, or teamwork, or kindness, or whatever you wish to teach at the moment].”

Don't forget one of your best resources is your youth themselves. Ask them what would be a good way to actively embody the lesson for the day or week. You will be surprised, not only at the creative ideas they come up with, but at how much you will learn from them.

One of the most important things we can learn from coming close to our youth is that they are each unique, very different from each other, and each require different treatment. Education, page 280, points out that the vacillating and ease-loving will need encouragement and assistance; the discouraged need sympathy and appreciation to create confidence. The stern (though never harsh) treatment that a strong-willed rebellious one needs would be seriously destructive to a timid one.

6. CONCLUSION

To summarize, a youth leader who has a strong commitment to Christ, who embraces and embodies biblical and spiritual disciplines, and who leads by clear and honest example will be a model that will inspire young followers to commit to Christ as well. This is the most effective form of leadership.

Practice these things and devote yourself to them so that your progress is seen by all.

This was what Paul sought to convey as a principle of leadership to the young Timothy when he wrote: "Recommend and teach these things. Do not let anyone despise you for being young. But for those who believe, be an example in the manner of speech, in the way of acting, in love, in faith, and in purity. As you await my arrival, devote yourself to public reading of the Holy Scriptures, to the preaching of the gospel, and to Christian teaching. Do not neglect the gift that you have, which God gave you when the prophets of the Church spoke, and the group of elders put their hands on you. Take care of yourself and be careful what you teach. Keep doing this, for thus you will save both yourself and those who listen" (1 Timothy 4:11-16).

7. ACTIVITIES

Individual:

- A. Write/Record down and keep the three things from this lesson that you find most helpful in your own situation.

Group:

- B. Gather with three or four others and brainstorm ways to improve your local youth ministry using the principles outlined in this lesson.

8. RESOURCES

Visit our website: youth.adventist.org for mentoring, devotional, and other resources.

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 4: LEADERSHIP

We certify that:
has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:
Date:

Young Adults Leader:
Date:

Elder/Pastor:
Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*
Date:



1. INTRODUCTION

Apart from the AY department, there is little space for young people in the different organs of the church, and many adults are reluctant to change that by giving up any of their positions to youth. Yet, in many churches, young people make up the bulk of our membership. Statistics show a percentage of 60 to 90 in some parts of the world.

Where they are not given a job to do, or even a say in how things are done, young people are less and less interested in the life of the church because they find it rather suitable for older people and leaders.

The older ones are worried about losing youth, and yet the need for commitment and involvement of young people in the life of the church is the most effective means of developing their spiritual life and preserving it. When they feel part of the ecclesiastical structure, they will have a sense of belonging and they will remain in the church.

It is time for leaders to seize the moment by recognizing the spiritual gifts of the youth and elevating them to positions of leadership as they are trained for them and develop the abilities. We need to have a plan in place for passing on the baton of mission and leadership. It must be an intentional effort and a thorough promotion and advocacy by the youth leader to the church leadership.

The youth want to belong. They have a right to belong. We can help them do that.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This module of the seminar will seek to develop a “Pass it On” philosophy. We will:

SEMINAR

MENTORING

*Ownership, and
Empowerment in
Youth Ministry*

- Understand the need to “pass it on” to the youth in all sectors of the Church.
- Know the scriptural bases of involving the youth in the development of the church
- Know the steps to follow in the process of using young people for better results.

The youth will be the leaders of the future, ready or not; why not get them ready now, rather than merely dropping the church in their laps when we are no longer here?

3. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

The importance of empowering youth and giving them responsibilities

More than ever before, young people remain important to the growth of a community. The psalmist says: *“Let our sons in their youth be as grown-up plants, and our daughters as corner pillars fashioned as for a palace”* (Ps. 144:12).

Young people must be trusted because there is life in them. The wise man declares: *“Strength is the glory of young people”* (Proverbs 20:29).

Leading through good mentoring

The Bible speaks about the importance of drivers in the personal development. In Hebrews 13: 7, it is said that the mentor leaves an impact and a behavior to imitate: *“Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.”*

Adults in churches have a part to play in helping the younger ones grow and imitate them so that they can have the necessary discernment to move forward.

In the Bible, young people are presented in a positive way and their physical, mental and moral qualities are highlighted. They are considered as the equals of their elders. In fact, in biblical times, a Jewish young person was considered to become an adult in the spiritual realm of life at 12 or 13. From that point on, they were usually apprenticed to a person experienced in whatever their life work was to be, so that they were completely ready to take over even something as serious as priesthood at 30. Jesus began His official ministry at 30, but He began doing spiritual guidance as needed, even to temple leaders, at 12.

The spiritual work to be done by elders is the same as that of the youth's.

“Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity” (1 Timothy 5.1-2).

Young people have deep spiritual abilities. They have the same spiritual potentialities as adults. *“I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God dwells in you, and you have conquered the evil”* (1 John 2:14).

Certainly, the Apostle was inspired by the books of proverbs which confirmed that young people are strong. This force is at once physical, moral, and spiritual. *“Strength is the glory of young men”* (Proverbs 20:29).

4. WHAT DOES THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY SAY?

First, it would behoove us to remember that our denomination was founded by young people. At 54, Joseph Bates was the “father figure” of the group. The others were in their late teens and twenties. Their hearts were on fire for God in a way that tends to fade in age.

The Spirit of Prophecy shows the importance of the emphasis to be given to youth. *“Let not the youth be ignored; let them share in the labors and responsibility. Let them feel they are part of the act in helping and blessing others”* (6T, p.435).

Within a few decades, we lost a lot of our young people through our negligence (and it’s still going on today). *“Very much has been lost to the cause of God because of inattention to the young. Ministers of the gospel should form a happy acquaintance with the youth of their congregations”* (Pastoral Ministry, p. 275).

There is a need for mentors who can be accepted by young people. *“We should seek to enter into the feeling of the youth, sympathizing with them in their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories. Jesus did not remain in heaven, away from the sorrowing and sinful; He came down to this world, that He might become acquainted with the weakness, the suffering, and the temptations of the fallen race”* (Gospel Workers, p. 209).

It is important to give responsibilities to the youth as they can be used by God to accomplish great things. *“God wants the youth to become men of earnest mind, to be prepared for action in His noble work, and fitted to bear responsibilities”* (Messages to Young People, p. 21).

That is why Ellen White makes this urgent appeal: *“We must manifest confidence in our young men...”* (Christian Education, p. 206).

5. EMPOWERMENT OF YOUTH

The main reason older adults are reluctant to allow youth to lead is because they are inexperienced. This is true. They must be taught and given responsibilities as they show aptitude. This is how they gain experience. We need to remember, we, too, started out young and inexperienced.

Youth empowerment is of paramount importance as it allows for young people to grow up with skills. The aim is to enable them to participate in the life and development of the church by helping them grow in knowledge and aptitude. In this case, the youth are allowed to take initiatives, given a share of authority, taught to make decisions and implement what is best for them in the church.

The aim here is to enable young people develop their ability to take initiatives and participate in the development of the church. Young people can be a key and a lever for the development of the kingdom of God, whether for evangelism or within the church.

David Wilkerson said, and I am convinced: “Young people are a part of the church today, but all the leaders of tomorrow.”

In order to become good leaders of tomorrow, the youth must be part of the church organization of today. They should be integrated into the present life of the church.

There is, therefore, a need to position young people on the right path so they can have the necessary discernment to move forward.

However, this does not merely mean teaching them to do all the things we already do, in the ways that we do them. The other reason older adults fear to give youth responsibilities is that they may have different ideas than ours. Good! We must learn to listen to and welcome their ideas. In the same way that we are asking them to learn from us how to discern the working of the Spirit and whether a given idea will be for the greater good of the congregation and community, so we need to learn from them how to listen “outside of our own boxes” of long-ingrained habits and culture.

Need of Good Mentoring

Mentoring is an intentional relationship that is created between a less experienced person and an experienced one. The experienced person thus becomes a growth model for the inexperienced one.

According to David Clutterbuck “*A mentor is a more experienced individual willing to share knowledge with someone less experienced in a relationship of mutual trust*” (*Encyclopedia of Strategic Leadership and Management*, p.1177).

Mentoring is, therefore, a means of self-development. It is a way of helping the mentor develop himself and develop the other. It is not a ready-made lesson, but a potential for young people to develop through mentor orientation.

What does mentoring involve?

- ***Spiritual accompaniment.*** The mentor is committed to guiding and providing spiritual direction to the young person by leading them to adopt a life based on Christ and be committed to the spiritual activities of the Church. For example, praying with the youth, including them in personal prayer time, and, importantly, allowing them to see the way the mentor deals with challenges and struggles that come into his or her life.
- ***Physical accompaniment.*** The mentor tries to help the young person in their physical development. Find out what physical activities interest the mentee and join them in doing those. Encourage them, too, to learn new ways of being active. Walk together, jog together, clean up a road or park or stream together. Show them ways that physical activity can be helpful to those around them, not only to their own health.
- ***Moral accompaniment.*** The mentor helps the young person “cleanse his way” (Psalms 119:9). A mentor is worse than useless if he or she is not already a committed Christian, dedicated to living a life close to Jesus’ side, which will therefore be worthy of emulation. As we already studied, this doesn’t mean being perfect. The mentee will learn the most by seeing how a faulty human humbly lives by holding onto Christ in all situations. Find out what your mentee believes his or her strengths and weaknesses are, and work together on ways to deepen the strengths and shore up the weaknesses. The mentor can be a strong help in situations of peer pressure, for instance, especially if the parents are not filling this role, for whatever reason. One thing you will both be reminded of is that people are stronger together.

- ***Social support.*** The mentor must assist the young person in creating and maintaining healthy relationships. Our young people are in the most tumultuous period of their lives as they figure out who they really are. They are likely somewhere in the process of choosing partners, from first beginning to think about the opposite sex to seeking to learn whether God has a mate for them, and if not, how to live pure lives as singles. This may be their central concern, but you are in a position to help them to understand that only whole individuals can have healthy marriages, and whole individuals must have strong relationships in all spheres of life—from their siblings, parents, and extended families to the church family relationships, and including community, school, and work relationships outside the church. If the salt never leaves the shaker, it won't be much use to God. Some of the older young people are already parents, as well, and that leads to a whole new level of mentoring.

In order to succeed in mentoring, one must be able to go through the monitoring stages. The feeling of belonging will begin when young people find in adults the people on whom they can rely, able to guide them and help them acquire the necessary capacities for leading.

In our particular context, the mentoring relationship would be between a present church leader and a young person who is interested in becoming a church leader. The relationship should be based on mutual interest—for example, a young musician should mentor with, say, a choir director or music minister, while one who may someday want to be a pastor could mentor with a pastor or elder, and one who is good with children can mentor with a Sabbath School leader or superintendent. The mentee can assist, then gradually take on more responsibility until he or she is prepared to hold an actual office in the area of interest.

Try the youth in the church

Care must be taken to avoid underestimating the quality of the content that must be taught young people. The key to drive the machine of the church must be given to the youth. Once in motion, they can, and they will make the machine their personal property, so be sure they know how to drive. As they grow in ability and understanding, show them all the complexity of running a church. Help them see how to lovingly deal with conflict. Let them try things. And let them make mistakes without being judged or rejected. If they have a strong mentor, they will be able to withstand mistakes and will increasingly be able to discern where they went wrong and what to do differently next time. If you don't know how to fail, you will never succeed.

A sense of belonging makes the church a family where the youth find their place. In the same way that children don't run away from their families so long as they feel they belong and maintain lifelong love and commitment to their families even after they grow up, so the young people will remain in the denomination when they feel they are part of the family. They may move to other congregations as they grow—in fact, the best outcome would be their starting new churches! But they will always belong. And the home church of their childhood and youth will retain a special glow even if they move away, because that is where they learned to truly follow Christ into abundant life, and into the ministry He had planned for them.

6. WHAT TO DO?

- a.** The integration of young people begins with a strong will of the community to welcome them. There should be a willingness to welcome young people. They need to feel connected, appreciated, expected, and respected.
- b.** Encourage and help the congregation develop dedicated and trained mentors.
- c.** Invite young people to participate in events that will strengthen them spiritually, intellectually, physically, etc.
- d.** Encourage and allow them to organize activities, camps, sports events, etc.
- e.** Give them opportunities to lead church programs.
- f.** Appoint young people in diverse positions of the church and train them to perform. They will do better and better each time they try.

The attraction of young people to church services depends on the quality of the program, the opportunities they will be offered, and the training they have received. Integrating young people into church life requires the taking of responsibility.

7. CONCLUSION

Young people have plenty of strength, energy, and ideas, and as they usually have time they can commit themselves fully (and free of charge) to the church. The sooner the young person feels needed and important, the more loyal they will become, and the more difficult it will be for them to leave the church.

8. ACTIVITIES

- A.** Go around the departments of your church and report how many young people are appointed in each area.
- B.** Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the report?
- C.** Choose a young person and mentor them for a year.

