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Youth Supports

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

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- Nine Tips
- Lost In God's Space - Middle School Gathering October 3-5

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Nine Tips To Remember When Building an Effective Youth Ministry Program

(Editor: Jonathan Cleveland from Trinity Lutheran in Portland, Oregon, is a veteran youth minister. He offers in this month's *Youth Supports* article nine practical tips to remember and use in youth ministry in your congregation. It is well worth reading through at least twice!)

1. Always communicate with your Pastor if you do not have a working youth committee. You may have a Pastor with no personal gifts for youth ministry yet he is concerned for them and wants to support them. Most Pastors will support what you do as long as they are informed. I can't imagine pastors opposing a well organized, popular program for youth. Just let him know what you are planning so that he can feel a part of the process.
2. Activities should be planned around doing things at a low cost if not free. Take into consideration the number of agencies that are willing to provide youth discounts and group rates. With a mixture of economic levels in your group and if finances are a problem, your youth budget could come in to play covering the cost of youth activities.
3. Before interacting with other congregations on a district or national level, it can be helpful to first establish your group and programs, work on building relationships among your youth, and then offer to them what the district and national levels have to offer. 4. Most churches do not have a paid professional youth director or a DCE although every church should. Just as we have pastors in our church we need youth workers. But be careful. Effective youth ministry requires a team, not a lone ranger. Help from volunteers is invaluable.
5. Films, books, videos, and other resources that our Lutheran Publishers put out seem to be mainly geared to white, middle-class youth. For those in the inner-cities there are other resources out there that can be tapped. On the other hand, today's youth are more alike than ever before, so we need not assume that our kids will not relate to or understand something that seems a little strange to us.

...get the support and involvement of the parents...

Never limit youth activities to just members...

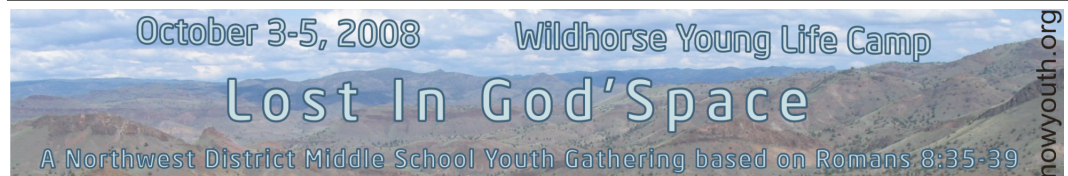
Middle School District Youth Gathering Oct. 3-5

6. As hard as it may seem, try to get the support and involvement of the parents as much as possible. We cannot be parents to the youth we work with and we should do everything possible to keep parents informed and involved.
7. Some youth do not travel or have the means to travel. When we travel it is an educational experience, an opportunity to learn about people and cultures that are new to them.
8. When planning activities, make sure that in your schedule you have time for picking up and dropping off young people. Most of the time, there is little parental support, and it first takes the youth involvement to reach the parent. Until you get the support needed, take into consideration that there may be youth that really want to be involved but do not have the transportation to get there. Provide it! And don't forget to include mileage reimbursement in your church budget for youth workers.
9. Never limit youth activities to just members of your congregation. As it says in John 3:3, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the Kingdom Of God unless he is born again." We will not be able to reach those who need to be reached if we limit our activities to just members. Encourage your youth to bring their friends.

—Jonathan Cleveland, Minister of Youth and Christian Education, Trinity Lutheran Church & School, Portland, OR <dce@trinityportland.org>

Find past issues of Youth Supports at:

http://www.nowlms.org/educational_services//YouthSupports.aspx



Lost in God's Space is a Middle School retreat for youth from all over the district - including Alaska, Washington, Idaho and Oregon. The cost is \$135 per person. The event is scheduled for October 3-5 at the *Wildhorse Young Life Camp* near Antelope, Oregon. All congregations should have received information about the event. For more information go to: <http://www.nowyouth.org/> and / or contact Ed Grassel at: egrassel@aslansoftware.com.

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