

TRANSITIONS



FAITH FORMATION IN
**CHILDREN
AND YOUTH:**
THE BIG PICTURE
AND THE SHIFTS
IN BETWEEN

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WHAT'S NEW?

Last year, we released the first version of this book. Yet, after a few months, we are now releasing version 2.0. What's changed since then?

First of all, we received tremendous feedback from readers like yourself. We've had time to allow the contents of this book to sit and digest. Because of that, we've been able to look at what we proposed a year ago with more depth and understanding.

Secondly, we were able to gather a significant amount of new data from the 2015 Canadian Youth Network Youth Worker Resource Lunch Tour. Over 450 participants provided their insights specifically focusing on the transition from high school to post-secondary life. These insights are a significant addition to the many great resources originally included.

The topic of transitions will continue to evolve as we all ponder, and learn, what makes for effective transitions especially for a person who grows up in the church. While we won't be releasing a new version every year, this subject will continue to grow as we all seek, under God's guidance, effective ways to help his children grow in their faith while in our care.

INTRODUCTION

Transitions: Revealing the Cracks Children and Youth Can Slip Through

James^[1] was new in my youth ministry. Invited by a friend, he definitely had a lot of energy. Some might say too much! Within a few months, James accepted Christ at a city-wide outreach event hosted by several local churches. I remember sitting with him as he made that decision. In the months to come, his faith seemed to explode. He shared with others about the good news of Jesus and invited them to our youth group. He studied his Bible (and he wasn't known to be an "intellectually-minded" person). He prayed fervently. He made every attempt to incorporate faith in every walk of his life. His parents, who were not Christians, remarked on his change of attitude. There was definitely a transformation in his life.

After high school graduation, he went to Kingston, Ontario, for post-secondary studies. As I moved on from that church my connection to James faded. A few years later, I found out from some mutual friends that James was growing distant in his faith. The spark didn't seem to burn deeply any more. He slowly drifted away from this church and, to my knowledge, from his faith. I've lost contact with James. Many of his youth group friends did as well. I don't know where he ended up. James fell through the cracks during a transition and became another statistic, like so many other young adults who have walked away from the church.

We probably all know of children and youth who have slipped through the cracks in life, particularly when there's a major shift in their lives (life stage or other circumstances). While there are plenty of resources for helping with micro-transitions (like a commissioning service or a tool to bridge graduating high school students into post-secondary school), many churches do not know how to address this from a macro, comprehensive or "big picture" level. **The purpose of this resource is to highlight key elements that churches, including church leaders, parents, mentors and ministry leaders, can use in supporting children and youth as they move from one life stage to another.** We aim to catalyze the conversation surrounding the topic of how churches can invest in children and youth as they move through different life stages, both from developmental as well as programmatic perspectives. Through our combined ministry experiences at CBOQ's Next Generation department, the shared expertise of others who serve in children and youth ministries, and the research and trends that currently confront us, we have become convinced that it is necessary for churches to adapt their approaches when discipling the next generation.

Together, we will consider some "big picture" elements that church leadership needs to address, from defining discipleship to setting a structural foundation that moves churches forward together. We will approach transitions from a programmatic need as well as the necessary investment into individuals, which we call "Sharing Life."

It is our hope that this would serve as a helpful resource for our family of churches as they consider their approaches to ministry and the discipleship of young people. This is intended to offer both abstract and practical ideas.

¹ Names has been changed for privacy purposes.

SECTION

A Response to the
“Hemorrhaging Faith” Report



In August 2012, James Penner and his associates released “Hemorrhaging Faith: Why & When Canadian Young Adults Are Leaving, Staying & Returning to the Church”, which was commissioned by The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada’s Youth and Young Adult Ministry Roundtable. Its purpose was to understand this demographics’ engagement with the church in Canada.^[2]

1. Children Leave the Church During Transitions

One of the key findings of the “Hemorrhaging Faith” report was that, as suspected, almost two thirds of children raised in the church had minimal to no involvement in organized church by the time they reached adulthood. However, the report revealed that the majority of the departures happened not just after high school graduation but also in the earlier transition points. In fact, the greatest drop-off transition was between children’s ministry and youth ministry. The research in “Hemorrhaging Faith” reveals that “we are losing more young people between childhood and adolescence than between adolescence and young adult years.”^[3]

Based on the research, the following conclusions were made:

The transition years to middle school, junior high and high school are highly stressful—many churches don’t expect and plan for supporting kids through these transitions.^[4]

We lose young people when they “graduate” from the ministry group for one age to the next (and ministry transition points may also include times when youth and church leaders are in their own transition periods)—especially if they are tightly connected to a youth ministry that gives them little exposure to other members of the church community.^[5]

Based on these findings, we recognize the need to identify key transition points and effectively move students through each stage, whether at a personal or corporate level.

2. The Impact of Early Adolescence

It may surprise some people, but the data seems to reveal that early adolescence may be an even more critical time on which to focus when it comes to nurturing an environment that fosters faith development well beyond the teenage years.

What Is Early Adolescence?

Adolescence is a term coined by G. Stanley Hall in 1907 to explain the period from puberty until a person is a fully functioning, contributing adult in society. Currently, adolescence is from ages 8 to 25. Early adolescence occurs between ages 8 and 14.