9. RESOURCES

Young Adults - Mentoring Series available for free download at www.youth.adventist.org

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 5: MENTORING

We certify that:

has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:

..... Date:

Young Adults Leader:

..... Date:

Elder/Pastor:

..... Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*

..... Date:



6

SEMINAR

CHURCH PLANNING

*Developing a Purpose
Driven Model for
Youth Ministry in
the Local Church*

1. INTRODUCTION

The senior youth leader is an integral part of the local church. He/she should work with the youth, their parents, the pastor, and volunteers to develop and implement a yearly plan with regular social, educational, spiritual and/or mission-oriented events meant to develop and maintain a vibrant program. Along with being fun and welcoming, this will also help to build a sense of community within the youth of the church, provide opportunities for both spiritual and social development, and help them connect with one another while growing in their faith. Since the local church is the rightful hub of youth ministry, the plans of the youth council should consider the initiatives of the Division, Union, and Conference.

One of the greatest challenges facing the local youth leader is the responsibility of yearly planning, while endeavoring to be faithful to the Ideals of the AYM as expressed in the Aim, motto, pledge and objectives. This has discouraged many leaders, even sometimes causing them to give up and feel that they have failed as a youth leader. In order to be faithful to the AYM aim ("The Advent message to all the world in my generation.") which is in keeping to the church's mandate: "to preach the everlasting gospel to a perishing world in these last days", the youth leader needs to become purposeful in adopting a balanced yearly plan model that will accomplish the AYM aim, motto, pledge and AYM objectives.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This module will seek to assist the leader to plan a yearly model for the youth of the church, while implementing the key AYM objectives of the local church within the four dynamic areas that grew the early New Testament church (growth, worship, community, and service). It will stress the fact that AYM primarily focuses on Jesus, the Master Youth Leader. It will also stress the need to incorporate annually the major youth objectives of their conference, union, and division. The model will also seek to assist the leader to implement the current re-visioning of the GC AYM department to save our youth through the initiatives of “Reach In, Reach Out, Reach Up”.

3. FOLLOWING JESUS’ PURPOSE

The youth leader needs to understand that it all begins with a focus on Jesus as the Master Leader who has given us a basic model to follow that transcends time. Christ’s life on earth gives the true model to save lost youth and usher them into the kingdom of God, modeling them into disciples of Christ, while living in this sinful world.

Christ’s method of fulfilling His mission on earth was very purposeful and practical. Likewise, there is a need for youth leaders to become purposeful in the way we lead our youth. Becoming purposeful involves a sense of urgency in the way we live and work. What made Jesus successful was His connection with heaven to carry out His mission. The promise Jesus gave to His disciples before His accession to heaven is exactly the same promise youth leaders can accept today as His last day disciples hastening His soon coming.

“
*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;
and you be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,
and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)*

The power that Jesus received from heaven to fulfill His mission came from the Holy Spirit and this same power is offered to youth leaders in their mission for their local church youth. Just as Jesus was empowered through the presence of the Holy Spirit, every youth leader needs this empowerment to develop a yearly youth model in their local church.

In seeking to develop a sustaining yearly model for the youth, and model them into disciples for Jesus, we need to look at the life of Jesus and discover His secret to making disciples. The lifestyle of Jesus reveals the key concepts that form the basic areas of a local AYM program.

4. FOUR DYNAMIC BIBLICAL FORCES

Luke 6: 12-17 A Day in the Life of Jesus

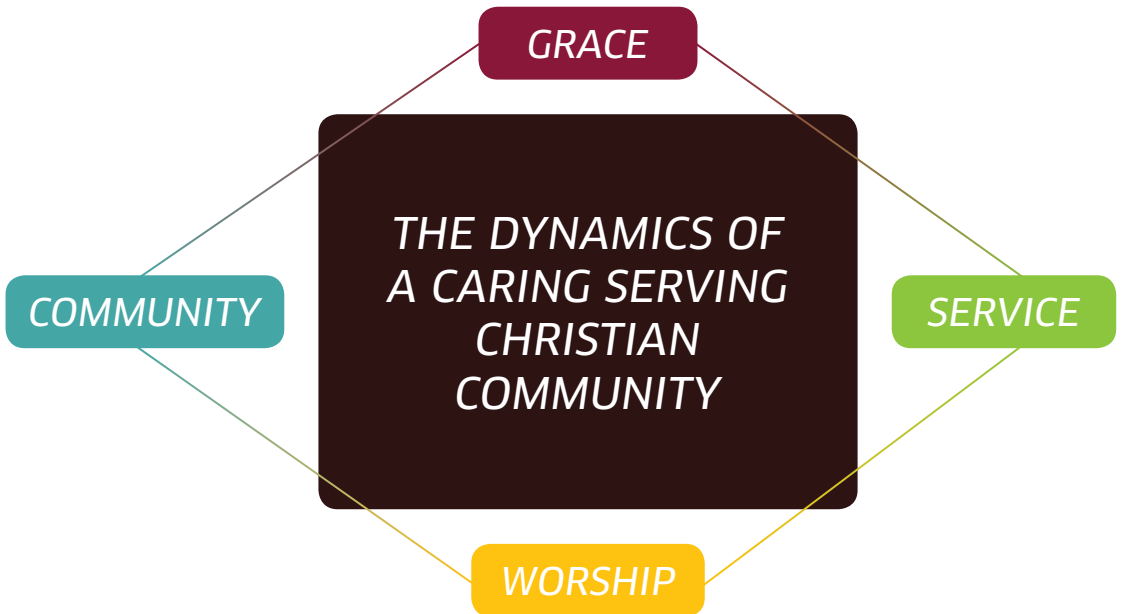
A day in the life of Jesus (e. g. Luke 6:12-17) reveals the same four biblical dynamic forces that helped the early church grow in Acts 2:42-47, and which we want to grow our youth programs. They are Spiritual Development, Building Community, Worship, and Missions.

1. **Verse 12:** “He went out on the mountainside to pray.” He spent the first hours of His day in communion with the Father. We will identify that as PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY/DISCIPLESHIP.
2. **Verse 13:** “When the morning came he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them.” Strengthened by His communion with the Father, He

next sought the company of His twelve disciples. The Christian was never meant to live in isolation; God is community. Jesus showed us the way to COMMUNITY.

3. **Verse 17:** "...he went down with them . . . and a great number of people . . . had come to hear him and be healed." Together, Jesus and His disciples spent the rest of the day in service, in the proclamation and demonstration of the Kingdom of God. This is true SERVICE AND MISSION.

Acts 2:42-47 A Day in the Lives of the Early Christians



Gane in his book "*Building Youth Ministries-A Foundational Guide*," outlined the Biblical model of these four dynamic forces of church growth, as found in Acts 2:42-47. These forces need to become the core areas of ministry for our youth in the local church, with its programs and training centered around them year-after-year (Gane, p. 52-53).

The four dynamic forces *were grace, service, worship, and community*. These four forces are clearly seen in the life of the early church and under-girded the rapid growth of the New Testament church community.

1. **Grace**—the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ to sinners, who don't deserve it. Gane stresses that Adventist Youth Ministry must include an intentional focus on God's saving acts in history in such a way as to meet the needs of the young people at their stage of development. Youth ministry built on this model seeks to meet young people where they are, and through love and spiritual care, lead them into a saving relationship that recognizes and fully accepts the astonishing, free gift of God's grace to them personally.
2. **Worship**—the celebration of God's gift in praises to Him in formal church services, small groups, and individual daily lifestyle. This is carried out

through prayer, singing, praise, and thanksgiving. These practices build a rich spiritual life which goes with the young person far beyond weekly worship services or AY meetings. They learn that while following Jesus today does not literally mean to be with Him in the same way as His first disciples could, the priorities and intentions, the heart and inner attitudes of modern disciples are forever the same. A disciple wants to be like the Master and the disciple reorders the priorities of life in order to make discipleship possible. Jesus says that the Scriptures testify of Him and no discipleship is possible without spending time with Him through the meditation upon His Word. The Word, made alive by the Holy Spirit, will shape and transform the heart and life of the disciple to be like the master (Psalm 1:1-3). The whole life will become worship.

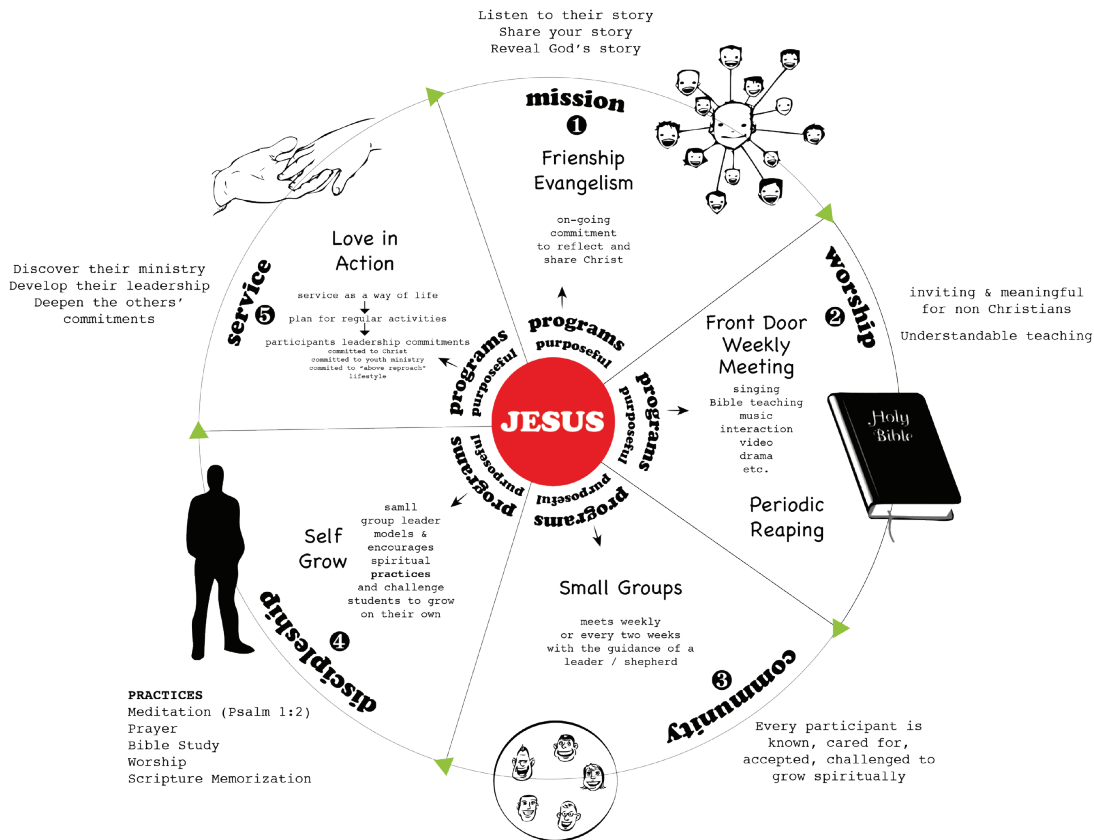
3. **Community**—relationships bonded together in an atmosphere of warmth, love, and acceptance, where self is laid aside for the good of others. As, in the early church, believers were nurtured through the Word and teachings of the apostles. So here, young believers are welcomed into a community that reflects love, support, and unity as a window on the kingdom of God. In this community, no one is left out and everyone is cared for. In this community, there will be people at all levels on their journey with God. Some might be totally committed to Him, others might have no interest in spiritual things at all. Our task is to journey with all of them and to minister to them wherever they find themselves on the spectrum of faith. This will lead our youth to do the same as they grow in faith.
4. **Service**—the early church was intentional about expanding the kingdom of Jesus and extending the good news of a life in Christ and the grace He gives to everyone, everywhere, all the time. In the same way, service and mission are the heartbeat of your youth group/small group. Your outreach methods and activities will depend on your circumstances, the needs of the community, the resources that you and your youth group have, the spiritual gifts of your team, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Whatever shape or form your service/mission takes, it should always represent the ultimate objective for the existence of your ministry. Bear in mind the prophetic counsel given to us through inspiration: “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, “Follow Me” (Ministry of Healing, p. 143).

These four dynamic forces (GCSYMH, p. 29) need to become the foundation of youth programming.

5. APPLYING THE MODEL TO YOUR PROGRAMMING

Youth Ministry Programming Cycle Model for the Local church (GCSYMH, p. 30)

This youth ministry cycle is presented in order of steps 1-5. While this is the order recommended, your youth ministry cycle does not have to follow this particular order, if your circumstances do not allow. For example, if your ministry is structured into small groups, number 2 would not be part of your cycle; however, you could bring elements of number 1 into your small groups.



Here is how the model is applied: (GCSYM, p. 30-33)

1. **Mission is the beginning and end of the model. Train your committed youth to become contagious and effective in sharing their faith.**
 - a. Equip all your committed youth for Friendship Evangelism. Use the "Contagious Christianity" training. Equip them to share their personal story/testimony and to be aware of opportunities God will provide to influence someone else's life, whether at home, school, work, neighborhood, or clubs. Construct your AY/Youth meetings (No. 2) in such a way that they feel free to invite their friends and non-believers they are influencing toward Jesus to come. Let them see their youth meeting as part of the cycle of evangelism. Let it be a place/event that can be of assistance to them in their mission adventures.
 - b. Resources: "Becoming a Contagious Christian" training and other training tools are available at youth.adventist.org.
2. **The Meeting Model: Plan for your weekly meeting to be your Front Door for Evangelism**
Consider your regular AY meeting, youth group, or small group meeting as an event that will have multiple targets:
 - a. Minister to non-Adventist youth
 - b. Minister to Adventist youth who are nominal

- c. Minister to Adventist youth who have made a commitment to Jesus

While your Message and Method are clearly defined and our three Foundations are firmly in place, these targets will define and determine the nature of your programming.

