



Youth Ministry

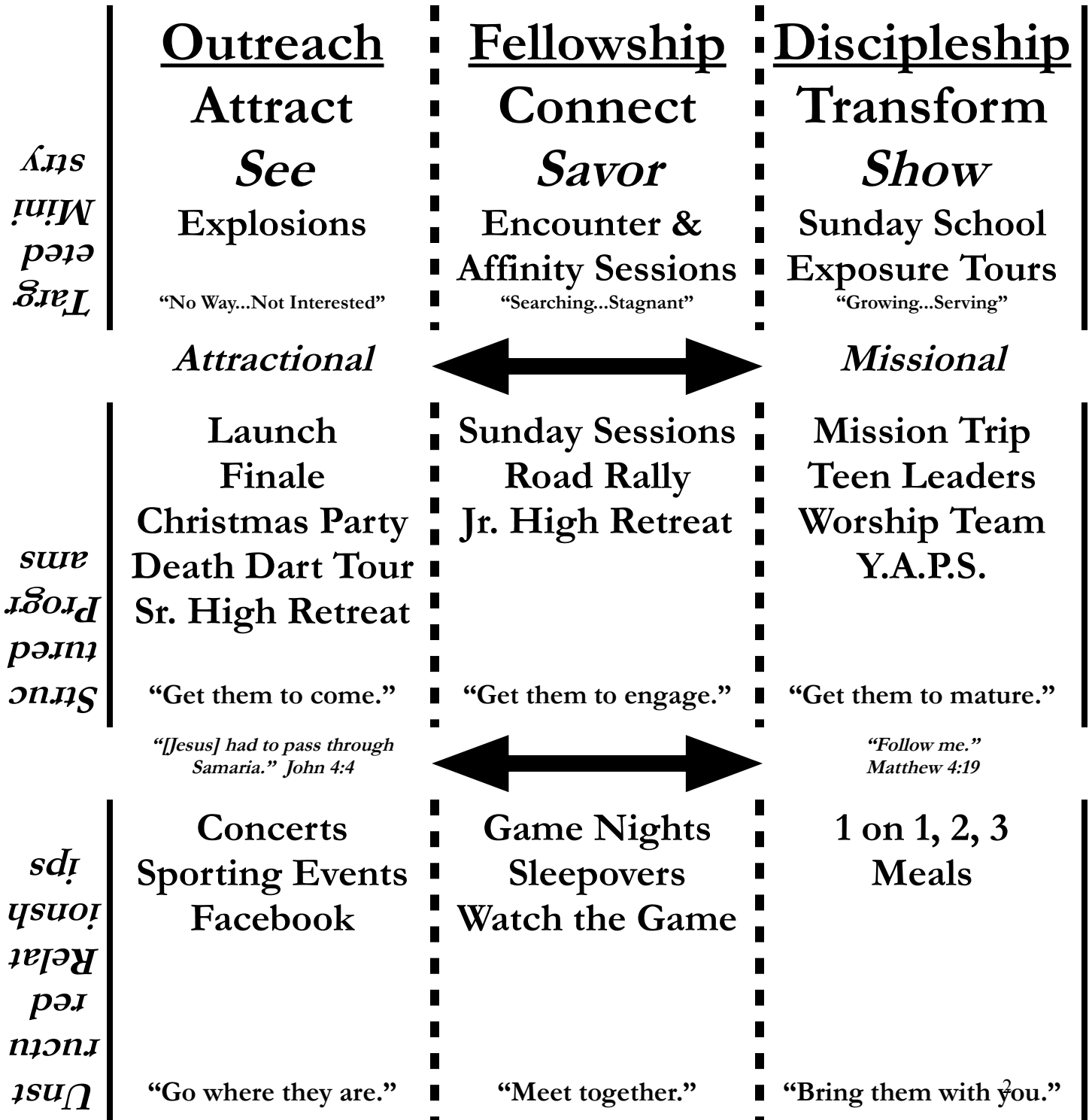
2011-2012 Campaign

Youth Ministry Guide

*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few;
Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest. (Matthew 9:37-38)*

Jesus is Lord, Savior, & Treasure

We want Youth to See, Savor, & Show Jesus as their Lord, Savior, & Treasure.



Prolegomena:

This document is designed with a desire to give volunteer youth workers and parents a greater understanding of the significance of Youth Ministry, how Keystone Youth Ministry functions, and the expectations of a Keystone Youth Worker.

