



A service of the
Northwest District
of the
Lutheran Church -
Missouri Synod

Youth Supports

A resource to encourage and empower youth
leaders for the expansion of the Lord's kingdom.

March 2002 - Volume 3, Issue 3

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Assess
current
needs...

Create
awareness
and
commitment.

Nurture the
support
assets...

How Can a Congregation Implement the Assets?

(Editor's note: Take time to read the first part in this series of articles on Developmental Assets. You can find a copy at

<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/YouthSupports/ys0202.html>

Reading that first will help to understand this part of the series.)

Understanding what *Developmental Assets* are and how they can positively impact young people is vitally important in today's world. Connecting people to make them tangible for our youth is the real challenge of youth ministry. In a publication made available by Lutheran Brotherhood entitled *Tapping the Potential*, Glenn Seefeldt and Eugene Roehlkepartain list ten asset-building strategies for congregations. Here are five of the ten they listed:

1. Assess current needs and programs -

Assess young people's needs and how they are being addressed through your congregation. Use the framework of developmental assets to evaluate existing programs – religious education, parent support, youth group, outreach, worship experiences, and other opportunities – and to begin identifying possibilities for innovative strategies. Also celebrate and strengthen congregational efforts that already nurture assets.

2. Build a shared vision -

Asset building can be particularly powerful in helping to shape a vision that gives focus and direction to youth work. When youth, parents, volunteers, congregational leaders (including clergy and the congregation's governing body), and other members all have a role in shaping your vision, it can unite and energize the whole congregation. Then, with vision in place, you can develop the concrete strategies that will move the congregation closer to that vision.

3. Create awareness and commitment -

All members in a congregation may not lead the youth group or go on retreats, but they do influence young people's asset base. As adults accept responsibility for asset building, the congregation can truly become a place where young people are nurtured by the entire faith community. Get out the message that *everyone* is an asset builder, and encourage members to make personal commitments to some kind of asset building.

4. Nurture the support assets -

Nurturing positive relationships in families, with peers, with younger children, and with adults of all ages is an innate opportunity congregations possess. It is vital to break down the barriers that tend to isolate youth. To

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K-scope!

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do this will require promoting a youth-friendly environment in which adults know the names of youth, talk and listen to youth, and engage in activities with youth. A goal might be for every child and adolescent in the congregation from age 5 to age 18 to have a sustained relationship with at least two non-parent adults in the congregation.

5. Empower youth through service and leadership –

Because of their commitment to service to others, most congregations already involve young people in service projects. In addition to the benefit to people being served, these opportunities can be instrumental in the healthy development of youth, particularly in nurturing in young people caring values, commitments, and skills. These efforts should involve opportunities for youth to interact with caring adults as they work side by side, even allowing youth to be involved in the development of such projects.

The other five asset building strategies are scheduled for next month's Youth Supports issue. In the meantime, I pray these ideas for developing assets in your congregations might change the way and look of youth ministry in our entire church. God's peace to all of you as we seek His guidance in caring for His people.

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Find past issues of Youth Supports at:
<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/ysupportslist.html>

Kaleidoscope

Kaleidoscope is a great week long youth event for up to 4 youth per congregation. You can read and see photos about it at

<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/YTalk/April00/yt0004a.html>

This year's K-Scope is scheduled for July 7-12 at the Christ Lutheran Retreat Center at Belfair, WA (Hood Canal area). Registration cost is \$140. Contact Pastor John Schmidt at Kscopenow@cs.com or (253) 584-2565 for more information!

Youth Ministry Consultants in Your Area

Youth Ministry consultants help you to either fine tune your youth ministry, refresh it or get you started on a complete overhaul. Contact Dick Weniger at the district office at 1-888-693-5267 or email him at dickw@nowlcms.org for more information on how a Youth Ministry Consultant can help you and your congregation!

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