Elements of the meetings:

- a. Relevant themes; develop a sense of belonging; make it attractive; engage the participants; use a variety of methods throughout the year.
- b. We live in the age of technology and wherever possible use technology in the context of your meetings.
- c. However, always remember the foundations of your ministry and always be purposeful in your programming.
- d. Core elements that are generally present in whatever type of meeting you choose to run:
 - 1. Creative and not repetitive
 - 2. Relationally based and warm
 - 3. Grounded in practical Bible teaching relevant to the theme of the day
 - 4. Based on involvement and interaction
 - 5. Anointed in prayer

Meetings are generally constructed around a THEME and contain a number of elements that include welcome, prayer, songs, ice breakers, quiz, interaction, role, etc.; however, there is a main segment that can be presented in a number of different ways, such as:

- a. Formal presentation by someone who has some insights on the theme
- b. Debate on the theme
- c. Theme presented to be discussed in a small group followed by reporting and summing up
- d. A musical meeting based on a theme (different songs to be presented and discussed)
- e. A theme to be role-played by different groups followed by discussions
- f. A presentation of a drama

Please Note

Provide periodical alternatives to your youth meetings; they do not always have to be conducted on the church premises. Here are some possibilities:

- a. Meeting in nature - in a park or simply go for a purposeful nature walk;
- b. Visitation of a hospital/nursing home / prison / orphanage / shutins / friends who do not attend

It would be wise to dedicate a series of meetings at specific times of the year that could take the form of a reaping campaign, when you can challenge participants to cross the line for Jesus.

Resources: For ideas for youth meetings and *Voice of Youth*/ reaping campaigns, go to youth.adventist.org. Look for “*Face Time*” and “*The One*,” among others.

3. **Developing community: an essential foundation of your youth ministry**

Consider small group ministry to be an indispensable part of your ministry weekly or once every two weeks. This is a place of belonging for every participant, where they are known personally, cared for, accepted, and challenged to grow spiritually. This is the place where you will lead your ‘seeker’ friends for further investigation of the faith.

Resources: You will find the Care Group training and the Underground Small Group Study Guides and other tools at youth.adventist.org.

4. **Growing into Deeper Spirituality: Discipleship**

Our vision is to transition our youth from simple membership to authentic discipleship. Youth and small group leaders are encouraged to embrace spiritual practices that develop their character and help them grow into the likeness of Jesus, the Master Teacher. They should challenge all participants to grow, whether it is in the context of the small group or individually.

Resources: Steps to Discipleship—personal disciple scheme, Discipleship in Action for groups and other resources are available at youth.adventist.org.

5. **Repeat: Youth Ministry begins and ends with Service and Mission**

Youth ministry has developed a reputation of service as something we do overseas or at home a few times a year; however, it is God’s plan for us to develop service as a way of life. It is on the journey of service that young people come to find their unique place in ministry; this is what brings meaning and purpose in their spiritual journey.

We consider the following elements as essential as part of our Service/ Mission tool kit:

- a. **My Story:** the readiness and ability to share your personal testimony/ story
- b. **His Story:** the ability to simply explain the essence of the gospel
- c. **Our Story:** a clear understanding and the ability to articulate the unique contribution of the Adventist Message
- d. **Regular involvement** in acts of compassion, justice and mercy
- e. **Proclamation of the Word** through regular evangelistic series.

Resources: All available at youth.adventist.org.

6. TOTAL YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

GC /AYM Quinquennium Theme - “Pass it On”

Refer to Pass It On Booklet (GC, 2016)

In keeping with the General Conference Youth Ministry Quinquennium Theme of “Pass it On,” the youth leader additionally needs to purposefully incorporate the three key elements of this initiative (Reach Up, Reach In, Reach Across) into their weekly programs, so that all three components are experienced at least once per quarter. This need not be seen as something to add; it is clearly present in all the dynamic elements of life and growth that we have seen already.

1. **Reach Up** (“*For the love of Christ compels us.*” 2 Cor. 5:14) Spiritual Renewal through:
 - Worship
 - Prayer
 - Meditation (Ps. 1:2)
 - Spirit of Prophecy
 - Bible study (1 Tim. 3:16)
 - Other Bible Practices

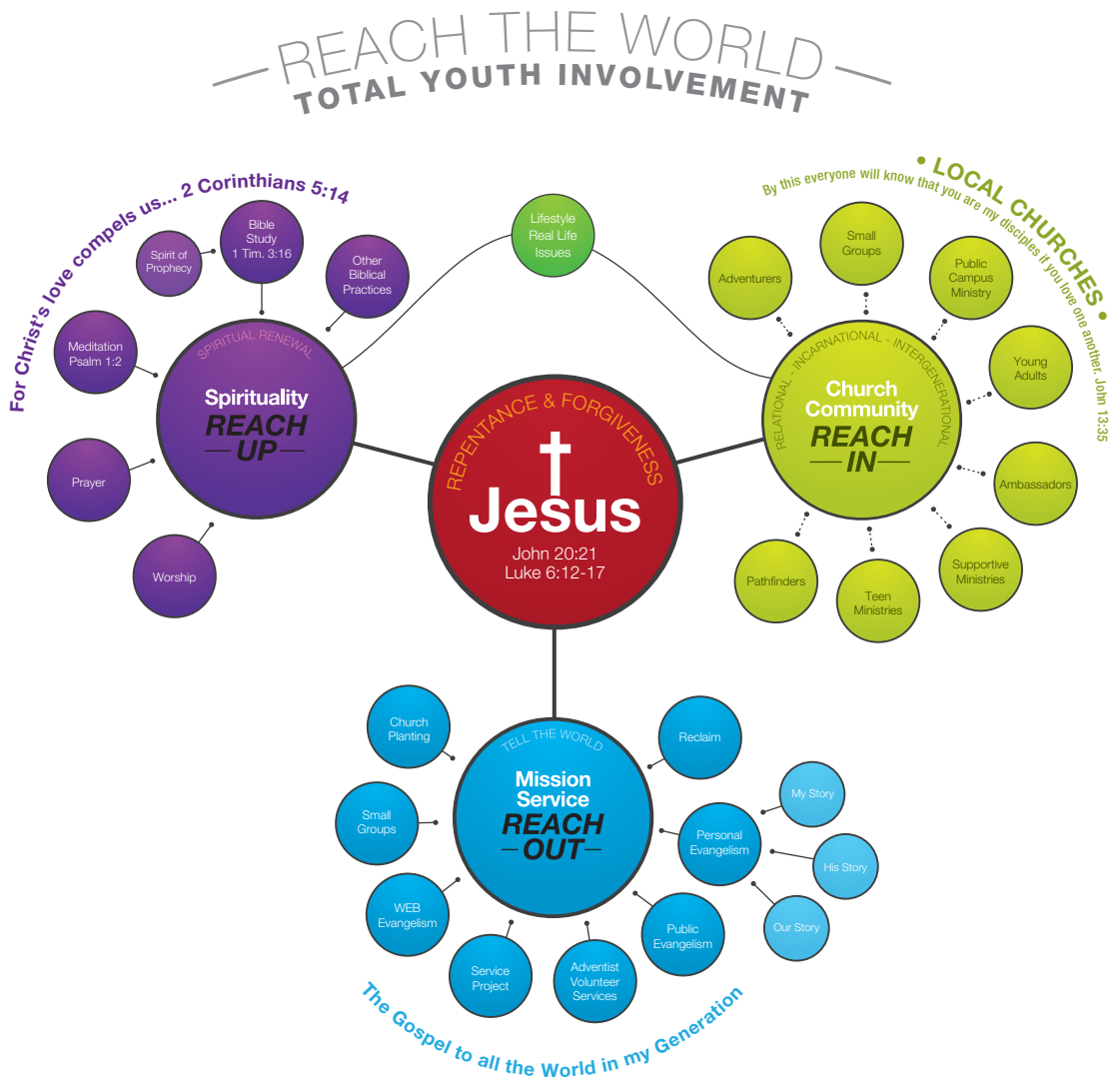
2. **Reach In** (“*By this everyone shall know that you are my disciples if we love one another*” Jn. 13:35). Church Community through:
 - Small Groups
 - Adventurers
 - Pathfinders
 - Ambassadors
 - Teen Ministries
 - Supportive Groups
 - Public Campus Ministries
 - Young Adults
 - (Involving Relational/Incarnational/Intergenerational)

3. **Reach Out** (*The Gospel to all the World in my Generation... tell the World*). Mission Service through:
 - Public Evangelism
 - Small Groups
 - Personal Evangelism (My Story/His Story/Our Story)
 - Reclaim
 - Adventist Volunteer Services
 - Service Projects
 - Church Planting
 - Web Evangelism

4. **Jesus (The Center of Love and Forgiveness...** Jn. 20:21 & Lk. 6:12-17). It all begins with Jesus as the center (hub) of AYM for total empowerment.

- Jesus is our Center of Empowerment: *“As the father has sent me, I am sending you ... Receive the Holy Spirit.”* (Jn. 17:20-22)
- His Purpose - *“To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God.”* Lk. 4:43 (NIV)
- His Message - *“The Kingdom of God has come near.”* (Mk. 1:14-15)
- His Method - *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.”* (Acts 1:8)
- His Prayer - *“That all of them may be one.”* (Jn. 17:20-21)

The AYM model below outlines the concepts of the local youth ministries' 5-year emphasis where Jesus is central to accomplishing the “Reach Up, Reach In, Reach Out” key emphases in a comprehensive AYM program model during the years 2016 - 2020.



See the three principles clearly in His own earthly life:

Luke 6: 12-19 (NIV)

- a. **Reach Up** - vs. 12 *“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray and SPENT THE NIGHT PRAYING TO GOD.”*
- b. **Reach In** - vs. 13 *When morning came, he called HIS DISCIPLES TO HIM AND CHOSE TWELVE of them, whom he also designated apostles: 14 Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, 15 Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, 16 Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.*
- c. **Reach Out** - vs. 17 *HE WENT DOWN WITH THEM and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, 18 who had come TO HEAR HIM AND TO BE HEALED OF THEIR DISEASES. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, 19 and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.*

Resources

The General Conference Youth Ministries Department has many resources and links to others that can help. Resource materials must be collected and studied in order to keep abreast of the latest developments and research discoveries in youth ministry. This can seem overwhelming, but if you dedicate an hour or two a week to your own personal “in-service training,” you can keep up. The leader should keep in contact with the conference/mission youth director, who can help the youth and young adult leader in his or her development. This contact also will help the leader to keep informed on the latest denominational programs and plans (GCSYMH, p.41).

7. CONCLUSION

Local church programming will vary from one AY Society to another, as the youth leader assesses the needs of their youth and group size. The leader however needs to stay faithful to the key objectives of the AYM while seeking ways within the weekly programs to integrate them into the hearts and lives of their youth.

The youth leader needs to always remember that the youth department is an integral part of the local church, incorporating the assistance of the parents, church board, and members to assist in discipling their youth for Jesus, and instilling in them a sense of outreach in mission-oriented events yearly (e. g. Global Youth Day). Building a sense of community within the group, providing opportunities for both social and spiritual development with vibrant purpose-filled programs that meet the key objectives of the youth department, must become the goal of every youth leader.

It's not easy to accept the role of a youth leader, but remember the Word of God to Joshua:

“Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night,

so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” *Joshua 1:7-9*

Our Mission: To lead young people in a saving relationship with Jesus and help them embrace his call to discipleship.

Our Motto: The love of Christ compels us.

Our Aim: The Advent Message to all the world in my generation.

Our Theme (2016-2020): Pass It On

8. ACTIVITIES

Individual:

- A. Briefly explain how the four Biblical dynamic forces were implemented by Jesus, as found in Luke 6: 12-17: A Day in the Life of Jesus. (Written/Recorded)
- B. Briefly explain how the four Biblical dynamic forces were implemented by the early church, as found in Acts 2:42-47: A Day in the Life of the Early Church. (Written/Recorded)

Group:

- C. Discuss various ways your youth can implement the four dynamic forces in purposeful activities in their youth meetings. (30 mins)

9. RESOURCES (bibliography)

1. Gane, B. (2000). *Building youth ministry - A foundational guide*. (2nd printing). Riverside, CA: Hancock Center Publications.
2. Gane, B. (2005). Understanding Young People Why a Special Youth Ministry. In Youth Department of Seventh-day Adventists (Ed.), *Getting it right: A power packed resource for Adventist youth leaders*, (p. 76-90). Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing.
3. General Conference Youth Department of Seventh-day Adventist. (2002). *Pastor's and Elder's handbook for youth ministry*. Silver Springs: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
4. White, E. (1893, May 29). *Walking in the Light*. Signs of the Times,
5. White, E. (1930). *Messages to Young People*, Nashville: Southern Publishing
6. *Foundations for Senior Youth Ministries (GCSYMH)*

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 6: CHURCH PLANNING

We certify that:
has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:
Date:

Young Adults Leader:
Date:

Elder/Pastor:
Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*
Date:





SEMINAR

CREATIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

*Thinking
Outside
the Box*

1. INTRODUCTION

Youth Ministry is always changing. It changes with the times; therefore, it is imperative for the Youth Leader to come up with relevant programming. This will naturally prompt the leader to think outside the box so that youth ministry is both attractive and interesting. The Youth Leader is expected to have a comprehensive program that is aligned with the annual themes of the General Conference Youth Ministries. A well-balanced program should include physical, social, spiritual, intellectual, and emotional components. Since the local church is the rightful hub of youth ministry, the plans of the youth council should consider the initiatives of the Division, Union, and Conference.