History:

Keystone Church began in 1993 as a small church plant meeting in a local bar. As she grew, elders prayerfully considered what Keystone's niche would be and soon determined that youth and young adults would receive particular attention. Within three years of launching the church, Keystone hired a youth pastor—a bold move for a small, young congregation. However, this decision set a precedent for our unswerving commitment to reach the next generation, and it remains a distinctive even today. Our budget, facility use, and general openness toward teenagers are evidences of our commitment to young people.

Keith Sensenig served as youth pastor, overseeing junior high and senior high ministries, from 1996 through the summer of 2005. After a change in job description, Brandon Fisher came on staff in the summer of 2006 and began to oversee junior high, senior high, and young adult ministries. Today dozens of volunteer youth workers serve within the junior high and senior high ministry to over 100 youth.

Who Are We:

- We are Another Voice: We are an echo of God's Word in a world of many voices.
- We are a Voice of Truth: We are committed to preaching Jesus from the Bible.
- We are a Beating Heart: We are body who loves youth and our community.

Importance of Youth Ministry:

Chapter 2 of Judges paints a startling portrait of what happens to a people without an unswerving commitment to reach the next generation. In verse 7, we read of one generation who served the Lord, all who had seen all the great work that the Lord has done. Three verses later, we find out another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord or the work he had done for Israel, and they did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. One generation grew up knowing God and serving him; the next did not, and things fell apart.

The promptings from God in Deuteronomy 6, to teach our children what the Lord has done, and the wisdom in the Psalm 78, to tell the coming generation of the glorious deeds of the Lord, lead us to be especially aggressive toward reaching youth. We intend to train our children in the way they should go and trust God to have them not depart from it when they age. (Proverbs 22:6)

A Sprinkler System:

Our youth ministry is structured more like a sprinkler system than a garden hose. If you have a small courtyard, it's easy to stand on your porch and water the grass. If you have acres of lawn, a thumb over the hose will be completely ineffective. Keystone Church is different from many churches in that rather than having one source of ministry coming from the youth pastor, we have a structured system of youth workers from which our youth ministry flows. The youth pastor's primary responsibility is to train and empower volunteer youth workers for the ministry. As we have

grown numerically, we have needed more and more sprinkler heads to reach our teens.

Shepherds, NOT Chaperones:

Volunteer Youth Workers are absolutely critical to the health of our ministry. We say they are shepherds, not chaperones. Chaperones stand on the fringes waiting to stop teenagers from doing things they shouldn't do. They don't know who the kids are; they just want to make sure nothing bad happens. Shepherds, on the other hand, lead and guide teenagers on a better path. They know their flock and form relationships that lead to transformation. Though some events within the Youth Ministry simply require chaperones, we are more interested in developing shepherds.

Our Goal: See, Savor, & Show Jesus as Lord, Savior, & Treasure

We at Keystone LOVE Jesus; so much so, we want to spur others toward the life we've found in him. To do that, our youth ministry seeks to have students SEE Jesus as Lord, Savior, & Treasure. Our eyes are captivated by the riches of this world—possessions, relationships, popularity, beauty, power. They are so fixed on this present, physical world they rarely shift to our gaping, spiritual needs. Like the woman at the well in John 4, we want our youth to see Jesus as the gift of God.

Seeing alone isn't enough; there must be affection. We desire students to SAVOR Jesus as Lord, Savior, & Treasure. Our hearts and souls hunger and thirst for something to satisfy cravings, so we strive after created things never designed fulfill us. Only once we taste and know that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) are we free from the tyranny of vices to joyfully “let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also” and obtain true riches (Matthew 13:44). The grip of Satan and this world on our lives will weaken as we find our affections shift toward Jesus.

The overflow of seeing and savoring Jesus is SHOWing Jesus as Lord, Savior, & Treasure. This manifests itself in loosed affinities for the world and greater love for others. Nothing in this world will compare to the precious gift we've found in Jesus, and so nothing can keep us from telling people about him or loving one another. Our love for Jesus will spontaneously overflow into praises toward heaven, the pursuit of holiness in our lives, and shouts of good news to this world. By this lifestyle, all people will know we are Jesus' disciples (John 13:35)

God will be most glorified when we love Jesus beyond anything else in this world and see him as the Lord, Savior, & Treasure in our lives.

Our Method: Transformation Among Friends

2 Corinthians 3:18—And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.

We believe the glory of the Lord is seen most clearly through the gospel message; the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our faces are naturally blinded to our own spiritual needs. We want to create an environment where we are constantly pointing toward God's glory, so that when God graciously opens our eyes, we see his glory and experience divine transformation. God's fingerprints are everywhere in this world; we want to train ourselves to be sensitive to notice them. Change happens when we see God's glory!