Adolescence is typified by an individual’s search for identity. These young people are searching for meaning and value in their lives. They often struggle with conflicting identity

2 Dr. Dave Overholt gives a great overview of the report at www.canadianyouth.net/?i=2306&mid=1000&id=411431

3 See “Hemorrhaging Faith” (110)

4 Ibid

5 “Hemorrhaging Faith” (113)

issues, weak self-esteem, and significant peer pressure in addition to struggling with academic, athletic and other performance-based activities. However, over the last two decades these physical, psychological and spiritual changes and challenges are happening earlier.^[6] This stage in life, known as early adolescence, is a time of transformation for children in grades 4 to 8, who range in age from 8 to 14.

Early adolescents are trying desperately to understand themselves and their world; where they can fit in successfully and happily. It is a time of great turmoil for some, while for others it is a time of great excitement and wonder. For most, it is both an exciting adventure embracing a larger world than their own and a terribly anxious time of uncertainty^[7]. Peers become more important to teens than parents during this time. There is a yearning to be accepted. Behaviour is often erratic and inconsistent. Independent, critical thinking begins to form (although it is not fully completed) during early adolescence. Andy Kerckhoff wrote a book called *Critical Connection: A Practical Guide to Parenting Young Teens* that helps readers understand this unique stage of life and how to better connect with young teens. Sarah-Jayne Blakemore elaborates through her 15-minute TED talk “The mysterious workings of the adolescent brain.” (bit.ly/1fUgG6e).

2a. Digital Identity Formation

Identify isn't just based in the physical world but also in the digital one. Previous generations would have referred to the digital world as virtual or possibly even “make believe.” However, today the digital world is as real as the physical one. Dr. Carl Pickhardt suggested the Internet now becomes a uniquely complicating factor in adolescent identity development.^[8] Dr. Katie Davis coined this new added layer as “Friendship 2.0.”^[9] Dr. Andrew Root infers the digital realm blurs time and space, and thus adds to the complexity of identify formation because identity is much more “liquefied.”^[10] This has profound implications on how one attempts to understand one's own identity. It exists both in atoms and molecules as well as binary 0s and 1s.

Early adolescence and digital identify formation are complicated matters in and of themselves let alone how we've traditionally approached adolescent development. But with children now establishing a digital presence (and in some cases, parents who are attempting to establish it for them at a very early age^[11]), these two staggering factors must be considered together, which plunges children and youth ministry into uncharted waters.



6 The field of early adolescence has grown so much that there is now a scientific journal dedicated to it called *The Journal of Early Adolescence* (jea.sagepub.com).

7 See growingupwell.org

8 <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/surviving-your-childs-adolescence/201405/adolescence-and-internet-identity> (March 29, 2016)

9 <http://www.washington.edu/news/2012/10/22/friendship-2-0-teens-technology-use-promotes-sense-of-belonging-identity/> (March 29, 2016)

10 <http://www.youthworker.com/youth-ministry/i-tweet-therefore-i-am-adolescent-identity-in-a-digital-age/> (March 29, 2016)

11 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/15/technology/personaltech/how-young-is-too-young-for-a-digital-presence.html> (March 29, 2016)

How Does This Impact Transitions?

Understanding this critical time of development is key to developing an effective transition strategy.

First, acknowledge that today there may be more overlapping developmental issues between children and youth ministry than in previous generations. Typically, a youth ministry begins at grade 6 or 7 (i.e., ages 11 to 12). However, because of early adolescence children's ministry may need to begin addressing issues that were typically seen as "youth ministry issues." For example, sexuality was previously not discussed until high school youth ministry. Given the biological changes happening in some children,¹² some of those issues may need an appropriate, initial addressing in children's ministry. Therefore, both children and youth ministry must have a common understanding so their messaging is consistent. Much of this is based on holistic discipleship as defined by an individual church.

Secondly, the actual moving of students from children's ministry to youth ministry is vital. As noted by "Hemorrhaging Faith," many students "drop out" from church between these stages because there was an inefficient bridging between the two ministries. It is often an overlooked area of ministry because this age group is "too old" for children's ministry but not yet ready for the youth ministry, at least not the way youth ministry is currently organized. It may also be a challenging stage for adult leaders, as young teens are often unpredictable in their behaviour. However, it is important that churches consider the ways they minister to the kids moving through this period. We will go more in depth in section 4.

The Biggest Faith Influences in an Adolescent's Life

The "Hemorrhaging Faith" study found four key factors, or drivers, influenced lasting faith development and young adults staying connected to church. (To understand these four key drivers, see Dr. Overholt's review: vimeo.com/66670908.)

Here is a summary:

- **Parents**
Parents are still strong influencers, whether positive or negative, in their children's faith development. Many student respondents to the "Hemorrhaging Faith" study indicated the faith practice (beyond going to church and praying at mealtimes) and lifestyle their parents exemplified and modeled were key in their own spiritual development. Unfortunately, some ministries have seen parents as obstacles in a student's life. If we do believe that parents are the primary caregivers, ordained by God to raise their children (whether or not they are Christian), our ministries need to work under that mandate and partner with parents. This doesn't mean just keeping parents in the loop as to what we are doing, it involves parental care; supporting them as they raise their kids. At the same time, we also know some situations where parents are neglectful or absent. We will address this later (see page 24).
- **Experience of God in Unique Ways**
There are moments when a person reflects and acknowledges the presence of God at a specific time in a specific place. These moments could be answers to prayer or perhaps

¹² The onset of puberty can now begin as early as age 8 (www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/nov/04/why-is-puberty-starting-younger-precocious).

they are specific events where the outcomes are attributed to God or the witnessing of God's actions in a particular circumstance. These "God moments" help to anchor a person's faith walk, especially in times of doubt. These examples of experiencing God in a unique way frequently come through experiences such as retreats, missions trips and Christian camping experiences.

