

THE CONTACT

AFLC Youth Worker's Newsletter

Winter 2017

Parents of Teens





Coffee Shop

"I Sometimes Forget that You Don't Have Teens"

A month before my 26th birthday I began my first full-time call into youth ministry. With seminary in the rear view mirror, I was eager to roll up my sleeves and be active in the lives of teens and their families. Seminary provided me a terrific training on handling God's Word and internship prepared me for connecting with people in congregational life and in the community, but almost nothing ever captures that sense of now being the person responsible in a particular ministry role.

Within the first year, I noticed that the parents of teens often seemed isolated from one another. Crazy schedules between employment, congregational life, and kids' activities had a tendency to leave parents sitting in their cars on a Wednesday night catching their breath. The idea was floated with the youth board (a team of three sets of parents - all that had a child in the youth ministry ages) of having a "Parents Only" session once a quarter. The idea was to get parents in conversation together about the challenges of raising kids to follow Jesus in this culture and to devote time for praying for one another.

It was a valuable idea, but I missed part of the opportunity. The first few had more of me sharing things as a pastor/youth leader and less of parents connecting. After one session, a parent asked me a detailed question. I thought about it a moment and gave my best reply. In a look of realization she commented, "I sometimes forget that you don't have teens!" Message received.

Although I was a leader, I could not fully relate to the challenges that this mom faced...and apparently my answer showed it. In the sessions that followed, I put more time into creating the environment for parents to be talking through things together. No matter where you are at in your youth ministry tenure connecting with parents and inviting them to connect with one another is very valuable.

*Pastor Jason Holt
Is the National Youth Director
for the AFLC*



YOUTH WORKERS WEEKENDS January 19-21, 2018

National youth leader annual gathering
Association Retreat Center, Osceola WI

Best Rate by January 3, 2018

REGISTER HERE

YWW Promo Video: <https://vimeo.com/218029468>

YWW Stories: <https://vimeo.com/242250574>



Video Clusters

60-minute offerings for volunteer and vocational youth leaders

Tuesday, Dec 19 at 3PM (Central)

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/306350773>

Thursday, Dec 21 at 8PM (Central)

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/437575669>





Reference Room

By: Sharon Rykhus

Now that I've Had Teens: A Mom's Perspective

"Shoulda, woulda, coulda."

"Life isn't fair."

"Do as I say, not as I do."

"You are not the only one who doesn't get to..."

As parents, the pressures of parenting are high. Train up a child and all. We fall back on these phrases when speaking about our roles as parents. We run ourselves ragged ensuring that our teens are equipped with the right coaches, tutors, and opportunities to compete in this world. Our teens are feeling the pressure of getting into college, or competing for the spot on the team. Parents feel the pressure, too. We repeat the phrases that our parents said to us and are shocked that they came out of our mouths. We say them in moments when we feel unprepared for the challenges that we face with our teens.

As youth leaders, you feel the pressures too. Busy schedules, activities every day, and more teens in your ministry than in any household are reality. Perhaps you feel like parents have abdicated their role as spiritual

teacher to you. It may seem that they treat you like you are just another coach, tutor, or supervisor. (Trust me, I realize that for a few families in your sphere, you are all of those.) It's easy for parents to feel unequipped to train up their teen to be grounded in the faith. You may even be thinking that you were led into YOUTH MINISTRY, not family ministry. The truth is, God called you, and you answered. And sometimes that means training up the parents as you work with teens. While it's a parental responsibility to lead teens to faith, in today's busy lifestyles, it can be difficult to make time to prioritize Christian teaching into our parenting.

Walking alongside parents so that they are equipped to prioritize faith into the daily routine of their lives with their teens is part of the role of a youth leader. Encouraging parents to be accountable to their teens can be awkward. But I want to encourage you to incorporate parents into your plans for your ministry. I know you might be overwhelmed. I hear you when you say that you don't feel like you have time for your own family. I also want you to know that you are covered in prayer. And that you are a voice that our teens need to hear. You are making a difference.

Looking back on the years that our teens were in youth ministry brings me a smile. I may have been a volunteer in the room, but it was because of a youth leader who partnered with parents to train up our teens.

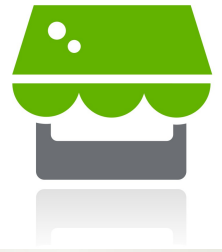
Sharon Rykhus
*AFLC Youth Board Member,
2019 FLY Committee Advisor,
& Mother of Three Adult Children*



Reflection Questions

- 1) How can you encourage parents to be involved in youth ministry? Within the youth group activities? Within their homes?
- 2) What resources can you share with the parents of teens in your sphere? (If you are coming up empty, check the next page.)
- 3) Who is someone in youth ministry that you have witnessed make parents a priority? What could you learn from them?

Convenience Store



CPYU's "Just Add Parents"—Portable 3-session Parent Tool

<http://bit.ly/2ljyh1j>



HomeWord—Seminars for Parents

<http://bit.ly/2i7rnal>



Youth Leadership—Parent Sessions

<http://bit.ly/2y7AzXc>



"Be With" Training—An Extension for Parents

<http://bit.ly/2y88vTv>



AFLC Youth Ministries



Mrs. Chris Rasmussen
AFLC Youth Ministries
Administrative Coordinator
chrisc@afmc.org
763-545-5631

Pastor Jason Holt
National Youth Director
jasonholt@afmc.org
763-412-2005

Mr. Daniel Keinanen
FLY Convention Coordinator
flycc@afmc.org

FOR YOUTH WORKERS

The Contact is issued twice a year to encourage and engage youth workers of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC).

FOR CONGREGATIONS

The AFLC is a growing fellowship of 275 congregations whose members believe that the Bible is true and that everyone needs Jesus.

FOR TEENAGERS

AFLC Youth Ministries exists to win teens to Christ, to build them in God's Word and God's love, to equip them to live and share their faith, and to multiply maturing teen disciples of Jesus.