The programs that take place weekly remains the key structure of the AY society. Much happens here that will attract the youth to attend the other meetings of the department. That why it is needful for the AY Leader to treat this work as the heart of evangelizing, discipling, and mobilizing the youth of their local church. Yet the chore of planning has caused many youth leaders frustration, some to the point of quitting, because of failure to plan relevant, interesting programs for their youth group each week. Many leaders are at a loss to know how to plan creative programs, around the mission of the local church, that will attract their youth to attend and keep them involved week after week.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This module of study will assist the local AY leader in the art of relevant, creative programming, incorporating a comprehensive structure that is aligned with the annual themes of the General Conference Youth Ministries. You will learn to create a well-balanced program that incorporates the physical, social, intellectual, and emotional components that assist the youth in building their faith in Jesus. Because our times are changing, Adventist youth ministry needs to constantly adapt its approach in programs to the youth without neglecting the key objectives of the Youth Department as outlined by M. E. Kern, the first world youth director, with the blessings of Ellen G. White (see Module 3 for more detail).

3. CREATIVE AYM PROGRAMMING

Since the local church is the rightful hub of youth ministry, the plans of the youth council should consider the yearly initiatives of the Division, Union, and Conference, each year. As a local church AY leader, you are to ensure that your programs meet the yearly themes of the GC youth department within that given year.

Ellen White stresses the need for church leaders to find the best and most interesting ways to disciple the youth for Jesus Christ:

“When the youth give their hearts to God, our responsibility for them does not cease. They must be interested in the Lord’s work and led to see that He expects them to do something to advance His cause. It is not enough to show how much needs to be done, and to urge the youth to act a part. They must be taught how to labor for the Master. They must be trained, disciplined, drilled, in the best methods of winning souls to Christ. Teach them to try in a quiet, unpretending way to help their young companions. Let different branches of missionary effort be systematically laid out, in which they may take part, and let them be given instruction and help. Thus, they will learn to work for God” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 210).

Creative AY planning begins with knowing the **basic programming structure** around which creative programs are run as well as the needs of your youth group. This is vital to achieve well-balanced programs that includes the physical, social, spiritual, intellectual, and emotional components. Knowledge of a basic program structure will give you a steady foundation on which to carry out creative programming.

4. AYM BASIC PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- a. **Within the parameters of your personality and that of your group, adapt your leadership style, program format, content, and approach to provide the following:**
 1. Fellowship
 2. Lifting of spirits
 3. Sense of participation/involvement

4. Sense of enjoyment
5. Change/variety
6. Relevant religion so that youth can:
 - Gain youth-oriented insights into religious beliefs and traditions.
 - See and accept the relevance of religious beliefs and traditions.
 - Understand the relationship between a Christian and the world.
 - Understand the role and real mission of the church.
 - Be brought face-to-face with a realistic representation of God's ideal for humankind
7. Be challenged to establish/maintain a relationship with Christ through His Spirit that brings direction, joy, and genuine peace to the individual's life.

(Foundations of Senior Youth Ministry Handbook, GC November 2013 p.141)

b. Know the GC AYM yearly theme.

In order to embrace a unified acceptance of the GC AYM theme for the year you need to first know the yearly themes as set out by the General Conference Youth Ministries department. These can be found on the GCAYM website (youth.adventist.org) or from the conference/field youth ministries office. The themes are chosen every five years.

c. Know the Various types of AY Society meetings:

1. The Regular weekly meeting.
2. Experience meetings, when opportunity is given to various bands and to individuals to tell the experiences they have had in working for the Master.
3. Evangelistic meetings; organized and conducted during the AY Week of Prayer or at other times for the purpose of winning the unconverted, reclaiming those who have strayed, and deepening the Christian experience of every member.
4. Rallies and Conventions in which the home AY Society serves as host to visiting AY Societies.
5. Congresses and Special Programs, such as:
 - Special programs for youth, with the whole church attending.
 - Special programs for the promotion of some activity of project.
 - Congresses or youth rallies where AY Societies from several territories meet together.

6. Special programs promoting Temperance.
7. Demonstrations of Conversion Training meetings, that will teach how to begin a conversation that will lead to Bible studies, hold meetings in homes, show slides, distribute literature, sell books, and conduct Revelation Seminars.
8. Investiture ceremonies, usually conducted once a year, are a type of recognition service where those completing class requirements are awarded certificates and other items that signify reaching a goal.

(Youth Ministry Handbook GC 2015, p. 35)

d. Know Key Five Basic Needs of Youth

1. Acceptance and recognition
2. Affection
3. Success and achievement
4. New experiences
5. Security & Sense of Belonging

(Foundations of Senior Youth Ministry November 2013, p. 81-84)

e. Know the Six Fundamental Youth Objectives for the AYM

The six key fundamental youth objectives as outlined by M. E. Kern, the first appointed youth director in 1907, and endorsed by E. G. White is still the fundamental objectives of the AYM that needs to be implemented into the yearly programs.

1. To raise the level of the devotional life of the youth.
2. To lift the standard of attainment of the youth.
3. To educate and train youth for service.
4. To provide opportunities for outreach and service.
5. To teach the principles of stewardship.
6. To lead youth to discover their individual worth and develop and discover their spiritual gifts.

(GCYD, 2002, p. 13)

5. CREATING YOUTH PROGRAMMING BY THE “SERVANT LEADER” MODEL

The many AYM manuals currently available present numerous models for developing creative youth programs. The following Servant Leader Model serves to meet the above key elements that form a successful AYM basic structure. The unique feature of this model is that it incorporates the need of involving the youth themselves in running the programs, thus

creating a buy-in of acceptance from the youth in the implementation of each program and training them for further church leadership.

Below, you will be learning a simple, six-step approach to planning your youth meetings for a whole year. But if you want your youth to learn to be leaders themselves, as we have said over and over throughout this seminar, you need to involve them from the beginning. They would love to help you plan, and their energy and enthusiasm will keep you from being overburdened and burned out.

Each box in the six steps below represents a type of program to be conducted **by the youth** that week. Three to four youth are requested ahead of time to plan and conduct the program, with the assistance of the youth leader to guide them in resources and ensuring the presentation will fulfill the objective to be taught.

The success of conducting the programs using the youth will engage them, and motivate them to come up with creative ways to conduct the program. Remember that a youth ministry program should be done **for** the youth, **by** the youth. Our youth have many exciting ways to run programs and this alone will create a buy-in from them because they are involved in owning the program.

The youth leader at the beginning of the year will gain much success by using the **Servant Leadership Style model** to train their youth to effectively reach a stage where they are competent enough to stand alone and conduct the program with the leader as a supervisor.

The youth leader and their youth need to consult together to find the best style of conducting any given program that will incorporate variety, interest, and a strong biblical foundation.

Each week a different box/theme should be conducted using different persons so that throughout the year, all the youth of your group would have had the experience of conducting a program.

6. A SIX-STEP AY PROGRAMMING AID (use together with your youth)

Here are six easy steps to plan an exciting, creative AY yearly program involving your youth.

1. Have an outline sheet of the AY Quarterly Yearly Calendar, with the four or five Sabbaths in the month.
2. Meet with your AY Society Council and selected youth, to plan the yearly calendar.
3. Fill in the major Division/Union/Conference events for the year. For example:
 - AY Week of Prayer
 - AY Celebration Day
 - Youth Congress/Camp
 - Youth Federation Programs
 - Bible Bowl Dates

- Health and Temperance Events
- AY Evangelistic Effort
- Conference Camp meeting
- Training Seminars/Other

Remember to include the AYM Yearly Theme into each program

4. Then proceed to fill in your Local Church Calendar Events. (Remember to invite those dept. heads of your local church to make a presentation to the youth.)
5. Fill the dates, venue, and type of **Social/Recreation events** in the AY Quarterly calendar.

6. Types of AY Weekly Programs

- SP Spiritual Nurture Program
- E Evangelism / Outreach
- T Training
- D Discussion
- V Visits
- B Bible-Study / Doctrines
- R Recreation
- C/S Community Service Program
- M Mission Outreach Service

Servant-Leader Model

- I Do It - They Watch
- I Do It - They Help
- They Do - I Help
- They Do - I Watch

The ultimate goal is
*“that we may present everyone perfect
 (mature, complete, whole) in Christ”
 (Col. 1:8)*

and

*“to prepare God’s people for works of
 service (ministry), so that the body of
 Christ may be built up”
 (Eph. 4:12)*

Once you have filled in all the types of meetings you intend to use in a given quarter, you can brainstorm creative ways to fulfill these objectives, in ways that will interest and please your particular youth.

1. Be sure to plan your quarterly AY Program around the **Six Fundamental AY Objectives of the AY department.**
2. You may choose three to four Fundamental Objectives of the AYM each quarter to fulfill. **Remember to include the AYM Yearly Theme into each program.**
3. Seek to plan in detail at least a quarter at a time, filling in all Sabbaths for that quarter. Let your young people help you brainstorm creative and exciting ways to fill in these programs.
4. Then post your three-month program on the church notice board.
5. Be aware, of course, that life can intervene. It may be that some things will change from the original plan, but if this happens, it is a lot less upsetting

than if you had no plan at all. If you know where you want to go, you can roll with the waves that occur on your way there.

6. Remember to seek approval from the church board, especially for new efforts or things which will cost money, at the beginning of each quarter.
7. Try at least one thing per quarter that you've never tried before, and be sure to evaluate together afterward! Make a note of which things worked well, and which did not. Determine if you could do something differently and try again, or if this particular method isn't a good fit for your group. Either is okay.

7. CONCLUSION

The senior youth leader has much work to do, and myriad opportunities to plan creative programs for and with the youth. Remember, as you plan for the whole year, consider taking into account the holiday seasons which present ideal opportunities to carry out mission and service activities that will be life-changing to your youth. If you have differing local holidays or festivals, so much the better.

In your planning, try to include training weekends, retreats, meal-meetings where you can continue to help those who want to assist you in ministry. After all, you will learn you cannot do it alone. Seek counsel from those that have a passion for the youth. Building a vibrant youth ministry team is the most important part of creative programming. Learn to engage your youth in all aspects programming, and you will find new energy and enthusiasm, too.

8. ACTIVITIES

Individual:

- A. What are the Six Key Steps to Creative Program Planning? (Written/Recorded)

Group:

- B. Plan a vibrant three-month "Youth Program" with four meetings per month, incorporating a few of the Key AY objectives and once a month recreational activity. (15 mins.)

9. RESOURCES

The AYM department has many resource ideas for creative programs. The senior youth leader can find great ideas from the following books:

1. "ACCENT" Magazine by the General Conference Youth Department.
2. General Conference-*Foundations for Senior Youth Ministries Handbook*, 3013. (p.148-157)
3. Barry Gane- *Building Youth Ministries – A Foundational Guide*, 2005. (p. 15-169)
4. General Conference website: youth.adventist.org

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 7: CREATIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

We certify that:

has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:

..... Date:

Young Adults Leader:

..... Date:

Elder/Pastor:

..... Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*

..... Date:





SEMINAR

SERVING

*Spiritual Giftedness
and Service*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Lord has a special gift for every youth. From the bestowal of the gifts to the discovery, use, and the upkeep of the gifts, is a special journey that youth leaders are privileged to walk through by the sides of their youth. It is the responsibility of the leader to grow the church youth program by proactively reaching out to youth within the church and partnering with them to assess their spiritual gifts. They can encourage them to participate in local and conference-wide activities like Bible bowl, mission trips, global youth day and week of prayer, but the real focus is how these gifts can be expressed at the local church. What opportunities are available for each gift? Who are the key people in the journey? What is the role of the nuclear family and the church family? How can these gifts be used to encourage maximum involvement of the youth? Why should the gifts of the youth be recognized and embraced?

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, every Adventist youth can be sure that he or she has full access to God through the Holy Spirit daily. It is this Spirit that guides us into all truth and brings all things to our remembrance. God the Holy Spirit also distributes gifts to the church for works of service, and to build up the body of Christ (Eph. 4: 12). Every disciple of Jesus, including the youth, has this asset available to him or her for service.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

In this module, we will develop an appreciation for Spiritual Gifts in Youth Ministry, establish a theological basis for Spiritual Gifts, demonstrate the relevance of identifying and utilizing Spiritual Gifts in young adults and teens, understand how to conduct a Spiritual Gifts Inventory, and learn how to recognize and affirm spiritual gifts and use them in building up the church of God on earth.