- Community

It's clear, both biblically and anecdotally, that people need one another. It's part of our social needs. However, this isn't just a community of similarly-aged peers. Intergenerational friendships are vital in both the practice and journey of faith. They allow for a broader understanding of how faith is lived and provide a unique support that's different from parental or same-age peer relationships. "Hemorrhaging Faith" found that being in mentoring relationships was a key driver to establishing and maintaining intergenerational relationships.

- Teaching and Beliefs

The accuracy of doctrine is of course important, but also important to development is the space to doubt and process. God's truth can be difficult to comprehend at times. Students are looking for a space to process and wrestle with how God's truth intersects with their lives in meaningful ways without losing their belonging in their community. There is a distinction between teaching that empowers versus teaching that restricts. Empowering teaching is not the compromise of truth. Rather, it encourages students to explore God's truth more deeply, especially with controversial issues. Restrictive teaching essentially shuts the door to any discussion. It's usually seen as a "That's the way it is and that's it" approach. One question to ask yourself is whether the teaching actually embodies "truth in love." Is God's word being taught without compromise within a community that allows others to doubt, question and wrestle without risking condemnation? These spaces are vital in allowing for faith growth in an individual.

"Hemorrhaging Faith" gave us a snapshot of the issues we need to address. It also gave us hope in seeing that we can foster life-transforming, Spirit-driven opportunities for students to thrive.

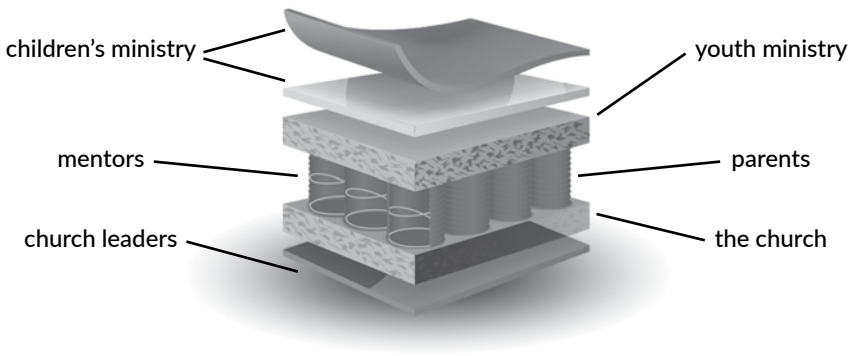
SECTION

Recognizing All the Players



There's an old and wise saying: "It takes a village to raise a child." This is just as true in a child's faith development. Ultimately, we recognize it is God who desires children to develop profound, life-changing faith in Jesus. No one person is responsible for the entire faith development of a child. After all, the Apostle Paul reminds us that God assigns various roles and responsibilities to different people,¹³ recognizing that no one role can complete the discipleship process on its own.

In a church ministry context, we identified four key roles that complement one another in that faith development process.¹⁴ In some ways, it's like a pocket-coiled mattress. All individuals are connected into the base, which is the church governed by the church leaders. Each coil or individual is supported by the parent (hopefully) and a mentor. The various ministries the individual is part of are highly visible connection points.



In this section, we will clarify the influence of the key roles and how they are complemented by the other roles.

1. Parents

As noted in the previous section on the significance of parental influence (see page 21), parents play a key role in a child's development, including faith development. From a sociological perspective, the majority of parents are the dominant influencers, especially for very young children. As a child grows older, influencers will come from a growing range of sources, including people, content and life circumstances.

In an ideal world, parents or guardians would be the catalysts in their children's faith formation. They would begin teaching and passing on the stories of God to their children, training them in the ways of the Lord. In essence, they would be making disciples who happen to be their children.

However, even in an ideal world, parents are not the sole influence. As children move into adolescence, they attempt to make sense of this faith that has been passed to them. To

¹³ See 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

¹⁴ We recognize that faith development does not happen solely within the local church community. There are other parachurch organizations and agencies that have a role. For the purpose of this discussion, we will focus specifically on the local church community.

do so, children will question, wrestle, doubt and revisit their faith. This is what makes the community of God so essential in faith formation. Parents can draw on others to come alongside their children as voices of influence—not to be a mouthpiece of the parents, but to pass on the stories of God and be living examples of God’s love and truth. This isn’t to say parents can now shift the responsibility onto others, but rather they share the responsibility more broadly with others.

In our world today, we recognize that not all children have positive role modelling happening at home, specifically in regards to a parent or parents who are not modelling an active Christian faith. In some circumstances, parents may be neglectful or absent in this role. In these cases, it is even more imperative that churches come alongside the children and, if possible, also alongside the parents to see the whole family engage in this spiritual journey.

What parents should look for in:

- Church leaders: As the overseers in the discipleship process for all its church members, church leaders can help parents understand how they and their children fit into the “big picture” of faith development. They help to provide the 10,000-foot look at ways the church can support families in discipleship, both individually and as a collective.
- Sharing Life relationships: These individuals provide voices of influence specific to their children. Parents can seek out key individuals to invite into their children’s lives. Just as important is parents having for themselves mentors and trusted older fellow believers to support them at each stage of their children’s lives.
- Ministry leaders: They provide shared opportunities to understand and stretch faith for all children and youth. Parents can look to ministry leaders such as a Sunday school teacher or a youth leader for key resources to help understand their children and ways to deepen their own parenting.

2. Church Leaders

In some churches, the only time the church leaders get involved in children or youth ministry is when there’s a problem. Sometimes, they accept the ministry report at the annual meeting, discuss details like the number of participants and the budget items, and move on.

