

CONTENTS

IS THIS HANDBOOK FOR YOU?	11
I. RETHINKING YOUTH MINISTRY.....	13
Age Categories Grade-Level Categories Church-Defined Categories Developmental Categories Ministry to/with/by Youth The Umbrella Concept Think About It Again	
II. IMAGES FOR YOUTH MINISTRY.....	25
The "Bill Cosby" Image The "Merlin the Magician" Image The "Anne Sullivan" Image The Storm Home Image "Julie, the White-Water Rafting Guide" Image The Worship Image The Artist Image	
III. KEY INGREDIENTS FOR EFFECTIVE AND FAITHFUL YOUTH MINISTRY.....	34
Intentional Ministry	
Relational Ministry Programmatic Ministry Faithfulness, or Gospel, Ministry	
IV. BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS.....	50
Basic Data Gathering Be Yourself Respect Confidentiality Key on Common Interests Find Time for the Teens Turf Issues An Adult Friend, Not a Peer	
V. THE RIGHT ADULTS	61
Having a Faith to Share Enjoying Young People An Appropriate Sense of "Calling" Using the Gifts of Adult Volunteers Recruitment Educating the Adults A Brief Word for Larger Churches A Brief Word for Smaller Churches Educating Teens for Leadership Burnout	
VI. CHOOSING TOPICS AND DEVELOPING YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMMING.....	80
Finding the Right Topics Leaders Youth Church	

Wider Youth Community
The Program Pyramid

VII. RESOURCES FOR PROGRAM.....	92
What Resources Can and Cannot Do Thinking About Resources	
Evaluating Resources	
VIII. WORKING WITH OTHER YOUTH MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS.....	106
The Juvenile Court System	
The Scouting Movement	
Independent Christian Youth Organizations	
Youth Ministry Resourcing Groups	
Support Groups	
Interest Groups	
IX. A YOUTH FELLOWSHIP MODEL	122
Fun and Fellowship Missions/Service Projects Program	
Worship	
X. MAKING YOUTH FELLOWSHIP WORK.....	132
Smaller Churches	
Time of Meeting	
Meeting Place	
Publicity	
Budget and Finances	
Officers	
Business Meetings	
Developing Youth Leaders	
Youth Involved in Programming	
Evangelism (or Increasing Your Attendance)	
XI. TEN COMMON MISTAKES IN YOUTH MINISTRY.....	153
1. Unclear Definition of Youth	
2. Mistaking Youth Fellowship for Youth Ministry	
3. Thinking That Youth Ministry Is Just Program	
4. Forgetting the Family and School Focus	
5. Recruiting the Wrong Volunteers	
6. Ignoring the Older Youth	
7. Not Allowing Youth to Lead	
8. Being Too Tied to Tradition	
9. Overemphasizing Entertainment	
10. Ignoring Youth's Hunger for the Holy Conclusion	
NOTES.....	160

Is This Handbook for You?

A Quick Health Checklist For Youth Ministry

- Are the youth events open to members of the church only?
- Does your church struggle with what to do with high school graduates who want to be a part of the youth group?
- Is youth fellowship what your church thinks of as youth ministry?
- Is your youth ministry just programmatic in nature?
- Does your youth ministry focus basically on youth?
- Does your church ask for adult volunteers for youth ministry from the pulpit?
- Are parents of teenagers always understood as the leaders of the youth ministry?
- Has your church made a decision to "concentrate" on the younger youth?
- Are youth expected to be on certain church committees but are never elected or, if elected, never participate?
- Does your congregation always expect the youth to lead certain events, such as an Easter sunrise service?
- Do the parents talk about youth ministry as a way to keep the youth busy or off the streets or out of trouble?
- Do members of your congregation think the youth ministry is too ambitious or requires too much of a commitment by youth?
- Does your church simply hire a youth pastor and turn everything over to him or her?
- Are the numbers of youth at Sunday school or youth group declining each year?
- Is there a budget squeeze at your church, resulting in a shrinking budget for youth?
- Do you serve some kind of meal at every youth group meeting?
- Do youth always get mailings from the church addressed to their parents?
- Do the adults at the church wonder what the names of the youth are?
- Do all the mailings to the church about youth ministry end up on the pastor's desk or in the trash can?
- Has your church's youth ministry had a succession of adults associated with the program over the past five years?

If the answers to many of these questions are yes, then the youth ministry at your church may be in trouble. If you are interested in thinking about the youth ministry of your church in a new and dynamic way, or if you wonder why answering yes to these questions may mean that the youth ministry of your congregation is in trouble, this handbook is for you.