3. SPIRITUAL GIFTS IN MINISTRY

Theological Foundation: Joel 2: 27 - 29; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12: 4 - 11; and Ephesians 4:1-13.

The Promise

Jesus made a promise to His disciples before leaving this world, that He would send them another Comforter, whom He identified as the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is functional and operational in the daily life of everyone, whether we recognize Him or not. Once we do recognize and welcome His presence, one role of the Holy Spirit is to give gifts to God's children. These gifts will vary according to our abilities and Christian maturity. All the gifts are given to build up God's church and to equip each disciple for service.

"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." (1 Corinthians 12:27, NIV)

Scripture and the church's expectation often seems at odds with each other. At first glance, it would seem that the congregation is deprived of gifts, while Scripture says, "We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us" (Romans 12:6). If we take God at His word, then we must believe that He not only gives us the gifts, but he gives to each of us a measure of faith as well. Yes, He has given each local church all the gifts it needs for life, health, growth, and ministry.

The Prophecy

The prophet Joel foresaw an unprecedented manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the last days. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2: 28, 29).

Amazing and exciting exhibitions of talent will take place when the young and old experience the outpouring of God's Spirit as prophesied in this passage. Unprecedented talents, gifts, and abilities will be demonstrated in those who are so gifted by God. According to the prophet, young people will have enhanced visions and revelations of what God's purpose is for their lives. This will be affirmed and endorsed through the wisdom given to older Christians in dreams.

The Fulfillment

This prophecy was cited by Peter as having a partial fulfillment at Pentecost, but like many other Bible prophecies, it has dual application and is very relevant and applicable for these last days. The apostle Paul affirmed the role of the Holy Spirit in the equipping

and distributing of gifts in God's church. In Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4 he outlines a variety of gifts that are given to Christian believers by the Holy Spirit. These include gifts such as teachers, government leaders, pastors, and helpers, among others.

Ellen White writes:

“God has set in the church different gifts. These are precious in their proper place, and all may act a part in the work of preparing a people for Christ's soon coming” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 481).

It is very clear from scripture that God never intends for all of the spiritual gifts to reside in any one individual. Similarly, it is absolutely clear that God desires and ensures that all who have been born again by His Holy Spirit become beneficiaries of one or more spiritual gifts. All gifts, including the gifts of faith and grace, are given to humankind by the Holy Spirit of God. It is our privilege to receive them and to use them for the purposes God intended. As Christian disciples, all Adventist youth can be assured that this gift is as readily available to them as it is to every other Christian, young or old, mature or immature.

Explore

List five gifts that God's spirit has given to the church

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

4. THE GIFTS DEMONSTRATED IN BIBLE HISTORY

Through all ages God's children have relied on the Holy Spirit for counsel, wisdom, and direction. Daniel and his friends in Babylon understood the need for complete reliance on the Holy Spirit: "In acquiring the wisdom of the Babylonians, Daniel and his companions were far more successful than their fellow students; but their learning did not come by chance. They obtained their knowledge by the faithful use of their powers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They placed themselves in connection with the Source of all wisdom, making the knowledge of God the foundation of their education" (PK 486).

This is the key for those who work with the young generation. We not only seek to teach them mere life skills, which are critical and important, but encourage the youth to rely fully and completely on the Holy Spirit as they make the best of those skills. We have the faithful examples of the past. We see the difference it made for David, when he followed the voice of the Holy Spirit while using his skill and experience to defeat an indignant Goliath. We see the very opposite in David's predecessor, King Saul, who was blessed with amazingly awesome gifts and abilities but relied on his own power, to his demise and defeat.

Jesus was very clear when responding to the stubbornness of the Jews, “It is the Spirit which quickens: the flesh profits nothing, the words which I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life” (John 6:63, ERV).

Ruth was “only a girl.” That’s what her society would have said, and many of our contemporary societies say the same. Her Jewish neighbors could have added, “only a pagan girl.” But Naomi took her on as a young apprentice in the wise ways of being a godly wife. As a result, Ruth stayed with Naomi even after there was no relational call to do so. Back in Naomi’s hometown of Bethlehem, Ruth’s spiritual gifts of helpfulness, faith, and generosity glowed in contrast with those around her, and in the end, she became a wife again, a mother this time, and—little though she knew it—ancestor of Jesus!

Esther was well-taught and obedient but destined for a future that probably shocked her. Instead of being wife and mother to a godly Jew, as she must have expected and perhaps longed to be, she was taken from her home into the harem of an ungodly pagan king and made queen. Obedient to Mordecai, the father figure in her life, she did not reveal her Jewishness—which must have meant foregoing ceremonies and celebrations that would have let the secret out. Did she secretly manage to keep Sabbath holy? We have many questions which will never be answered until we can ask her in person. However, we can imagine that she must have spent many a night in prayer, wondering what God’s plan for her was. Yet in the end, her clear gifts of wisdom and discernment, gained through prayer and fasting, saved her whole nation.

Solomon was very young when the mighty responsibility for the guidance of God’s nation fell on him. Overwhelmed by this prospect, Solomon no doubt fell asleep thinking, pondering, worrying...and God sent him a dream. In the dream, God asked, “What shall I give you?” Little did Solomon know this was a test which would reveal his untried character. Solomon passed the test by begging God to give him wisdom—and became a king who is famous all over the world to this very day for his wise use of the gift God gave him by His Spirit. Solomon’s life is also a cautionary tale—being spiritually gifted will not protect us if we persist in making unwise choices. This is what we strive to teach our youth in all the areas of life covered in this seminar, and more. They must be well-rounded and whole when they come to adulthood. They must make wise choices.

Our youth today may have a quiet destiny like Ruth’s, an unlikely one like Esther, or a noble one like Solomon’s, but as we near the end of earth’s history, we will no doubt be astonished at what God has in mind for them.

Explore

Can you identify the specific gift or talent in these bible characters?

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. Samson | 4. Ruth |
| 2. Solomon | 5. Esther |
| 3. Hosea | |

Discussion:

Choose your favorite bible personality and share in small groups the spiritual gift or talent you admire most in him or her.

5. SPIRITUAL GIFTS TODAY

Faithful men and women in all ages have understood the benefits of living by the Holy Spirit. Far too many others have been too independent and too impatient. One young man was amazingly gifted and talented but had serious character flaws. While this young man was a member of the church, it happened that he ran afoul of the law and had a criminal case pending in court. The senior church leader offered to pray for God's intervention in his case, to which the young man replied, "I'm fine, God works too slowly."

The rich young ruler who met Jesus was much the same. He may have been extremely gifted and talented and accomplished much but did not see the need for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in his decision making.

One of the great advantages youth leaders have is to utilize the trust which the youth have in them to inspire and motivate them to develop their God-given gifts and talents. While working and interacting with young people, youth leaders have a VIP advantage in their lives and can make this a positive partnership to help to identify and encourage these gifts. Many talents remain unused and dormant simply because they were never identified or encouraged.

An insightful and observant youth leader will engage youth in the development of these gifts. This must be a deliberate and intentional process. The following steps are not linear; they are circular. Once you have gone through steps one through five, you are back at one again to start over. Young people grow up and move out of your program, and others come in all the time. If we want our young people to be active and productive and stay in church, we must continually help them discover and develop their gifts.

Step One: Conduct a Spiritual Gifts Inventory

You will find the link for the Adventist Youth Ministries Spiritual Gifts Inventory at the end of this module, but it would be helpful to be familiar with the general categories of gifts as given in the Bible. It should also be understood that the lists in Romans, 1 Corinthians, and Ephesians are not exhaustive. God, as anyone who is even a little familiar with the Bible knows, gives whatever gifts He wants to whomever He wants to give them to, whenever He chooses to give them! It is enough to ask, will this gift or ability build the church up in love, to know that it is from God. That said, here are the main categories in the Bible. It can help to envision them as a diagram of the Body of Christ. (You will notice that some gifts are in more than one category.)

- "Head" gifts: wisdom, discernment, knowledge, teaching, administration, and leadership, intercession
- "Mouth" gifts: preaching, teaching, exhortation, prophecy*, evangelism
- "Heart" gifts: faith, giving or generosity, hospitality, pastoring (chaplaincy, etc. also fit in here), mercy, intercession
- "Hands" gifts: helps, mercy, hospitality—people who like to make things should read Ex. 28:3; 31:1-6: God also gives those "crafting" gifts as spiritual gifts, and we under-utilize them in our churches.
- "Feet" gifts: apostleship (planting new churches), missionary, helps

*Prophecy: We tend to think of this as a rare gift, one who sees the future in dreams and visions, and so on. God does sometimes work this way, as He did in Ellen White's life (starting when she was only 17, by the way), and according to Joel, He will again. But the gift of prophecy is actually defined as someone who "speaks for God." In a sense, preachers, teachers, and evangelists have this gift in some measure, but many, many of us, even while young, have received impressions of something God wants us to share with someone, and that is the gift of prophecy at work.

Step Two: Identify the gifts and abilities of the youth

You and your young people will enjoy the exploration and study of spiritual gifts. An important thing you will see happening is them encouraging and affirming each other. One will shyly think they don't have a gift, but the inventory shows they do. A friend, or several, chime in--" Oh, yes, you do! Remember that time when you---?" Of course, you will help them to understand that one of the important steps of discerning a gift is that it is affirmed by others when it is exercised. Many, if not most gifts will be affirmations of something the young person already feels an attraction to, but some will be surprises. And remind them these can change over their lifetimes. At 80, Moses certainly didn't expect to be suddenly given any new gifts, let alone be called to lead the people out of Egypt!

Step Three: Encourage those gifts and talents

No matter how much the youth encourage each other, it will be your task as leader to be the head cheerleader. You don't want to give the impression that the young person gets any credit for whatever gift God has bestowed, as if they are somehow special above the others and "deserve" this gift somehow. But you certainly do want to affirm and encourage. If a young person feels she cannot do the thing God seems to be calling her to do, you can say that God wouldn't ask it if He didn't believe in what this young person can do with His help, and that God never calls us to do anything on our own. If another seems to be feeling proud or acting conceited about his gift(s), remind the group that no gift is greater than another, and nobody simply sprouted his own gift; they all came directly from God and should be used humbly and for His purpose.

True Maria. God doesn't take back the gift. But I don't see where that fits here.

In fact, be sure to round out your spiritual gifts Bible study with 1 Cor. 13, which shows the "more excellent way" of the greatest gift of all. It's not any of those listed above—it's Love. True love, the kind that only comes from God, and with it enthroned in our hearts we can't be either too humble or too proud.

Step Four: Engage or utilize these gifts and talents in ministry

Here is where "the rubber meets the road." Spiritual gifts are given for very specific purposes, and we don't need to guess or figure out what those purposes are. They are listed very plainly in the same scriptures that list the gifts. They are for strengthening disciples, building up the body of Christ, His church, and reaching out to share His love outside our walls.

So, once you have a list of the gifts within your group, you are ready to put your young people to work, and they will be much more inclined to help, because they will be doing

things they are good at, which God is calling their hearts to do. This is when you create the plans we have talked about at other points in this seminar and mobilize your energetic young “army” for Jesus. Great things will happen, and then you will come together, evaluate, take note of changes you want to make next time, and yes, comfort each other for mistakes made and encourage each other to try again, with your hands in God’s.

Step Five: Affirm those gifts constantly

As a youth leader, you know, yourself, how easy it is to get discouraged, or simply drift away and forget your calling in the midst of life and its stresses. For young people, this is even more true. Their friends are making fun of their attempts to use their gift for evangelism. Or their parents don’t understand their desire to be hospitable or generous. The “old people” (that’s us!) in the church don’t like the way they do ministry. Or the youth are “just too busy” with school and work and fun.

Constant, mutual encouragement will go a long way toward helping all of you move ahead on the journey God is leading you on, to become fully committed disciples of Jesus.

Explore

List at least five (5) gifts or talents you have identified in the youth in your local congregation?

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

5. CONCLUSION

It cannot be overemphasized how important it is for youth leaders to help young people discover their spiritual gifts, and then to provide or create opportunities for them to use them for God. Every local congregation has youth who are extremely gifted. It takes a spirit-filled and attentive youth leader to identify and encourage the gifts in our youth.

All Christians have full and complete access to the Holy Spirit at all times and are beneficiaries of the gifts which He bestows. It is the privilege of every youth to be a recipient of one or more of these gifts. A proper understanding of the role of spiritual gifts in ministry is a necessity for every youth leader. Youth leaders have a unique privilege and opportunity to encourage young people to identify and develop their spiritual gifts. This task will be made much easier if the youth leader is equipped with the tools to identify their own gifts and to ask God daily to assist them in developing and utilizing them in ministry.

6. ACTIVITIES

- A.** List at least five (5) gifts you have identified in the youth in your local congregation.
- B.** Course leader will lead participants in completing the Spiritual Gifts Inventory on the Youth ministries website (youth.adventist.org). This is a major portion of the evaluation process.