Church leaders, whether they be the senior pastor, elders, deacons or the church council, need to see their role as being responsible for the intentional and strategic disciple-making process in their church context. After all, Jesus’ mandate to his church via his disciples is to go and make disciples. Even in a congregational model, while the congregation has the final say on major issues, the church leadership is entrusted with the day-to-day oversight of the church’s operations. While the leaders may not be intimately involved in every church member’s development, they need to understand the overall scope of the faith formation process and how people can grow closer to Jesus and his church at different stages in their journey. With that knowledge, church leaders can ensure all the appropriate resources and ministries are available (as far as possible) in their context to all members of the family.

As the above diagram suggests, church leaders are vital in both the establishment and the solidification of that foundation so that the church as a whole knows the direction of discipleship in their church’s understanding of it.

What church leaders should look for in:

- Parents or guardians: These people typically have lived the longest with their children. While they may not understand everything that's happening with their children or how to respond, they usually know them best. Ask parents for input in how they see their children are developing, and what kinds of supports the children and/or the parents need.
- Sharing Life relationships: If Sharing Life is an ethos a church as a whole embraces, church leaders should expect and equip ALL their Christ-following members to be engaged in a mentoring or Sharing Life relationship. While church leaders aren't expected to coordinate those connections, they can hold congregants accountable and ensure they are provided with resources to connect with others.
- Ministry leaders: While church leaders oversee the overall framework for discipleship, ministry leaders give insights on how it can work best. Ministry leaders take ownership in how a particular ministry group (e.g. toddler, primary, junior high, senior high) can effectively disciple children and youth in conjunction with the other ministry resources in churches.

3. One-on-One (Sharing Life) Relationships

One-on-one intergenerational relationships are a critical need for healthy faith development in children, especially for those in their adolescent years. Each Christ-following member of the church has a mandate to pass on the stories and teachings of God to the next generation.^[15] While some may choose to influence as ministry leaders, all Christians have the responsibility to do so no matter what their ages. (We will discuss the concept of Sharing Life on page 18).

What Sharing Life friends should look for:

- Parents and guardians: Parents can give day-to-day insights on what their children are experiencing and other factors that could impact these children's faith formation.
- Church leaders: Church leaders need to give clarity in the biblical mandate of discipleship and how they as individuals can contribute to it.
- Ministry leaders: Ministry leaders are usually the primary teachers of faith understanding and knowledge. By knowing what's being taught, the Sharing Life friends can help the students unpack the teachings and help make them applicable to the students.

4. Ministry Leaders

Ministry groups (e.g. children, youth, seniors) give a common-ground foundation for a particular age and stage. They establish the common metanarrative and vernacular of the group in age-appropriate terms. Usually, ministry leaders are specialists in that age group, and have key insights on the culture of that age range.

The uniqueness of age-specific ministries is their opportunities toward outreach into the community. While a church would invite a whole family to participate together, most children and especially youth first-points-of-contact happen through their peers. The age-specific ministry is a bridge between the invited friends and the church community. As that individual becomes more established hopefully in their faith, they become grounded within the church community.

¹⁵ See Psalm 78:1-4

What ministry leaders can look for in:

- Parents and guardians: Parents can give day-to-day insights on what their children are experiencing, and other factors that could impact the children's faith formation.
- Church leaders: Church leaders need to set the overall direction and understanding of discipleship.
- Sharing Life relationships: Sharing Life friends need to take the teaching done within the ministry group and help students apply it in their lives.

BONUS: Peer-to-Peer Relationships

Peer-to-peer, age-similar friendships are unique from the other roles. As children get older, those friendships become stronger influences. Since the peers are on journeys of their own, they may not want or be able to grasp the overall faith formation process. Nonetheless, whether or not it's intended, peers play a key role in the faith development. By caring for people individually—taking time with each one—the church can help establish a more fertile space for faith growth as a peer group.

In many ways, the way these four roles engage with one another is a dance. There are intricacies and layers of engagement that cannot be expressed in a simple matrix. (We would need a 3D virtual model to show how all four roles dance together.) As a dance, each role has unique responsibilities and dependencies to operate in harmony to support a child or youth in his or her faith development.

SECTION

The Underlying Foundation



Before we can address transitions directly, we need to look at four key factors or influences that precipitate this discussion of discipling our children. These factors provide both the launching points and a framework of understanding of what it will take to facilitate effective transitions.

- A holistic definition of discipleship is foundational.
- Mentoring and Sharing Life relationships are key in this process.
- Parents are the primary faith influencers in their children's development.
- The church's role is to equip and encourage parents in raising their children while assisting in their children's faith development process.

1. Holistic Discipleship

Common understanding and vision are key when it comes to addressing transitions. Without these, every person and ministry splinters off into their own ideas and objectives. Having that common understanding gives everyone a defined starting point and the vision gives direction to everyone.

Common understanding and unified vision begin with a shared definition of discipleship. Discipleship is a word regularly used in our Christian lexicon, but it has ambiguous connotations.

- What is a disciple?
- What elements are core to the disciple-making process in children and youth?
- What are characteristics that young people demonstrate after coming through your next generation ministries?

As a local church body, there must be consensus of what the discipleship process (or disciple-making experience) looks like. This isn't just a one-sentence definition, but instead a clear, concrete understanding of where the disciple-making process takes a person. It must include markers that serve as signposts after each stage (e.g. at ages 5, 11, 13, 17, 20 and 25) to ensure intentional bridging through life stages. Some people define it through a discipleship matrix.

