

Mentoring Information

South Florida Church of Christ

Broward Youth Ministry

Fall 2007

Youth Ministry Roles and Responsibilities

Parents:

- Find a mentor for your child
- Monitor your child's behavior in church activities
- Help your child with his/her daily personal relationship with God through prayer and Bible study
- Have family devotionals regularly
- Set a Godly example
- Provide rides and money for activities
- Oversee and encourage the relationship between your child and his/her mentor
- Regularly communicate with Youth Shepherds
- Don't over-schedule your child (don't require your child to baby-sit younger children during important activities etc., and *help* your child make time for weekly meetings with his/her mentor)

Youth Workers:

- Give input and help run middle and high school activities
- Have a discipling relationship with at least one child
- Have Bible Studies with middle and high school students
- Attend meetings related to youth ministry
- Occasionally teach classes

Youth Shepherds

- Aid parents in accomplishing their responsibilities
- Plan/execute/oversee/chaperone youth activities
- Work together with youth workers and provide support
- Help with Bible Studies

Mentors:

- Have a **discipling** relationship with at least one child
- Meet on a weekly basis with the child
- Provide friendship, spiritual guidance, and someone to talk to for the child
- Occasionally asked to chaperone special events, like retreats & monthly devotionals, especially when the child they are mentoring is attending

Youth:

- Obey their parents
- Respect authority
- Live as disciples

General Information

Establishing Great Relationships between Mentors and Parents

BUILDING TRUST

Safety trumps fun

Appropriate supervision, ratios

- Safe driving, seat belts etc.
- "When in doubt, *leave it out*"

Be reliable!

- Do what you say you'll do
- Be where you say you'll be & on time

Keep parents in the loop!

- Consistent communication
- Be respectful
- Empathize

Set guidelines for confidentiality

Establish with both parent and child BEFOREHAND

- Respect privacy
- Never promise to keep confidential anything that would endanger the child's safety or well-being

DEALING WITH CONFLICT

Be the peacemaker - greet everyone with a smile; set a tone of peace and faith that whatever the conflict, it will be worked out.

Listen - hear what they have to say; take brief notes if necessary; try to determine if the conflict is directed at you or something else (conflict at home or school???)

Be humble - admit your mistake and apologize if you caused hurt feelings or embarrassment

Clarify miscommunications - find out exactly what was said and done; do not assume you know what all parties are thinking; correct any wrong information

Keep good records - if you have a problem, document dates and specific behaviors; record facts not feelings or opinions

Involve the teenager - let the teen tell his/her side of the story; ask questions in a non-threatening way; this may help parents see the problem in a new light.

Be confident - explain your strategies and choices without abandoning your belief system; be clear about your goals for the child.

You should be seeking advice and seeking to learn about the special challenges of teens, in general, and of this child in particular. Establishing a great relationship with the parents will prevent many conflicts.

Strive to find cooperative solutions-work together to find ways to handle the problem; offer to have a follow-up talk and maintain consistent communication,

****Remember, the youth ministry is a tool used to help teens love God. Ultimately, however, parents are responsible for the spiritual training of their children.*

SOUND THE BATTLE CRY: BECOME A MENTOR

February 20, 2006

You can play a crucial role in a young person's life by becoming a mentor,

Aaron *grew* up in a *very* volatile home. He had four fathers, three of which still live their lives from one prison sentence to the next. He had always hoped for a dad, someone he could love and trust, but every time, he was disappointed. At age fifteen, Aaron determined to live for Jesus Christ against all the odds. At this point, he needed the input of Godly older males more than ever. The commanders of his school's ROTC program became some of **those** men as well as his pastor and a volunteer in the local church he started to attend. Through these mentors, he began to understand the abundant *life* and true love that God had for him.

Just before summer, 14 year old Megan started showing up at church. She was from the poor area of town and looked uneasy around the other kids in the youth group, not really knowing anybody. The youth pastor, however, noticed her and offered her a scholarship to attend youth camp, where she surrendered her life to Jesus Christ.

The joy of God is evident on her face, and she is finally starting to get acquainted with others in the youth group. Right now, her life is in one of the most tender, moldable stages it will ever be in. What *she* *learns* about Christ from his followers within the next *few* months will be pivotal to her understanding of Him for the rest of her Christian life.

