

Youth Education Summit Minutes – 11/26/2007

What issues do youth deal with?

How do we connect the Youth to Christ?

How do we connect the Youth to the Church?

Hour 1.

What are the issues that the youth face today?

- Peer pressure – social clichés. Who are your friends but more what do they look like?
- Priorities – activities and work, classes at school, church gets pushed to the back
 - Parents? Living through their children
 - Entertainment is a top priority
 - Job
 - Sports – more pressure to perform, parents and peers and coaches (college scholarships)
- Church is a church is a church... let's go to the one that has the best band, theology takes the bottom rung of the priority ladder
- Alcohol
- Drug of choice, drug culture
- Identity? Who am I? where do I fit in?
- Parent's apathy, parents not being parents
 - Parents not teaching the faith to their children
 - Parents not being "leaders"
 - Lack of guidelines and discipline
- Youth in a rural setting is different from other places
- Pressure to be perfect, self image (difference between "hazing" and fun games)
- No family time, together... family must be a priority.
- Access to technology, myspace, eMail, Youtube, cell phones, etc... connected but disconnected.
 - Don't know how to react in the "real" world.
 - They don't know how to communicate "face to face"
- No time alone. No down time.
 - "short attention span"?
 - Channel surfing...
 - Postmodern multitasking
- Popular culture has more influence on youth of today than previous generations
 - Not able to process and evaluate what they see and hear.
 - With leadership they often can differentiate, they are often open to these discussions
- The devil, the world and our sinful nature...
 - Parents and children don't know how to apply their faith to all these temptations.
 - Disconnect to our faith
 - How do I as a Christian react to these things?
 - We are not living our faith
 - Repackaged old sins
- All religions are equal to Christianity
- Role of authority, parents, pastor
- "R" rated hallways.
- Dress, clothing,
- Modesty
- Popularity is the main issue as it has always been.
- Evolution is a huge problem it is taught to the children K-12.
- Forgiveness – an opportunity to point youth to the Savior
- For youth leaders, you are making a difference even if you don't see any progress.
 - Developing contacts

- Where are the rest? Start with where you are at.
- Look at the positive
- The youth will see that they are important to you.
- Sometimes the youth are the most active members of the church.
- “Get the youth group to do that.” -- Sometimes the youth are looked at as “servants” doing things that we don’t want to do
- Churches want “magic bullet” for youth
- Do we feed the need for “entertainment” instead of instilling a desire to serve?

Hour 2.

Youth information can be found at <http://sd.lcms.org>

Suggestions for Youth Leaders

- Our job is to be faithful not just relevant
- We have something to offer that no one else has to offer
- Faithful and truthful. This is what we have to offer that no one else has to offer.
- Kids want substance. Yearning for the truth.
 - “If you want counter culture go to church.”
- We can’t be irrelevant
- Becoming the confidant of the youth
- Establishing relationships with the youth
 - “The Richest Man in Town” book by B. J. Smith
- The best high school youth group is a middle school youth group
- Camp Minniboji – 4th grade
- Remember the children on their Baptism Birthday
- Relationship to the Body of Christ not just one individual

Notes and suggestions for The Youth Board

- #1 problem is commitment of the youth. Camps, family vacation, school, work, etc... where do we put the emphasis?
- Some of the planning may have been lacking in recent gatherings, more and better preparation
- District sports camps with the correct emphasis
- Structured material for youth in congregational youth meeting and bible studies
 - Use what is happening in the community
- Breaking up the national youth gatherings
 - Size of the national gathering
- SD gathering to continue to meet at Concordia Colleges.
- More “Homework” before state gathering, bible studies that prepare them for youth gatherings
- Cost is an issue, money / priority issue
- More stability in the SD gathering, similar to Minniboji. Trying to connect to the momentum here
- Would Rapid City work as a gathering area?
- Family Camp?
- Parent / child relationship and faith building events
- No so much emphasis on “Youth Gathering”
- Training for parents: parenting, faith building, etc.
- Parents connecting with other parents
- Ask (poll) church for themes for the gatherings