7. RESOURCES

<http://youth.adventist.org/Resources/Spiritual-Gifts-Assessment/Spiritual-Gifts-Questionnaire>

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 8: SERVING

We certify that:

has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:

..... Date:

Young Adults Leader:

..... Date:

Elder/Pastor:

..... Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*

..... Date:



1. INTRODUCTION

The Church exists for Mission

When the apostle Peter, still in the first century of Christianity, sought to explain the reason for the existence of the church, he quoted what God had said to His people before Sinai: Peter reminded us that we, the church of God, is a “ holy nation, a royal priesthood, a people chosen by God for the purpose of proclaiming the virtues of Him who brought us out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

We exist for a purpose; we have a mission: to proclaim the virtues of Christ. Christ himself left this mission: to preach the Gospel to every tribe, language, and people. This same mission is identified in the context of the three angels’ messages when we see that each angel brings with him a Gospel to announce to everyone on earth. If the church exists for the purpose of evangelizing the world, then our young people’s programs should reflect this. We as leaders should be about the business of both evangelizing our youth, and recruiting them to take their place in the world church as young evangelists.

But what does “evangelist” mean? Is it only an official, paid position, someone who goes out and preaches to crowds at large meetings? Or is it true that, one way or another, every Christian is to be an evangelist?

If the word Gospel means “Good News,” then the evangelist must be happy about what he or she is sharing. To simply speak of the problems of society is not to evangelize. This is journalism. The act of evangelizing is something that, regardless of form or method, must take place in a context of “good news,” “happy



SEMINAR

YOUTH OUTREACH

*Comprehensive
Evangelism*

novelty,” both to the speaker and to the listener. Evangelism does not deny the sad reality, but it brings back to this sad reality the joy that hope produces in the hearts of those who believe in the “good news” of the Gospel.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This module will consider different forms of evangelism and how to motivate our youth to experiment with them to discover what their particular best place in mission is. We will also examine biblical models, and realize the importance of spiritual gift discernment in determining what an individual’s role should be in the mission of the church.

3. MANY DIFFERENT METHODS

When the writer of Hebrews begins his epistle by talking about the “various ways” through which God has always sought to speak to human beings, he not only describes a form of God’s action, but grounds a reality: in the transmission of the Gospel message, there are diverse ways and means of transmitting the same message. Let’s look at a few of them.

Relational or Friendship Evangelism

This is the method that is most often used and with which most people will be more comfortable. It is, in a very real sense, what Jesus did when He “mingled with the people, seeking their good.” Your youth already have friends. (Those who don’t are in need of a different kind of help, and helping them learn to be friendly and find friends will be a first step in evangelism, both to them and to the friends.) Help them learn to see that when they act in loving ways toward their friends they are doing the work of God.

This does not mean preaching to their friends or trying to convince them to believe what we believe. As a matter of fact, trying to argue someone into something does far more harm than good.

It does mean being there for their friends—having a trustworthy listening ear, watching for ways to help and encourage them, and also receiving help from them. The best kind of friendship is the one in which both friends are seeking to help the other be his or her best self. Then, when the relationship is strong and has grown in intimacy, at some point the friend will have questions about what you believe. Why, for instance, are you able to remain in a state of trust when things are going wrong? That is the time we need to be ready with answers for why we believe what we believe, what Jesus has done and is doing for us, and stories of grace we’ve seen in our own lives. That’s when it’s accepted as the best of Good News.

Small Groups

On a little more formal basis, all youth organizations should also have small groups which get together to sing, study the Bible, pray, and share stories. We have many excellent resources for how to begin and carry on small group ministries. If you already have small groups in place, it might just be the best place for someone to easily bring a friend who is beginning to have questions about faith and spiritual practice.

Hopefully, these friends would have already been invited to fun events, outings, or service opportunities the youth group is doing, and which many will enjoy even if they are not yet spiritually awakened.

Local Community Service Projects

The priority area for the ministry of youth is the community. One of the main needs of young people, one of the main reasons they become bored and restless, is the need to be needed. The community is a real space, with real people, and real needs. Any action in favor of the community is an action that will produce reactions, transformations that can be perceived. This encourages all involved, but especially the young.

Although it seems romantic (even epic), the idea of serving in distant lands beyond the sea, as vital as this dimension of service is, is far from being the only possible way of doing mission. For the great majority of people, the call to mission takes place in the context of “flourish where you are planted”. There is no denying this local, daily dimension of evangelism. The ends of the world need the Gospel. But Jesus told His disciples to start first at home, in Jerusalem and Samaria, then all Judea.

Youth must be taught by example that every church has a special responsibility to its community. Although our system oversees the financial maintenance of mission in distant lands (see our Sabbath school offering system), the church cannot ignore that it has a special responsibility to the community in which it is situated. The Jerusalem of every young person is the place where he lives, the school where she studies, it is his university, her work environment.

In the ideals of Youth Ministry, we can clearly perceive this broad and inclusive vision of the Mission, for, driven by the “Love of Christ” that motivates me, the target challenges me to preach the Advent Message to the whole world in my generation. “Everyone” includes those who are close to me. By committing myself, in the Vow, to take part in the Youth Ministry of the local church, I am showing interest in my local reality. In the purpose, I am reminded that I exist for the youth, the church and my fellow human. In the Objectives I understand that I exist to Save from Sin and Guide in Service. In the Mission statement, I am urged to “work for the young, fostering fellowship and spiritual motivation, empowering them to serve the church and the community.”

Not only that but doing local community service of some kind is one of the most effective forms of evangelism. It raises awareness of the church as a whole, and of the youth in particular; it's something you can invite youth to help with, and it opens doors no other kind of service. If someone is worrying about basic human needs, from where their next meal will come from to how they will get their lawns mowed or get to their next doctor's appointment, it's hard for them to be very interested in going somewhere to hear a sermon.

Public Proclamation

Here we come to the thing that most people first think of when they hear the word “evangelism.” It is an important part of our mission to the world, and some of your young people will be interested and gifted in the ways they need to be to help with public proclamation. When your church puts on evangelistic series, your youth can be helpful in every aspect of this endeavor, from planning, inviting, putting up posters, stuffing envelopes, and sharing it on all their social media networks, to greeting at the door, sitting with guests, helping to answer questions, and yes, preaching and singing, too. For that matter, why wait until a special series to let them try all these ways of helping? You may have a budding young preacher in your midst who could learn invaluable lessons by preaching now and then.

When members of your youth ministry has already been active in being true friends to those they know, meeting and praying in small groups and inviting others to join in, and doing visible community service that matters—not for the purpose of “getting people to come to your meetings or to church,” but simply because they are in need and it’s the right thing to do—then many more will, in fact, be interested in the public meetings.

4. TEACH THEM TO APPRECIATE THE DIVERSITY

Every method, every form, every way of evangelizing should be taught in such a way that the young enjoy it. Remember: “Gospel” is something happy for those who speak as well as for those who listen. Therefore, evangelization must take place in such a context that the youth appreciate it.

In Module One (*The Youth Leader as a Spiritual Leader, Mentor, and Friend*), it was mentioned that young people, especially in the context of postmodernity, are pragmatic. They believe in what works. They need to see how the things they believe affect real, day-to-day life. A method of evangelism that works in practice will always be a method that the young will appreciate. Realizing that your actions are providing a reaction in the intended direction will bring tremendous satisfaction and joy to the young person who is involved in the process of evangelism.

It is especially important that each young person is being carefully led to discover and use his or her own special gifts.

The discovery of spiritual gifts will help to connect the young to the type of evangelism they are comfortable with.

We have observed that the AYM Mission Statement challenges me to empower young people to serve the church and the community. This training includes training, but it is not limited to that.

Empowerment includes making young people fit to fulfill the mission of proclaiming the gospel. If we already understand that this proclamation must take place in a context of good news, something good for the proclaimer and the receiver, there is no denying the crucial importance of allowing the young person to do what they need in a way that they like. No matter what age we are, we all have seen the sad results when someone, perhaps for years, has dutifully filled a position they really don’t like and for which they are not gifted or fitted, just because they think they must. This is not evangelism, nor is it a good way to run a church!

The most effective way for evangelism to happen is for the young person to fulfill his mission in the context of exercising his spiritual gifts. It is therefore the duty of the youth leader to guide the process of discovering the Spiritual Gifts of their youth. This discovery will help affirm the youth and young adults in the kind of evangelism they feel comfortable with. And there is no denying the reality: Happy people work better. A young person doing what she needs in the way she likes, is a young person doing what she needs to be happy. While she discovers true joy in service, others are discovering the joy of following God.

That is evangelizing. Happy—it will be more effective. Happy—they will feel more fulfilled. Happy—they will be more creative in finding ways and means to bless their community with the reality of a transforming Gospel.

5. METHODS

Try it: Instead of you alone wanting to determine the form and manner in which your young people should evangelize, dialogue with them about possible ways and means, how they would like to see it done. Ask what they like to do. Challenge them to think of new ways to do what needs to be done. Analyze together the reality of your local community. Help them realize every community is different. What is the character of theirs? What are the values of the community? What are taboos? What are the connection values?

If evangelism is “Good News”, what would be the “Good News” in the context of this individual community? The people of the community have already tried the “Bad News” of Satan. We all are victims of sin. Look for ways to transform the life of the community for the better.

For example: A universal value of connection is love. Christ knew that. Christ’s method in all the communities He visited was to love. When He loved, He attracted. Those who felt loved and supported were also attracted. Loving is always right. Yet different actions say “Love” to different people and in different places. Together with your youth, study the differing methods of Jesus. When did He use friendship evangelism? When did He use small group evangelism? What kinds of community service did He do? When and how did He proclaim publicly? Then determine which of these methods will work best in your community. You may use them all, at some point. Have a plan. But also pray a lot, and allow the Holy Spirit to work in ways that seem to you to be completely off your plan!

The human being is reactive. By default, it reacts to the stimuli it receives. If one is simply criticized in his worldview, he will become defensive (or go on the attack). He will close his heart (and maybe his fist ...). Now if he feels loved he will open his heart. Jesus left the example.

6. ELLEN WHITE ON JESUS’ METHODS

“Christ Lifted the Stigma From Poverty—Christ has ever been the poor man’s friend. He chose poverty, and honored it by making it His lot. He has stripped from it forever the reproach of scorn by blessing the poor, the inheritors of God’s kingdom. Such was His work. By consecrating Himself to a life of poverty He redeemed poverty from its humiliation. He took His position with the poor that He might lift from poverty the stigma that the world had attached to it. He knew the danger of the love of riches. He knew that this love is ruinous to many souls. It places those who are rich where they indulge every wish for grandeur. It teaches them to look down on those who are suffering the pressure of poverty. It develops the weakness of human minds and shows that notwithstanding the abundance of wealth, the rich are not rich toward God.” (*Welfare Ministry*, 172.3)

“Our Savior went from house to house, healing the sick, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to

the disconsolate. He took the little children in His arms and blessed them, and spoke words of hope and comfort to the weary mothers. With unfailing tenderness and gentleness, He met every form of human woe and affliction. Not for Himself, but for others did He labor. He was the servant of all. It was His meat and drink to bring hope and strength to all with whom He came in contact”

(Gospel Workers, 188).

“*Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, “Follow Me”*

(The Ministry of Healing, 143).

7. THE PROPHETIC DUTY OF THE YOUTH

It is the youth who will finish the work. The youth leader who is able to instill these mission principles into the hearts of young will not only be fulfilling a leadership role but will be helping the youth fulfill the purpose for which Adventist Youth Ministry exists. The young have a mission, and this mission is a prophetic duty. ***They will finish the job.***

Joel prophesied that young people would be directly involved in proclaiming the message: “[In the last days] I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions” (Joel 2:28).

The target “The Advent message to the whole world in my Generation” establishes the sense of urgency that must be imprinted. The mission of preaching the gospel must now be completed in their generation.

8. CONCLUSION

It is the leader’s responsibility and privilege to cultivate that passion and commitment, while encouraging increasing levels of participation of each young person in the fulfillment of the mission in a holistic way. This integrity in the fulfillment of the mission will give qualitative aspects (forms, methods, and manners) and at the various levels of involvement (personal, small groups, public proclamation, local community service projects).

By challenging young to engage in these various levels, the youth leader will be giving the young the blessing of having day-to-day, mission-driven involvement.

Youth will learn how to testify of their faith at the level of personal relationships, whether by studying the Bible with someone through a series of Bible Studies or through everyday or occasional dialogues where they will always have the opportunity to impart spiritual values and experiences.

They can participate in Small Groups and Youth Sabbath School Classes where they can experience a maturing of their faith as well as help other young people to grow.

They will have the opportunity to engage in public proclamation, both on a normal Sabbath and in public evangelism series.

They will participate in local community service projects where they will have the opportunity to involve non-Adventist friends—or help them in projects they already have going on.

Remember, this is one of the most effective methods of personal evangelism today: Involve those who intend to evangelize in joint actions to meet the needs of a community. Giving people a sense of belonging is the most effective way to make them believe. For many years, people first had to show that they believed before they were allowed to belong. But that's not the way Jesus did it. The world changed. Involvement in common experiences is the most effective way to convey values and make them common. It is the "Test Drive" of the Gospel. First try it, then want it for yourself. It works.