1 Thessalonians 2:8—We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.

This life cannot be lived to the full in isolation; we were created for community. The gospel message and the command to love one another are closely entwined. The two propel us into relationships marked by care, authenticity, and forgiveness en route to continued transformation. We value not only teen-teen friendships but also teen-adult friendships and mentorships. Youth ministry is all about loving teenagers enough to share the good news of Jesus by entering and investing in their lives.

Keystone's Front Door:

People are starting to find out that we are a church with an “Unswerving Commitment to Reach the Next Generation.” Keystone’s body is experiencing growth because families are coming to Keystone for our youth ministry. Kids are bringing their parents because they want to be a part of what we’re doing. Parents are bringing their kids because they want them to be a part of what we’re doing. The only way this can be a healthy motivation is if Jesus remains at the center of what we do. Because we are impacting lives with Jesus at such an early age, the course of someone’s life can be altered exponentially! Our youth ministry is the most important ministry at Keystone!

Components:

Sunday School:

Our Sunday School hour is designed to allow teens to dig deep into the Scriptures and to learn how to know God through His Word. We use Student Life Bible Study curriculum, a 6-year course designed to strategically expose students in grades 7-12 to a holistic understanding of the Bible. There is emphasis placed on learning how to read, study, and value the Bible each week. We don’t want students to starve spiritually when they leave this ministry, so we teach them how to feed themselves spiritual nourishment for the day when no one may be around to spoon feed it to them. We intend to promote skills and habits on *how* to read God's Word and *why* God's Word is important *so that* they might become life long students of the questions of *who* and *what* is significant and life changing in the Bible.

Encounters:

Our Encounter sessions are designed for large group interactions. The night consists of games, teaching, time to hang out, and food. The teaching spotlights major Biblical truths surrounding Jesus Christ and challenges students to understand why the gospel message is such good news. So many people know the name of Jesus. There’s familiarity to stories and miracles and parables; some even know he was killed on a cross to save the world. Sadly, most only know about Jesus as a humdrum fact. We want students to *see* and *savor* the magnitude of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection so that they might live to *show* him to be the Lord, Savior, and Treasure of their lives.

Affinity Groups:

Affinity Groups are small groups of 8-12 students led by two adult leaders. The definition of affinity is “a close connection marked by community of common interests or similarity in nature or character.” In chemistry, affinity is “a force between two particles that causes them to interact and bond.” These are the exact traits we want to be true of our Affinity Groups. This world is overloaded with places for superficial friendships and casual interactions. We seek to create pockets of genuine relationships so that students can:

- Be known and accepted for who they really are.

- Discuss important life issues.
- Be accountable to an older, mature Christian for spiritual growth.
- Encourage each other to apply Biblical truths to how they live.

Exposure Tours:

Our Exposure Tours are the mission component to our youth ministry. The flexibility, energy, and sense of adventure in teens' lives make them excellent candidates for short-term mission trips. We believe God has blessed us richly that we may be able to love, serve, and give out of what we've already been given. Our goal is three-fold:

- Proclaim the gospel of God's grace and love to lost parts of the world.
- Partner with Keystone-supported missions in their ministry.
- Expose teens to the life of a missionary and to cultural differences.

Explosions:

Youth Ministry Explosions are large group functions positioned throughout the year as opportunities to take our group into our community and invite our community into our group. We seek to be less an exclusive clique and more an inclusive body, welcoming of all people. These big events include Retreat Weekends, Road Rallies, Creation Festivals, Beach Trips, Pool Parties, Holiday Celebrations, Game Nights, and the like. In the middle of the whirlwind of excitement surrounding these events, Jesus Christ remains on a pedestal displayed as our all-satisfying Joy.

Times:

Our evening Sessions, Encounter and Affinity Groups, meet on Sunday nights. Junior High runs from 4:00-6:00pm, and Senior High runs from 6:30-8:30pm. There is also a pizza time every Sunday from 6:00-6:30pm where pizza is \$1/slice for all youth! Of course, Sunday School meets during the Sunday School hour between both services, 9:30-10:30am, but major events such as Exposure Tours and Explosions happen throughout the year without set times. Check our Youth Ministry Calendar for those dates and times.