The problem *is* that she has no support to go home to, and she has nothing but the same despondent group of friends to return to **at school on** Monday. *Unless* someone steps in and significantly renews her mind by the teachings in God's word, she is **in danger** of never fully realizing her freedom in Christ and fully escaping the grip that the world has had on her. Boys like Aaron and girls like Megan are waiting for a mentor just like you.

"Like me?" you may ask. "Yes, like you." As you know, most homes in America today are not providing the love, security and sound truth that every teenager craves. This causes emotional wounds, insecurity and doubt. It causes teens to fear that if people really knew *them*, then they wouldn't be accepted. Because of that, many of them are being lured into traps like eating disorders, cutting, popularity, isolation, witchcraft, alcohol and premarital sex.

This is a time in their life when they need affirmation and truth spoken into them by older people they can look up to. If Truth can take root in their core and form their identities, America will have a free and healthy generation of young people. This is our responsibility.

"Well," you might ask, "how do I get started?"

First, familiarize yourself with the youth at your church. Make a point to talk to them before and after services or when you walk past them on your street_ Remember Aaron? Well, one of his current mentors greeted him before church service one day and just kept talking to him week after week. They have a fabulous relationship now, and it all started by showing interest and creating small talk.

Don't be afraid **to just start talking**; teenagers are some of the **most social people** you will ever meet. Taking initiative will not only help you determine who to mentor, but it will also help break down some hidden barriers.

Another way to get involved is by attending your church's youth group and helping out at youth events. The adults that youth talk with the most are the ones that work with them week after week. They are also the ones who make the most impact in their lives. Ask if you can be part of the Sunday School classes once a month or so. Sit in on them and listen and maybe even add your input every now and then. Not only does this communicate that you love them, but it helps to gain their trust.

The next thing to consider is what age group to focus on. Middle-schoolers will most likely be dealing with their sense of identity as worldly pressures start sinking in for the first time. This is when most youth begin a downward spiral away from church.

A typical high school student will need a lot of practical advice for how to deal with society. It's important to be real. Seniors in high school seem to be in a completely different world. They are dealing with becoming adult and making life altering decisions for the first time. This is when wise counsel, vision and a heart like God's heart are pressing needs in their lives. Rapidly developing people are in all of these age groups, but the real development that should be taking place is a transformation into the likeness of their God.

Above all pray. Everyone can identify with a certain age group or type of person. Ask God to show you how He has gifted you and who He wants you to mentor. He has worked mightily in your life and he want to teach and disciple others through you. Prayer is the only way to unleash the power and blessing that God already has stored up for this new relationship. Believe that God will do incredible things as you pray.

You are equipped to take action, there are youth all around you and now is the time to act. Make it your goal this week to speak to three different youth. Remember to take the initiative, engage in their lives and keep trying. You may have a position in their lives that no one else can fill. Determine which age group you want to seek out and pray that God would reveal the right person or group to mentor. You can even give your youth pastor and school teachers a call this week to see how you can get involved. And don't give up seeking, praying and loving.

Remember Aaron? Because of the example, time, love and input of the mentors in his life, they built a foundation of truth that has caused him to become an honorable man of God. Aaron continues to seek out mentors to this day and with this support system, his life will faithfully and forcefully advance the kingdom of light. But Megan is still waiting. Carefully consider this question. Who is the Aaron or the Megan in your life that God has called you to?

*You are welcome to republish this article once you include the following text and link at the end of the article:

Read youth culture news, youth ministry articles, and join the fight for America's young people at www.battlecry.com.

Comparison of Childish Faith and Mature Adult Faith

Childish Faith	Mature Adult Faith
Good Christians don't have pain or disappointment	God uses our pain and disappointment to make us better Christians
God helps those who help themselves	God helps those who admit their own helplessness
God wants to make us happy	God wants to make us into the image of Jesus
Faith will help us always explain what God is doing (things always work out)	Faith helps us stand under God's sovereignty even when we have no idea what God is doing
The closer we get to God, the more perfect we become	The closer we get to God, the more we become aware of our sinfulness
Mature Christians have answers	Mature Christians can wrestle honestly with tough questions because we trust that God has the answers
Good Christians are always strong	Our strength is admitting our weakness
We go to church because our friends are there, we have great leaders and we get something out of it.	We go to church because we belong to the body of Christ

Mentoring Guidelines

The goal of mentoring is to help the kids build a deep and meaningful relationship with God, to prepare them to study the Bible, and to get them ready to make their own decision to make Jesus Lord. Build for the future — you want to help this child become an adult Christian who will stay faithful, contribute to the body, and impact the world.