Be open to change

Although these various levels of involvement can be achieved through various structures present in the context of the church and the Youth Ministry, they do not need to (and should not) be restricted to pre-existing structures. For an ever-changing society, methods, forms, and ways must continue to change. Your youth will be your best source of new ideas and creative methods.

Love (by God and people) is the driving principle that will ground all actions. But the methods, forms and ways need to be relevant to the reality with which it is intended to dialogue. Emphasize therefore the importance of guiding young people in discovering their spiritual gifts, and in the challenge of applying these gifts, in methods of evangelism preferred by themselves (under the guidance of the leader).

But there remains one final question: Why by themselves? Simple: Young are the best translation of the reality in which they are inserted. They are the best thermometer of this reality, and can become an effective thermostat of the reality of a postmodern, relativistic, pluralistic, individualistic, and pragmatic society. Ellen White said it accurately: "The Lord appointed the youth to be His helping hand" (3T, p. 104).

9. ACTIVITIES

In pairs or small groups

- A. Discuss the four different evangelism methods outlined here. Which are your youth already involved in? Which do you want to branch out into?
- B. Make a list of at least two ways to encourage each of the methods within your youth ministry.

10. RESOURCES

While the website below is not specifically targeted to youth, it can very easily be adapted to fit a youth group. <http://www.ifollowdiscipleship.org/index.php?id=98&search=small+group>

Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? Visit our website and do the Spiritual Gifts Self-Assessment: <http://youth.adventist.org/Resources/Spiritual-Gifts-Assessment>

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 9: YOUTH OUTREACH

We certify that:
has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:
Date:

Young Adults Leader:
Date:

Elder/Pastor:
Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*
Date:



1. INTRODUCTION

The first language of many of youth is not French, Portuguese, Tswana, Swahili or English, it's social media. Traditionally, friendships have been personal, but since the advent of social media, they have, to a great extent, become digital instead. We cannot ignore the power and influence of social media on our youth, but we need to educate them on both the opportunities and the dangers. The leader should help the youth to be stewards of social media.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

In this module we will study how the internet, social media, and cell phone usage affects youth and their world. We will look into the Bible and our church teachings to find insights on how to provide counsel, leadership, and assistance to young people in dealing with these issues.

Internet/Social Media

3. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Call it cyberspace, call it the web, call it your virtual life—whatever you call it, the internet is an incredible marvel of technology. And like most marvels of technology, it has incredible potential for good, and for evil.

We've all heard the horror stories about the web. Pornography is so readily available that even elementary-school kids can click onto X-rated sites. And what about the safety factor? Almost everyone has a story about someone who gave out their name and address to a friend they met in a chatroom and ended up being the victim of a psychotic stalker. If these are the images you have of the web, your reaction may be, *why would any Christian want to get involved in that? I should just stay away from it!*

10

SEMINAR

DIGITAL MINISTRY

*Maximizing the
Opportunities Offered
by Social Media While
Circumventing Its
Hazards*

But the web is not only about computers. It's about people, media, and choices and those are all important issues for any Christian. We can choose to use email to keep in touch with friends, do research for school or work projects, check out and support our favorite Christian music artists, and discuss hobbies, not to mention spiritual subjects with people around the whole world. The web has a great potential for good.

And it's here to stay. Here are some alarming facts to consider:

In the USA:

- a. Today's teens spend more than 7 ½ hours a day consuming media—watching TV, listening to music, surfing the Web, social networking, and playing video games.ⁱ
- b. 93% of teens ages 12-17 go online.ⁱⁱ
- c. 38% of teens ages 12-17 send text messages daily, while a quarter send daily messages via social networks.ⁱⁱⁱ
- d. One in every 25 teens had “problematic Internet use” and those students also tended to be more depressed and would get into serious fights more often. And boys in that category had higher rates of smoking and drug use.^{iv}

Cell phones, too, are amazing and incredible things! The average cell phone user has more computing power in their palm than what it took to land men on the moon in 1969... technology really has come a long way.

Cell phones are a true blessing; allowing us opportunities to multi-task and work smarter, not harder, and to access information at lightning-fast speed; or contact someone quickly and efficiently in case of an emergency; or share the love of Jesus through a verse, testimony, poem, etc. Plus, we can choose from virtually any type of game, app, or entertainment we desire. Nowadays the cell phone connects its user to virtually anyone in the world at the touch of a screen.

But as with anything that offers us blessings, there are curses in disguise and with the incredible power that cell phones give teens, great responsibility and caution must be exercised in how they are used.

4. FINDING SOLUTIONS

We must help our youth understand that technology is neither some scary, evil plot to destroy their minds and souls, nor is it the heaven-sent answer to all of earth's problems. It's just a tool, and it can be used for good or evil. Like everything else in life, it comes down to the choices we make. As we have studied throughout this seminar, a very important part of our leadership is to model good social media choices in our own lives. If we're not, it won't matter what we tell them.

Some Things Your Young People Need to Know

1. Anyone can put up a website, so it's our responsibility to make sure that the information we're getting is coming from a reliable source. Teach youth to compare different, reliable sources before believing everything they read.

2. Using the Web for entertainment is just as legitimate as picking up a book, turning on the TV, or putting a CD in the stereo. And we need to follow the same guidelines. Would Jesus cheerfully watch/listen to this with you?
3. Always follow safety rules (see details below)

Rules for Social Media Safety

(This is suitable for printing and handing out to your young people.)

1. **Never give out your real name, address or phone number.** Unless you already know them personally, keep your online friendships online; don't plan to meet in real life. Be careful about giving any identifying information like your hometown, the name of your school, the name of a team you play on etc., that might allow a stalker to identify you. You can share what's going on in your life with online friends without having to give a lot of details.
2. **Never abuse; make fun of, or bully someone online!** Not only is this behavior inappropriate in all social media environments, but it is also against the law and downright ungodly! Jesus made it clear that we should always seek to treat others the way that we would want to be treated ourselves (Matt. 7:12).
3. **Set reasonable personal time limits.** The apostle Paul had this to say about doing things—even good things—too much: “You say, ‘I am allowed to do anything’ but not everything is good for you. You say, ‘I am allowed to do anything’—but not everything is beneficial” (1 Corinthians 10:23, NLT). The reality is that most youth's online time will be spent on social media; so, limit yourself...and if you have a problem with that...
4. **Walk with the wise.** Solomon in Proverbs 13:20 writes, “Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm” (NIV). If you've got friends who are choosing to use the internet unwisely—then it's likely that you'll also fall prey to the negative peer pressure. Choose your friends wisely. They will either help you or hurt you.
5. **Make yourself accountable to a caring adult.** Talk to a parent, teacher, youth pastor, Pathfinder leader or counselor. Any adult who cares about you will be more than happy to help you find a balance in your life when it comes to social media.

5. SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

For many youth the internet and social media are great ways to access information, get entertainment, and stay connected with friends and family, but for some—a surprisingly large number—the internet can actually become an addiction.

In China, in February 2015, a teen known only as “Little Wang,” in an effort to end his internet addiction, cut his left hand off. The 19-year-old called a taxi to take him to the hospital, leaving a note telling his mother he'd be back soon. He left the hand behind on the nearby bench where he cut it off, but the hospital was able to reattach it. Still, he may not regain full control of it, surgeons say. A teacher says the boy's Internet habit made him “impetuous.”^v This is, of course an extreme case, but the fact is that the internet can be extremely addictive.

Warning Signs of Addiction

- diminished interest in activities youth once enjoyed
- feelings of distress or anxiousness when youth cannot use the Internet
- secretive Internet usage
- withdrawal from activities with family and friends^{vi}

6. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

On the web, just as anywhere else, the Christian's guideline should be "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things" (Philippians 4:8, NIV). There are a lot of websites out there that simply aren't pure, noble, true, or appropriate for a Christian person, young or old.

Maybe it's because the web is such a new technology, maybe because it's so private, but whatever the reason, some people feel that the usual rules don't apply. They'll click onto pornographic websites even though they would never buy a *Playboy* magazine or rent an X-rated movie. Let's face it, pornography is pornography, wherever you find it. And it's never appropriate for a Christian. Neither is violence, hatred, racism or spiritualism (witchcraft, wicca, ghosts, demons, etc.). Yes, there are websites that advocate all those things. We must help our youth to understand that looking for such things, or staying there out of curiosity if we accidentally stumble across them while looking for something else is dangerous. They should leave the site immediately. There are also resources at the end for software which will help screen out such sites.

God wants our youth to "Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Timothy 2:22, NIV).

They need to learn, also, that even if they are only visiting wholesome, positive sites, maybe even Christian ones; their use of the web may still be hurting their spiritual life. Web-surfing can be addictive. Some people spend hours and hours each day at it, neglecting family and friends, exercise, sleep, work, school, and time with God. Discuss with them ways to examine how much time they are spending online and whether it is getting in the way of other activities. Some may need to give themselves an internet/social media vacation until they get their priorities straightened out. Moses, in Psalm 90:12 wisely writes: "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (NIV).

Many youth fall prey to the devil's trap when it comes to the choices they make online, but God says: "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect" (Romans 12:2 NLT).

The thing that may help the most is simply remembering that our minds and bodies belong to God and are a holy place where He lives (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Create some activities which help to reinforce this, and it will tend to chase away all unhealthy obsessions, online or not.

7. WHAT THE CHURCH SAYS

“God calls us to live in light of His grace, knowing the infinite cost God paid to save us. Through the Holy Spirit we glorify God in our minds, bodies and spirits. We are called to be a godly people who think, feel and act in harmony with the principles of heaven. For the Holy Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we should involve ourselves only in those things which will produce Christ-like purity, health and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty... It also means that because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently. Along with adequate exercise and rest, we are to . . . engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy and goodness. (*Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 John 2:6; Eph. 5:1-21; Phil. 4:8; 2 Cor. 10:5; 6:14-7:1; 1 Peter 3:1-4; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 10:31; Lev. 11:1-47; 3 John 2.*)”^{vii}

8. PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

It is important to understand the key difference between the internet and social media. The internet is a kind of super-highway, and social media—things like Facebook, SnapChat, Twitter, YouTube, Vine, Tumblr, Medium, Kik, and Instagram—are all different side-roads that can be used on that superhighway.

As we have studied, we can help our youth make wise choices about which apps to use and how to use them by filtering all choices through God and His Word, the Bible.

It is fine for them to use the web to stay in contact with friends and family who are miles away. Whether they send letters by email, arrange to meet in a (private) chatroom, or post family pictures on a website for grandma to view, they can use the web to strengthen the relationships they already have.

But what’s much more intriguing and controversial is using the web to make new friendships. There are lots of ways to do this. One of the most common is through chatrooms where people meet to talk about common interests. Chatrooms range from places where Christians meet for online Bible studies, to places where people gather to discuss downright perverted topics. Young people are naturally curious, and on top of that, being “invisible” online can lead to a feeling of deceptive power and safety. They will take chances they might not in real life. They *must* learn to exercise choice and discretion in deciding where to chat and with whom. People also meet online through message boards and news groups, where one can post a message on a topic that interests one and check back later to see if anyone’s answered the post. Here is where the safety rules above especially apply.

Chatrooms, message boards, and newsgroups can all begin to take on a sense of community as the same people use them over and over and get to know each other. People can either post questions and information by typing, but they can also connect via face-to-face as well with things like Google Hangouts, Skype, Facebook, and FaceTime. As is to be expected, online friendships (and romances/infatuations) do form. Someone can go from discussing a hobby they’re interested in, to sharing concerns and problems from their everyday lives, and even (on many Christian sites) asking for prayer and encouragement from fellow believers.

This sense of community—of knowing and being known—can be great. It can also be deceptively dangerous.

Remind your young people: Online friendships can be wonderful. But they come with a major warning attached: generally, you don’t actually see these people. You don’t know anything

about them, except what they *choose to reveal* on their computers. Some people are probably telling you the truth about their age, gender, interests, and other characteristics, but there's nothing to stop someone from lying. Always be cautious with people you chat with online. Remember, somebody in your chatroom may not be who they say they are. It's sad, but true, that there are sick people out there who lurk in youth chatrooms looking for young people of whom they can take advantage of: hurt, abuse, kidnap, rape, or even murder!

Does this mean they should never chat, post messages, or otherwise get acquainted with people online? No, it simply means they must remain watchful and follow the safety rules. One great safety is the same as it is in everyday, personal life: trusted adults. Remind your youth that in the same way that parents (or other trusted adults) would like to meet and know the friends they bring over to the house, so they should be invited to "meet" online friends. If you have modeled good, compassionate, caring, and open leadership qualities for them, they will be more likely to believe that you might know something more than they do about who is to be trusted online. Of course, you know that not all your young people have trustworthy parents, and some have parents they could, in fact, trust, but for whatever reason, they don't. They need to be able to turn to you for guidance.