Basic Sunday Session Schedule:

Junior High:

4:00-4:05pm Junior Highers Arrive
 4:05-4:35pm Welcome, Game
 4:35-4:55pm Announcements, Hot Seat, Singing
 4:55-5:30pm Transition Activity, Encounter Lesson
 5:30-6:00pm Affinity Group

Pizza Time:

6:00-6:30pm Junior High & Senior High Pizza & Candy

Senior High:

6:30-6:45pm Senior Highers Arrive
 6:45-7:15pm Welcome, Game
 7:15-8:00pm Announcements, Transition Activity, Encounter Lesson
 8:00-8:30pm Affinity Group

Battle Plans:

Each year Keystone Youth Ministry engineers a Battle Plan for the school year campaign. This Battle Plan includes series, lessons, themes, and goals for the entire year. Long range planning is necessary to ensure we make best use of our resources and accomplish our purposes comprehensively and with excellence. A Battle Plan aids the youth ministry in the following ways:

- Sets clear and defined deadlines for sessions and events.
- Unifies Youth Workers and Parents in all of our efforts during the year.
- Consolidates Youth Worker abilities and gifts over both Junior & Senior High.
- Generates creative collaboration among Youth Workers.

Terms Defined:

Campaign:	Timetable following the school year, August through June.
Battle Plan:	Document outlining what the youth ministry will do during the year.
Component:	Program deigned to meet a particular purpose for a targeted ministry.
Strategy:	Scheme of how the components will work together within the youth ministry.
Session:	Gathering of youth around a lesson.
Strike:	Series of sessions on a particular topic—a Series.
Tactic:	Method for making a concept stick.

Guiding Principle #1—Integrated Youth Ministry:

Keystone's Youth Ministry is not a separate entity from Keystone Church. The Purpose, Mission, Core Values, and Vision of Keystone Church include our Youth Ministry. We function as a piece of a larger body and wish to integrate ourselves with the rest of the church. Therefore, whatever Keystone Church endorses, we will endorse. Whatever Keystone Church supports, we will support. Whatever Keystone Church values, we will value. We will structure this ministry to align ourselves with the mission of Keystone Church.

Guiding Principle #2—Cooperating Youth Ministry:

Keystone's Youth Ministry is fought on two fronts—Junior High (Grades 6-8) and Senior High (Grades 9-12). Though these sub-unit ministries function separately from each other in space, they are united together in purpose. The goals and purposes of the youth ministry will be the same for both Junior & Senior High. By having a unified Battle Plan, we will create a synergistic team of Junior and Senior High Youth Workers who consolidate abilities and gifts and collaborate on ideas for the good of the overall youth ministry. We will maximize the efforts of our volunteers by utilizing their special skills for the entire youth ministry.

Guiding Principle #3—Air War & Ground War:

Keystone's Youth Ministry is composed of several components intentionally designed to target specific purposes. Sunday School, Encounters, Affinity Groups, Exposure Tours, and Explosions are complimentary components that function together for the greater purposes of the youth ministry. By Air War, we mean certain components target the masses. Air War tends to focus on the program to reach as many people as possible with Jesus. By Ground War, we mean certain components target the individual. Ground Ward tends to focus on the person to deepen the faith of a few in Jesus. We believe the planned and artificial environment created by the program aids the Air War's effectiveness; meanwhile, the unstructured and natural interaction of youth workers and

teenagers aids in the Ground War's effectiveness. We will unite the efforts of the Air War and Ground War under the canopy of our youth ministry's purposes.

Guiding Principle #4—Attractional & Missional:

Keystone's Youth Ministry uses Attractional and Missional components so that teens would be reached with and transformed by the love of Jesus. Certain sessions will be more Attractional in nature, thereby drawing a large crowd of people to hear about Jesus. Other events and sessions will be more Missional in nature, thereby deepening the faith of people in Jesus. We see Jesus use Attractional ministry when he performs miracles and preaches to the crowds. We also see Jesus use Missional ministry when he withdraws with a few to explain lesson more deeply. We will couple Attractional and Missional components to reach and deepen the faith of as many teens as possible.

Making it Stick:

Within each component, our goal is to immerse ourselves in the theme and purpose. Everything we do should be saturated with sticky concepts to bring teenagers' attention to Jesus. We need to create deep grooves in the minds of our teens by constantly walking the same path over and over again. We will have a greater impact when more tactics relate to the theme.

We have unique and talented volunteers who are able create certain sticky tactics. If a Junior High youth worker is a gifted graphic designer, we will let her develop handouts for both Jr. & Sr. High. If a Senior High youth worker is a gifted carpenter, we will let him design a background for both Jr. & Sr. High. Since our topics and themes are united throughout the youth ministry, our efforts are consolidated and our energies will go farther.