Here are a few examples of how different traditions define growth in discipleship through various matrix systems:

- Faith United Methodist Church (for small children): bit.ly/1F4AoGn
- Family Land Map created by Family Matters: bit.ly/1Iqd08E
- Excellence Ministry Coaching: bit.ly/1E3CQsJ
- Heartland Community Church: bit.ly/1zVSkE8
- Dr. Shawn Anderson, author of *Living Dangerously*: bit.ly/1E3CUZw
- CRCA Resource Center: bit.ly/1Fi3Iwd

By having that high-level understanding, the various ministries more easily recognize their overall objectives are and how their ministry's mandate achieves them. This unified, common-vision enables the different ministries to know, at least to some extent, about the children's and youth ministries—the general needs, strengths and challenges students face and the kind of students they intend to send out into the next stage of life.

It is important to recognize that not everyone enters the discipleship process at the same time. Some people begin very early in their lives, many in their tween years. Others enter discipleship in high school; still others in adulthood. What this means is there is another dimension to the discipleship matrix. The matrix needs to include both spiritual development and life stages.

In this construct, a discipleship matrix does not become a linear progression, but as with almost all matters of faith, there is an ebb and flow that doesn't necessarily follow a sequential order. This is why there's a need for other "dimensions" in this matrix. The main point is having those common markers is critical to ensuring churches know the direction in which they're moving, both at the collective and individual levels. Without common markers, we're pulling people in fragmented directions that do not help disciples thrive in their faith development.

One challenge we've come across is that discipleship is seen as a program. North Point Church refers to this in their document "Practically Speaking" (insidenorthpoint.org/practically-speaking). Their Practice #2 is "Think Steps, Not Programs," which involves first understanding the end goal or objective then formulating the appropriate steps to reach it. In other words, it's not about creating a series of activities for a person to go through like an assembly line. Rather, given an individual's unique faith journey, the "thinking steps" approach seeks to identify where God is leading that person and provide the appropriate tools and experiences that will help move that person forward well. When there are overlapping opportunities that God is moving a person towards, we can then synergize and cluster them into a "program."

As a family of God, if we're to walk alongside others in building their faith, we need to have a clear idea of who God created us to be, and then move towards that end in a collective effort.

2. Sharing Life and Mentorship

Mentoring has become the buzzword in the discipleship of children and youth. It's the biblical model of discipleship that Jesus demonstrated and Paul with Timothy exemplified. That's more than a buzzword! It has been shown to be one of the most effective and high-impact means for supporting students in their faith development, because mentors are able to address very specific developmental needs (while ministry groups address chronological needs). Studies show that intergenerational relationships are vital and formative in faith development.

James Frazier, author of *Across the Generations*, says, "The best way to be formed in Christ is to sit among the elders, listen to their stories, break bread with them, and drink from the same cup, observing how the earlier generations of saints ran the race, fought the fight, and survived in grace."¹⁶ However, it's not often we see children and youth relating deeply with adults from their communities, despite the research showing that young people desire to be mentored. Adults give several reasons for not mentoring:

- They don't have time to mentor on a high level every week.
- They're not sure what mentoring really is. (Many adults have never been mentored themselves.)

¹⁶ See *Intergenerational Christian Formation* (17)

- They're uncomfortable being around youth. This usually translates into fear of conversing or relating to youth because some adults just "don't get them."

While it's true mentoring is part of a Christ-follower's biblical mandate (cf. Psalm 78:1-8), we can't expect people to just "do it" without first being equipped. It's important to note is that investing in the next generation is not just for youth or children's ministry workers. This is something that every mature follower of Jesus is called to do. Therefore, as the church, we need to invest in people and equip them for this calling. The Sharing Life model helps with the transition into mentoring, as jumping right into being a mentor might be tough for some. Sharing Life involves sharing life with one another, teaching and learning from one another, so think of it as an on-ramp to mentoring. While this may not fit the strictest definition of mentoring, Sharing Life is a way to build intergenerational relationships that foster trust.

We'll use a six-degree scale to break down different aspects of this continuum. Think of them as degrees of involvement instead of a sequential progression. People can move between these degrees of involvement depending on their life circumstances.

1st Degree (1D)

Every relationship begins with some basic knowledge of the other person. What's his or her name? Parents' names? What grade? Which school? What interests? The key to this is consistency. Is that adult^[17] regularly connecting with that student? This doesn't have to be a long conversation (maybe just a couple of minutes), but it does need to be consistent. It's proactively interacting with students each week—greeting them, seeing how they are, and finding out about their lives (e.g. "How was that math test last week?"). The crucial part of this level is following up. The key is reminding students they are noticed and are missed if they are not around. It is a way to demonstrate that they have a place in this community.^[18]

2nd Degree (2D)

This is the deepening of the conversation from 1D. Whereas 1D's purpose was to connect for a brief time, now the adult extends the conversation. Consider this the 2+ level conversation. Here's an example:

- A: How was your math test last week?
- C: It was really hard.
- A: What did you find most difficult?
- C: I still have trouble with fractions.
- A: How much time did you spend studying?
- C: At least 3 hours.
- A: It sounds like you've put a lot of effort into this. I'm proud that you took that much time.

This degree maintains that consistency but delves deeper into students' lives. To engage the next generation is to enter into their world rather than pulling them into yours.

¹⁷ While we use the term "adult" in this section, this person can be a youth Sharing Life with an elementary student. It refers to the older individual in that relationship.

¹⁸ In CBOQ Youth's ministry cycle, the first step for most students is the recognition they need to experience a sense of belonging in a faith community before they identify with or embrace that of a personal faith (cboqyouth.ca/about-us).

