

## **Organizing Youth Ministry in a Small Church**

By Chuck Gartman

Every church setting is unique, but the smaller church setting has its own set of unique challenges to get ministry accomplished in a way that really does make an impact. Think of the number of hats a youth minister in a smaller setting has to wear: Sunday School, Discipleship Training, Missions Education, Music, in some instances - recreation, administration, counseling, and the list goes on. So the question is: How can I organize to do effective ministry? Below are some elements of a strategy to get the work done in the church.

1. Take a look at your organization. What functions need to be performed? After you have determined what your organization will be, then decide ideally how many workers it will take to get the work done. Seek to create a balance of ministry functions so that you are not just doing one little thing over and over.
2. Decide who will be the leader of each of those functions. Pray about who you ask, and ask the people you ask to pray about accepting the positions before actually beginning the work.
3. Plan your calendar along with the input of the leaders you have enlisted with the needs of youth in mind. Once you have determined the goals and priorities of your youth ministry, you can add to the calendar the events and activities that address those priorities and goals. Remember: don't overbook your calendar.
4. Have the leaders of the various function groups in your church enlist additional volunteers. If you are the Youth Minister or Youth Ministry Coordinator, you may need to help them with the names of people in your church who can/would help.
5. Be careful about asking the same people over and over again to do all the work in the church. They will appreciate it if you are able to enlist others to help with the ministry.
6. Provide and encourage training for the people who have been enlisted to do their work you need completed or managed.
7. Provide resources for people in the various organizations to do their work. You may be on a limited budget, so consider seeking some of the resources from your association office or from your state convention. Another source for resources is a large sister church who may have an abundance of resources. Don't hesitate to ask.
8. Think about using the Lead Team Approach to Youth Ministry. Handouts will be shared during the conference to help with this.
9. Continually evaluate along the way to make sure that the needs of the teenagers in your group and those of the leaders you have enlisted are being met by the ministry you are providing.