Youth Workers:

As God has graciously added to our flock, we continually have a need for additional shepherds to lead, protect, feed, and care for our sheep. Since it will only be as strong as the youth workers we have in it we are always looking for quality and diverse youth workers. Excellent youth workers are not limited to any gender, age, personality, or interest; they just need to love Jesus and love teenagers!

There are literally hundreds of tasks which must take place every week just to maintain our youth ministry. Some of the tasks don't require much expertise. Taking attendance or taking out the trash are both fairly low skill responsibilities. These tasks are numerous and super important! They may only take a minute or two, but if left for one person, they'd be impossible. Dispersed among many, they're simple.

Some of the things we do require some talent or skill. Everyone has something to offer that no one else can. Not just anyone can lead worship. If someone without the gift-set tried, he or she would get frustrated and disinterested quickly! Likewise, someone else could be energized doing the same task. Many of the things that will distinguish Keystone's Youth Ministry as something special will come because we have youth workers who find ways to do what they love and are good at!

A goal of the youth ministry is to train anyone called to the ministry to be someone who does the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12). Those who are trained can then train others (2 Timothy 2:2). Our hope is to so thoroughly equip and enable volunteers for ministry that the youth ministry will function even when the youth pastor is absent.

Bad Reasons to be a Youth Worker:

- It pays the bills. By definition, volunteering doesn't pay. Free pizza, soda, candy, and weekend retreats are perks, not payment.
- It fulfills a Christian service requirement. We want shepherds who love the sheep, not hired hands who run away when things get tough.
- It boosts my self-esteem. Our youth ministry does not exist to provide adults with an entourage of young people to stroke their pride or lousy self-image. It is demonic to desire the praise, adoration, and attention of teenagers. This youth ministry does not exist for you.
- It enlarges my pyramid scheme. Any agenda that doesn't point toward Jesus is a bad idea. This youth ministry does not exist for your purposes.
- You want to see the lives of youth transformed by God's work through you.

Good Reasons to consider being a Youth Worker:

- You want to see the lives of youth transformed by God's work through you.
- Teens enjoy being around you.
- You enjoy being around teens.
- You were impacted by a youth ministry.
- Your heart breaks for lost teenagers.
- You love Jesus and the people he loves.

Qualifications:

Pastor Brandon was hired as a 24 year old, single guy with no youth ministry experience and without a Bible degree. Age, marital status, ministry background, and Bible training may be factors in making an effective youth worker, but they by no means qualify a person for ministry. Above all else, youth workers must feel drawn to this ministry. It may be tough to explain or quantify, but youth workers should feel called to youth ministry.

- We want youth workers who are passionate about Jesus. Spirituality and "god" talk can lead to all kinds of trouble if Jesus isn't at the center. We desire youth workers who have a deep, unquenchable soul thirst for Jesus and want to see others shift worship off their idols and onto Jesus.
- We want youth workers who love teenagers. Teens can be loud, rude, awkward, dramatic, self-absorbed, apathetic, inconsiderate, impulsive, and a whole host of other despicable traits. But teens can also be broken, lost, hurting, afraid, neglected, searching, and many other fertile soils that are ready for gospel of Jesus. Our love for teenagers must run deeper than commonality; it must overflow from a heart that wants to see Jesus' name lifted high above all other names.
- We want youth workers from all ages, genders, races, backgrounds, occupations, and interests. Teens will naturally gravitate toward youth workers who were like them. A diverse team of youth workers will attract a diverse group of youth to hear about Jesus.

Expectations:

Unspoken expectations lead to frustrations. The following expectations serve as a guideline for what the youth worker should be and do.

- Maintain consistent spiritual disciplines of prayer and Bible reading.
- Live a repentant lifestyle worthy of emulation.

- Pray for youth and this ministry.
- Use special gifts and abilities within this ministry.
- Be a servant within this ministry.
- Follow through with assignments.
- Be CYPP approved by Keystone Church.
- Attend monthly training sessions. (1 hour)
- Attend weekly youth sessions, arriving 30 minutes prior & staying 15 minutes after.
- Lead an Affinity Group of 8-12 teens with another youth worker.
- Know the names and interests of the teens in your Affinity Group.
- Know details of life of 3-5 teens in your Affinity Group.
- Look toward developing a special relationship with 1-2 teens.
- Make contact with at least one teenager from your Affinity Group during the week.
- Leave your comfort circle to initiate conversation with new teens.
- Commit for one year minimum.

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