***More Suggestions, from psychologist, speaker and popular author,
Dr. Tim Elmore:***

1. Teach your young people to balance "screen time" with "face time." For every hour they spend in front of a screen, they should spend equal hours face to face with people. This will help them keep their soft skills high as they enter a job.
2. Place your kids in groups and ask them two questions to prompt discussion:
 - a. What are the advantages to new technology in our lives?
 - b. What are the disadvantages to new technology in our lives?
3. When spending time in face-to-face conversations, always prioritize those people. Place your phone on silent and give eye contact with the persons in front of you. This communicates they are the priority and that you can reply to messages later.
4. Give assignments that force young people to interface with people from older or younger generations. Whenever we converse with those different from us we grow in our emotional intelligence and in our communication skills.
5. Teach your students that whenever they feel they're slipping into a dependence or addiction to anything—it always helps to take time off. Together, you and they can do a "technology fast" and put your phones, tablets or laptops away for a season. You'll all feel liberated.^{viii}
6. Encourage parents to talk to their children about these issues—at least before middle school. They should monitor their kids' cell phone and Facebook page, as long as they still live at home. Talk about it so it's not a secret, but remind them accountability is good, and prevents harm. Let them see your pages, too, to help them see that you, too, follow good internet safety rules.

7. Work with schools to communicate that sexting is illegal/immoral. Teen sexting leads to criminal charges; and when photos get sent to another state it's a federal offense."^x
8. Teach Social Etiquette with Cell Phones (see "Additional Resources" for link)
9. Teach them that choices have consequences
10. Teach them to think before they act
11. Teach them that what's posted online, stays online... forever!

9. ACTIVITIES

Discuss:

- A. Because of the dangers, some parents are hesitant to grant internet privileges to their teens. Others allow their teens total freedom to surf the net as they please. How much freedom or restraint do you think teens should be allowed on the internet? List at least four internet safety rules.
- B. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 and discuss: what are some ways a Christian youth could use the internet and social media to help spread the gospel?
- C. How can social media be incorporated in Youth Ministry?

10. CONCLUSION

Youth today use technology as a natural part of their life. They have been born into and grown up in a world that is infused with it. Cell phones, the internet and social media can either be an incredible help or hindrance to them. It's all in how you, as their youth leader, have prepared yourself to train them and their parents about both the positive and negative aspects of it.

11. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThxmgXMBpoM>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CE2Ru-jqyrY>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cV1ZCF4oueQ>
4. <http://www.today.com/parents/secret-life-teens-internet-addiction-changes-boy-shell-son-1D80153806>
5. <http://www.pluggedin.com>
6. <https://www.common sense media.org>
7. <http://insightmagazine.ning.com>
8. **Internet Addiction information:**
<http://www.netaddictionrecovery.com/internet-addiction.html>
9. **Internet Addiction Treatment:**
<http://www.netaddictionrecovery.com/programs/treatment-program/youth-ages-12-17.html>

10. **Internet addiction test:**
<http://www.globaladdiction.org/dldocs/GLOBALADDICTION-Scales-InternetAddictionTest.pdf>
11. **Family cell phone contract:**
http://www.cyberbullying.us/cyberbullying_cell_phone_contract.pdf
12. **Tween cell phone contract:**
 - a. <http://growingleaders.com/blog/cell-phone-agreement/>
 - b. https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B2XAZlbvI9_qQ3otbW9IcWo2aUE/edit
 - c. http://www.imom.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/imom_cell_phone_contract_color.pdf
13. **Cell phone Tween social etiquette:**
 - a. <http://tweenparenting.about.com/od/tweenculture/qt/TextEtiquette.htm>
 - b. <http://growingleaders.com/blog/how-texting-is-re-defining-social-etiquette/>
14. **iPhone Contract Story and Interview:**
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/janell-burley-hofmann/iphone-contract-from-your-mom_b_2372493.html
15. **State Sexting Laws:**
<http://www.cyberbullying.us/state-sexting-laws.pdf>
16. **Teen Driving Cell Phone app:**
<http://teenroadtosafety.com/faq/lifesaver-app/>
17. **Sexting Apps & Video:**
<http://www.wmcactionnews5.com/story/26217272/sexting-could-land-teens-in-jail>
18. **Focus on the Family: Teens and Technology:**
<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/protecting-your-family/staying-on-top-of-your-teens-technology/staying-on-top-of-your-teens-technology>
19. Book: **What Would Jesus Post? by Brian D. Wassom**
http://www.amazon.com/What-Would-Jesus-Post-Principles/dp/1490811621/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1427058473&sr=8-1&keyword=s=what+would+jesus+post
20. **Additional Info. on Talking to Teens about Cell Phone Safety:**
<https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Talking-to-Kids-and-Teens-About-Social-Media-and-Sexting.aspx>
21. **Center for Parent and Youth Understanding's "Cell Phone" Resources:**
http://www.cpyu.org/resource_topic/cell-phones/

22. 10 Signs of Smartphone Addiction:

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/11/25/living/10-signs-smartphone-addiction-digital-life/>

23. Morningside Recovery

<https://www.morningsiderecovery.com/educational-resources/recognize-the-signs-of-cell-phone-addiction/>

24. Adventist Recovery Ministries:

<http://www.adventistrecovery.org/article/33/resources/addiction-resources>

Possible handout material for young people

The internet, social media, and cell phones can be incredible blessings, but they can also quickly become a real curse if not used carefully and with balance. DO NOT ALLOW technology to make you roadkill on the Information Superhighway.

If you feel like you have a problem:

1. Take the Internet Addiction Test (listed under the “Additional Resources” section).
2. Confess your dependence/addiction to God and ask for His forgiveness and for strength to stop it.
3. Immediately ask a parent/guardian for help.
4. Get treatment at a hospital if you need to. Commit to following through with the help.
5. Once you're better, purposely ask a trusted adult for accountability.
6. Check in regularly with your accountability partner to keep you safe and free from getting addicted again.

CERTIFICATION

SEMINAR 10: DIGITAL MINISTRY

We certify that:
has completed the requirements for the *Senior Youth Leader*.

Instructor/Mentor:
Date:

Young Adults Leader:
Date:

Elder/Pastor:
Date:

*Conference/Mission
Youth Ministries Director:*
Date:



PREAMBLE

The new Senior Youth Leader logo mirrors the Master Guide logo to ensure consistency with regards to the two leadership programs of Youth Ministries.

SYL PIN

- Mandatory
- Two stars: representing the two Ministries: Ambassadors and Young Adults
- World map: leaders are prepared serve the world field



SYL SCARF

- Optional (Division to Determine)
- Yellow and Blue Lines to represent the Young Adult Colors
- Maroon and Black to represent the Ambassador Colors



SYL SCARF HOLDER

- Optional (Division to Determine)



SENIOR YOUTH LEADER UNIFORMS

*For Ambassadors and
Young Adults*



AMBASSADORS UNIFORMS



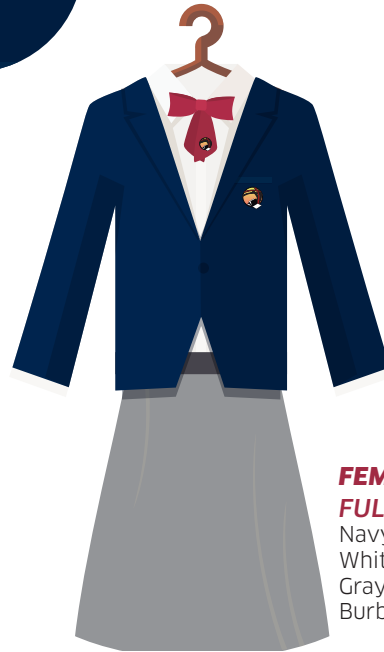
SYL PIN, MANDATORY

The SYL Pin is worn on the left lapel of the jacket



MALE FULL UNIFORM

Navy Jacket,
White Shirt,
Gray Pants,
Burbundy Tie



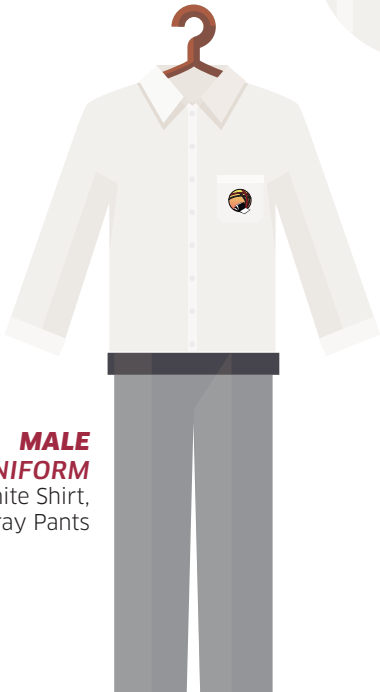
FEMALE FULL UNIFORM

Navy Jacket,
White Blouse,
Gray Skirt,
Burbundy Bow Tie



SYL PIN, MANDATORY

SYL pin is worn on a shirt.
Top of left pocket in the middle.



MALE LIGHT UNIFORM

White Shirt,
Gray Pants



FEMALE LIGHT UNIFORM

White Blouse,
Gray Skirt

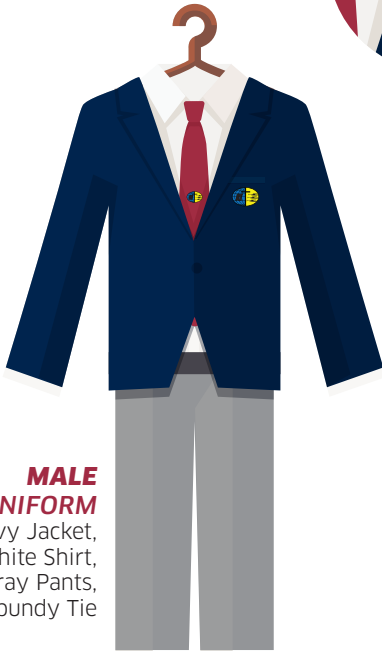


YOUNG ADULTS UNIFORMS



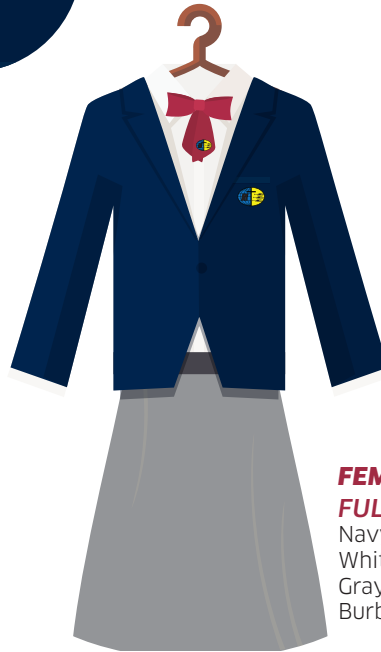
SYL PIN, MANDATORY

The SYL Pin is worn on the left lapel of the jacket



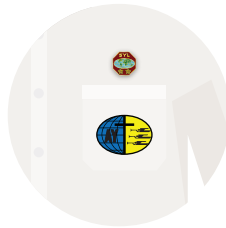
MALE FULL UNIFORM

Navy Jacket,
White Shirt,
Gray Pants,
Burbundy Tie



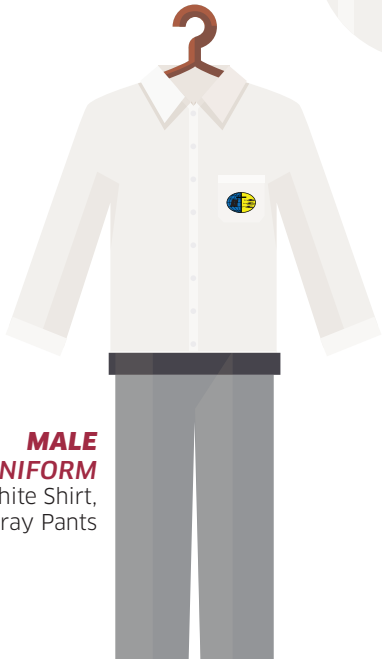
FEMALE FULL UNIFORM

Navy Jacket,
White Blouse,
Gray Skirt,
Burbundy Bow Tie



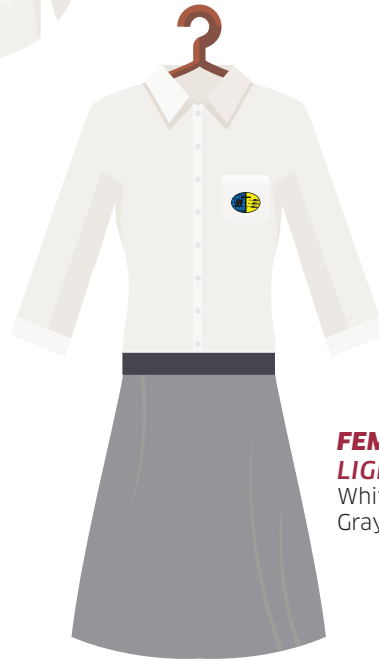
SYL PIN, MANDATORY

SYL pin is worn on a shirt.
Top of left pocket in the middle.



MALE LIGHT UNIFORM

White Shirt,
Gray Pants



FEMALE LIGHT UNIFORM

White Blouse,
Gray Skirt







***General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church
Youth Ministries Department***

*12501 Old Columbia Pike,
Silver Spring, Maryland, USA*

M M X V I I I



**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
YOUTH MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT**

YOUTH.ADVENTIST.ORG