3rd Degree (3D)

At this level, the adult is looking for ways to enter the student's world. This can include:

- attending special occasions like a sports tournament or a recital (mentors may consider bringing along their families)
- meeting at a coffee shop after class near their school.

It doesn't have to be frequent. However, entering their world gives a vantage point into other areas of the students' lives. It also broadens their familiarity with the mentors by seeing them in a context outside of the church building. (We've all had moments where we recognize a face but forget a name because we see someone in a completely different context.) Stepping into their world deepens the sense that adults are making time for them on their turf.

4th Degree (4D)

At this level, adults have gained trust so now they can begin to invite students into their world. In Doug Fields's book *Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry*, he uses the example of bringing them along to run errands. Perhaps an adult would like to invite the student's family over for dinner. Adults can even partner with a friend and invite both students and their families for a meal. 4D looks for opportunities for the student to see the adult living outside a church context.

5th Degree (5D)

One great way to share life is by serving together. Typically, this involves common interests and/or gifts. The key here isn't just ministering together, but continuing those God-exploration conversations. It also provides ways to share common experiences where the mentor and student begin to see each other more as peers versus leader and student. For example, an adult may teach a student how to use the sound board in the sanctuary. The adult intentionally goes beyond the "how to" stage of operating the sound board to helping the student unpack how this is a ministry. They can continue conversations like in 2D. The focus isn't just the ministry itself, but another opportunity for the adult and student to learn and serve together with shared experiences.

6th Degree (6D)

Formal mentoring occurs at this stage. We define this as intentional, intensive, time-defined explorations of God's directives for that individual. Let's break this down:

- Intentional: Both the student and mentor understand the purpose of gathering.
- Intensive: They realize this may delve into appropriately "hard" moments as the student moves deeper into his or her own faith and exploration.
- Time-defined: Most mentors cannot commit to being "mentors for life." An understanding exists between the student and mentor on how long this particular context will last.
- Explorations of God's directives: Mentoring isn't about going through a curriculum or a set of learning objectives (although that may be part of it). The purpose is helping students hear and understand what God is saying to them. Mentors are to help facilitate and create space for God's directives to become as clear as possible.

The point of this is to intentionally focus and assist students in uncovering what God may be revealing, whether through Scripture, through everyday circumstances or through in-depth self-reflection. Bo Boshers' book called *The Be-With Factor* explains this process well.

These personal mentorship relationships are extremely influential and important, but mentorship is broader than these levels of engagement. Communal mentorship really takes the form of Sharing Life. Sharing Life is about a whole community engaging in holistic discipleship. It's not a program to implement; rather, it is a culture a church embraces as a whole and the adults take ownership in doing their part. It is imperative to build those relationships with the support of the parents. This isn't to say the adult reports to the parent, but the adult builds the parent's trust as that individual walks alongside the child. Through it, the adult becomes another voice that child trusts. The mentor cares for the child, models a life following Jesus and is there for the child as he takes the next steps in his faith journey.

3. The Role of Parents: To Nurture the Faith of Their Children

Parents are the primary faith influencers in the lives of their children. In addition to resourcing children's and youth ministries, we strongly believe that churches must intentionally resource and support parents in their role as the primary faith influencers in their children's lives.^{19]} Parents need encouragement for the small and crucial steps along the way. The following are suggested resources that may encourage and equip parents to grow in their own faith, in the parenting of their children, and in their families' overall spiritual health.

While Children Are 2 to 8 Years Old

While children are very young, it is important for parents to model and establish healthy rhythms of growth in their own walks of faith. This sets the tone for how they interact with their children about God, faith, discipleship and growth. Here are a few recommended books to assist parents in this step.

- *My Monastery Is a Minivan*, Denise Roy
With a relaxed and appealing writing style, Roy discusses the many times when she has noticed the divine presence operating within the very ordinary and daily experiences of a middle-aged woman with four kids, a mortgage and ten extra pounds, as she describes herself.
- *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Brother Lawrence
The Practice of the Presence of God is a book of collected teachings of Brother Lawrence, a 17th-century Carmelite monk. The basic theme of the book is the development of an awareness of the presence of God, which Brother Lawrence reflected on as a dishwasher. It is a good encouragement for parents during their own monotony of laundry and diapers.
- *The 5 Love Languages of Children*, Gary Chapman
This book can help parents discover their child's primary love language. It shows

¹⁹ We recognize that families come in a variety of configurations and there are situations where a parent may be neglectful or absent in a child's life. For our purpose, "parent" will also refer to the legal guardian of that child.

parents what they can do to convey unconditional feelings of respect, affection and commitment in a way that will resonate with their child's emotions and behaviour.

- *Boundaries with Kids*, Henry Cloud and John Townsend
Many well-intentioned attempts to discipline children get lost in tangled family systems without boundaries. This book helps parents set limits and still be loving parents. This resource will help parents define legitimate boundaries for their family. Above all, it teaches parents how to instill in their children the kind of godly character that is the foundation for healthy, productive adult living.
- *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, Peter Scazzero
This resource explains a deep, beneath-the-surface spiritual formation paradigm that integrates emotional health and contemplative spirituality. Ultimately, children will be able to respect the faith that their parents profess if it is coming from a mature and healthy source.
- *Sacred Rhythms*, Ruth Haley Barton
Spiritual disciplines are activities that open us to God's transforming love and the changes that only God can bring about in our lives. Picking up on the monastic tradition of creating a "rule of life" that allows for regular space for the practice of the spiritual disciplines, this book examines seven key disciplines along with practical ideas for weaving them into everyday life. A healthy spiritual rhythm in parents' personal lives will overflow to the family system as a whole.

