Turn Youth Ministry Components into Action

Advocacy

✓ Keep parish and church leadership aware that teens are a vital part of the parish and require adequate resources, support, and attention.
✓ Get a teen on parish council.
✓ Stay abreast of community developments, issues, and events that affect young people.
✓ Celebrate World Youth Day at Sunday liturgy
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Catechesis

✓ Conduct youth group meetings with a theme or specific learning objective.
✓ Have small or large group bible studies.
✓ Conduct parish retreats for teens.
✓ Plug into diocesan, regional, or national retreats, conferences, and events.
✓ Give youth opportunities to share life experiences; talk about teen issues.
✓ Create opportunities to catechize via social media (i.e. saint or topic of the day)
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Community Life

- Use icebreakers and games at all meetings/gatherings.
- Create social and refreshment times at each meeting.
- Send each teen a birthday card; pull birth dates from parish census.
- Host fun events and/or take trips together (i.e. ball games, concerts, bowling parties, pizza parties, lock-ins)
- Get to know as many teens as you can in your parish and greet them. Chat with them at every opportunity.
- Go on their “turf” to visit (i.e. extracurricular events, Starbucks, Chipotle)
- Volunteer time at Catholic or public schools for events (i.e. after-prom, dances, fundraisers)

Evangelization

- Reach out to young people who are active in their faith.
- Break away from a “club” mentality in the youth group. Make sure everyone knows they are welcome and feels welcome!
- Train/empower young people to reach out to their peers with God’s Word.
- Meet teens where they are, especially in regards to technology (i.e. social networks and cell phones **with special consideration of diocesan guidelines and web policies**)


Justice and Service

✓ Arrange for teens to help in soup kitchen with chaperones or, better still, with parents.

✓ Arrange for opportunities for teens to serve through organizations like nursing homes, CSS (Service Saturdays), or OYYAM (Gospel Road).

✓ Try simulation experiences (i.e. food fasts or homeless situations)

✓ Invite speakers from homeless shelter, social service agencies, advocacy groups, environmental groups, and/or respect life groups.

✓ Process any of the above at youth meetings and be certain to allow teens to share their personal experiences.

Leadership Development

✓ Get adequately trained and updated in youth ministry skills, youth development, and youth culture.

✓ Create and empower a youth leadership team that helps to plan and execute youth events and activities.

✓ Train teen leaders!

✓ Create a parish youth ministry resource library.

✓ Consult the OYYAM for resource ideas, training, and direction.
Pastoral Care

✓ Take time to listen when a young person needs a friend.
✓ Offer programs on teen issues (i.e. peer pressure, wellness issues, sexuality)
✓ Train teens in peer ministry skills.
✓ Post crisis hotline numbers where teens can see them.
✓ Arrange parent skills programs for parents or parent support groups.
✓ Create a contact list of professionals for referral in instances of high risk issues.
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Prayer and Worship

✓ Integrate prayer at all meetings and functions.
✓ Involve teens in Sunday worship with specific roles.
✓ On occasion, hold a special liturgy for teens.
✓ Collect teen prayer resources and use them at youth meetings.
✓ Conduct parish retreats for teens.
✓ Create text or Twitter prayer chains.
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