Getting Started as a Mentor

- It is preferable (but not necessary) to **already have a relationship** with the child and his/her family.
- Communicate with the youth ministry leaders and/or shepherds about the kid(s) you could potentially mentor.
- Make sure you are Kingdom Kids approved and complete a driving application.

Building a Relationship

- Building a strong relationship and great communication with the parents is crucial.
- Once you begin mentoring a child, please arrange with their parents to have a meal together with the child and his/her parents so you can all get to know each other.
- Then work to build a relationship with the child, spending time on the phone talking and having fun together.
- The relationship should be one of fun. It is as important as any other discipling relationship in the Kingdom. Keep in mind that this may be the first experience these kids have in any discipling relationship, so make sure that it is excellent in every way!
- Be sure to follow all Kingdom Kids guidelines. Although not required, you may want to have another disciple with you when you spend time with your child. The best way to accomplish this is to hook up with another mentor and take two kids together with two mentors. Be sure when doing this that each mentor is spending time with his/her child (not just having the two kids hang out together). The goal is for YOU to build a deep and trusting relationship that will see them through their Bible studies into becoming a disciple.
 - You should meet with your child once a week for a fun activity, dinner or lunch with their family, or attend a youth ministry event with them. You need to commit to meeting with the child at least every other week with weekly phone calls.
- Until you build a trusting relationship, you should initially stay close to their house. You could play a game outside their house or go to a nearby park or fast food restaurant.
- When setting up times together, it is important that you let your yes be yes and let your no be no. Do not cancel times you have planned with the child unless your reasons are of dire importance and you have exhausted all other possible ways to work it out. If you do cancel, communication is important with both the child and the parents. Set up a new time to get together immediately.
- There should be at least one church-planned youth ministry activity per month. Although mentors are not required to attend, this is a great opportunity for you to spend time with the child. If you cannot attend, be sure to follow up with the child by asking what the event was all about.

Character Studies

- The character studies are for children who WANT TO STUDY THE BIBLE. Do not study with them simply because he turned 12, his parents told you to do it, or you decide that it's time. *Our goal is to develop kids who decide they want to pursue a relationship with God.*
- Character studies are enclosed in the mentoring packet.
- Be sure to read the introduction to the character studies and the "how to use character studies" sections.
- Character studies are not necessarily done in order. Pick the topics that your child may need the most help with during that particular time in his life.
- As you build this relationship, it is important you (the mentor) share about your relationship with God including quiet times, answered prayers, and victories.
- Help them to see that your decision to become a disciple is the best decision you've ever made!
- As you begin the character studies, be sure to communicate with the parents about the direction you heading with specific studies.
- Encourage your child to begin to build relationships with the disciple teens. This will become very important as they get closer to beginning the studies to become a Christian.
- As the child matures, it may be time for him to begin the Foundations of Faith (First Principles) studies. This is different for every child and getting advice is crucial.
- It is important to involve other disciple teens, youth leaders, youth workers/shepherds, and adult Christians in the Foundations of Faith studies.
 - Seek advice! Make it your goal to communicate regularly with the youth ministry leaders about the progress of the Bible studies.
- Enjoy time with the child you are mentoring! See how God has called you to be a part of this tremendous opportunity to eternally impact a young person's life.

Why does Youth Ministry exist?

Reconcile the lost to Christ

Help as many teens as possible, become disciples of Jesus

Kingdom Kids and teenagers in the community

Mature the Redeemed in Christ

Instill biblical convictions in teen disciples to keep them faithful to God after high school.

Mobilize Disciples for Christ

Inspire teen disciples to make a spiritual impact on the world during and after high school.

Baptism is only the Beginning...

DEFINING YOUTH MINISTRY SUCCESS

In youth ministry, success cannot be measured by today's baptisms. *True success will be measured 15-20 years from now and beyond.* We are building for the future. Youth Ministry success hinges on making sure the next generation becomes faithful adult Christians who change the world!

MENTORS CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS

A recent study revealed a single faith-nurturing factor that was present in more than 90 percent of the families surveyed. Those (kids) that stuck with their faith (as adults)... had a half-dozen "mentors" present during their growing up years.

Faithful Parents, Faithful Kids, Johnson & Yorkey