While Children Are 8 to 12 Years Old

During these tween years, parents are in the trenches of the biggest transition that children will go through: early adolescence. It can be a confusing time with all the hormonal, cognitive and spiritual changes their children experience. This is where the axiom "it takes a village to raise a child" is most evident (as discussed in section two). Bringing other trusted adults into a student's life benefits both the child and the parent. It is vital for parents to build a network of supporting peers and trusted mentors to help navigate early adolescence. The following books help provide context and some practical steps with tweens.

- *The 5 Love Languages of Teenagers*, Gary Chapman
Children at this age start to receive and express love differently than when they were younger. It is important that parents adapt alongside their children, so their parenting and discipleship can be rooted in a well-communicated affection and love.
- *A Love Worth Giving*, Max Lucado
Often when parents feel like they are burnt out and low on love for their kids, they grit their teeth and "try a little harder." Lucado encourages the weary giver to spend time receiving love before attempting to pour it out. The premise of this book is to "receive first, give second."
- *The Gift of Being Yourself*, David Benner
Sometimes parents can get stuck in the rut of functioning as "parent" or "teacher" to their child. This book encourages parents to stay attuned to the unique individual God has wired them to be. Kids will reap more in their relationship with parents if they are

staying true to the person God has designed them to be.

- *“Tween Us”* blog, Shannan Younger
This is one of many parent blogs that highlight the adventures of living with a tween. Parents may find humour and encouragement by taking a few minutes to tap into these sites and help discern which battles are worth fighting along with other tween parents.

While Children Are Adolescents and Into Adulthood

As kids begin to push the boundaries of their independence, parents want to appropriately prepare them for adulthood. This becomes the final stage before their children take their own societal-contributing, independently thinking, on-their-own life path (although it may take several years before it comes to fruition).

In Section Two we discussed the different players in a child’s faith formation. As a child gets older and starts puberty, this is a key time for parents to connect the child with another trusted adult. The default is to expect the children’s ministry leader or youth leader to be that person. While those ministry leaders are a vital asset in a child’s faith formation, the burden of every child’s faith formation cannot be completely shifted to them. Rather, parents can “diversify” the voices of influence to include people who are not ministry leaders to be in those Sharing Life relationships. It becomes the parent’s responsibility to help involve those key adults in their child’s life.

As my (Alvin’s) two children are close to the start of adolescence, my wife and I identified three adults per child who we believed would be key influencers. We invited them to become involved in our children’s lives with the Sharing Life paradigm. These adults were keen on doing what they could to invest in our kids.

Recognize that these relationships will take on lives of their own. Parents cannot (or arguably should not) manipulate these relationships. Parents must trust that God will speak his truth through these adults and that their children will trust those other voices of influence. In time, a child’s faith support network grows wider than what a parent can provide, which helps the child move forward into adulthood. These books help to unpack ways to engage adolescents and young adults.

- *Help, Thanks, Wow*, Anne Lamott
During the complexity of teenage parenting, parents can take refuge in simplicity. Straightforward prayers help them to hold on to Christ through any storm. Lamott clears through the rubble of her own life and offers up three simple prayers: “help”, “thanks” and “wow.”
- *And Then I Had Teenagers*, Susan Alexander Yates
Yates offers encouragement and guidance to parents of teens and preteens. Drawing from her experiences raising five teenagers, she offers parents a unique blend of stories, compassion and advice.^[20]
- *Boundaries with Teens*, John Townsend
Townsend gives important keys for establishing healthy boundaries—the bedrock of good relationships, maturity, safety and growth for teens and the adults in their lives. The book offers help in raising your teens to take responsibility for their actions, attitudes and emotions.

20 www.amazon.ca/And-Then-I-Had-Teenagers/dp/0800787919

- *Tending the Family Heart*, Marie Hartwell-Walker
Hartwell-Walker highlights the importance of creating and nurturing the “heart part” of our families. The heart of the family is what transforms the very ordinary and repetitive tasks of daily life into expressions of mutual support and care. It is what celebrates the “dailyness” of love and belonging and helps everyone cope in times of challenges, separations and even tragedies.
- ”Parenting Teens”, Crosswalk.com
This Christian site contains many articles that can encourage parents along the journey and create a sense of solidarity with other Christian parents as they interact with their teenagers.
- ”Teenagers”, Dr. Laura Markham
This section of the “Aha! Parenting” website will help give insight to parents about their teenagers and the best ways to interact with them.
- *The Blessing*, Gary Smalley
Children crave their parents’ blessing, and without it, they may become angry and driven or detached and empty. It is important that parents release children with a blessing to be the people they are wired to be. Smalley offers practical, effective methods to heal broken hearts and families.

4. The Role of the Church: To Support Parents

Data collected by George Barna, a leading researcher in faith and culture, revealed the importance of churches empowering families to take the lead in the spiritual development of their children. He writes:

In situations where children become mature Christians we usually found a symbiotic partnership between their parents and their church. The church encouraged parents to prioritize the spiritual development of their children and worked hard to equip them for that challenge. Parents, for their part, raised their children in the context of a faith-based community that provided security, belonging, spiritual and moral education and accountability. Neither the parents nor the church have done it alone.

You can read more about this and other findings in Barna’s book *Transforming Children Into Spiritual Champions*.

It is important for churches to recognize that simply providing good programs for children and youth is not enough. It is important that at each stage, churches connect with, equip, and support parents and caregivers with the encouragement and tools they need to navigate and guide the spiritual transitions children are moving through. Good communication and partnership with families is critical. This is something that can begin right from birth, for example as churches connect with families through planning child dedications. A church understands its role in a child’s life isn’t to take over the spiritual development process, but to come alongside a parent in raising that child. While it’s true that “it takes a village to raise a child” not all those voices are equal. The primary responsibility lies with the parent.^[21] The

²¹ This is true in an ideal setting. However, if the parent is absent or neglectful in that responsibility, the church needs to supplement the discipleship process for the child.

church has a responsibility to both support the parent directly and to facilitate the common objectives many of them hold together (similar to the baptistic idea of “interdependence”). This is where church programs can be an integral part of a child’s discipleship, but they cannot be the sole source for discipleship.

Practical Ways for Churches to Support Parents

Provide Parent Seminars

There are qualified experts who can provide a framework of understanding for parents as the culture and the developmental process affect their children. Contact any of the following professionals or visit their websites for more information about their fields of expertise.

- **Leanne Cabral, Speaker (Toronto)**
Equipping Parents to Bring Faith Home and Lead Their Family with Intention
leannecabral.com
- **Adam Clarke, Children’s Associate at The Peoples Church**
Children and Social Media; Navigating the Adolescent Years
AdamC@ThePeoplesChurch.ca
- **Vivian Chu Chen, Youth Unlimited Youth Worker**
Second Generation Issues; Chinese Families and Church
vivchuchen@gmail.com
- **Marianne Deeks, Youth Unlimited**
Preteen Girls; Adolescent Sexuality; Bullying; Anxiety; Self-Esteem
mdeeks@rogers.com
- **Dr. Karyn Gordon, dk Leadership**
Bridging the Gap; Teaching Empathy in Kids; Lost in Translation
dkleadership.org
- **Dr. Merry C. Lin, Family Issues Speaker**
Life-Proofing Your Kids; Stress and Your Kids; Loving Your Kids Too Much: Healthy Parenting Strategies
drmerrylin.com
- **Paul Robertson, Youth Culture Specialist at Youth Unlimited**
Setting Boundaries to Build Character; How Technology Affects Family; Understanding the Tween to Teen Transition
paul@paulrobertson.ca
- **Deb Tempelmeyer, Director of Sales at David C Cook**
Equipping Families and Churches with Materials for the Spiritual Formation of their Kids
Deb.Tempelmeyer@davidccook.ca
- **Brett Ullman, Speaker**
Parents 101; The Sex-Talk
brettullman.com

Communicate About Transition Points

Transition periods from one stage to another can trigger just as much anxiety (sometimes more) for the parent as they do for the child. Church ministries need to be on the same page with regard to what the upcoming transition will look like, and discuss that with the parent(s). Section 4 will elaborate on this.

Provide Parent Resources

There are different types of resources that churches may use to encourage parents at different points in their parenting journey. There are resources that will help them in the “big scope” of things; other resources may nourish parents at different seasons in the path. It is imperative for parents to tend to their own spirituality as they journey with their kids. Kids will look to them for cues. If a parent is deeply drawing from Christ and building strong and clear communication with his or her children, it will be smoother for children to experience Christ through the parents.

The following are some “big picture” resources that help parents develop an understanding of their role as the primary faith-nurturers:

- *Connecting Church & Home* by Dr. Tim Kimmel is a helpful and practical book that shows how churches and parents can work together to make each other's efforts more impactful. Given the reality of our culture of busy churches and families, this resource presents a clear plan for passing on faith.
- *Revolutionary Parenting: Raising Your Kids to Become Spiritual Champions* by George Barna provides research on the lives of young adults with strong Christian faith and looks back at the steps their parents took to shape their spiritual lives as children.
- *Spiritual Parenting* by Michelle Anthony focuses on cultivating an environment for growing children's faith. A parent's own authenticity and relationship with Christ is what matters most.
- *Parenting Beyond Your Capacity: Connect Your Family to a Wider Community* by Reggie Joiner and Carey Nieuwhof is a great book for parents to recognize their role in leaving a spiritual legacy for their children. The family exists to communicate faith to the next generation and they present five values from which to parent in light of the Scriptural instruction in Deuteronomy 6:4-12.
- *Dedicated: Training Your Children to Trust and Follow Jesus* by Jason Houser, Bobby Harrington and Chad Harrington unpacks the simple, practical, and essential practices of spiritually parenting and discipling children in the home.^[22]
- HomeFront (homefrontmag.com) is a resource for parents, available in digital or print format. There is also bulk pricing for churches. Each month focuses on a different theme and it contains a lot of helpful ideas for building faith in the home.
- CBOQ Youth and Family Ministry monthly eNews for parents contains the top 10 web articles related to children, family and youth ministries. Parents can sign up to receive this monthly resource at cboqkids.ca/sign-up.
- “Out of the Nest” (stickyfaith.org/articles/out-of-the-nest) is an online article for parents whose children are moving out of the family home.

Provide Parental Care

If we believe that parents have the primary God-given responsibility for raising their children, the church needs to affirm and support that premise in a God-honouring way. We can provide them with resources and cheer them on as champions in their own journeys of discipleship and their journeys alongside their children. We can also ensure that we don't leave them isolated, by having healthy and effective age and stage ministries and mobilizing the congregation to mentor those kids.

22 www.zondervan.com/dedicated

SECTION

The Church and Children

Transitions They Travel Through Together



1. The Church's Discipleship Approach and Structure

As explored earlier, in most cases parents have the primary responsibility to tend to the faith development of their children. It is the church's role to equip and mobilize parents in this endeavour and to provide the other players in that child's faith formation. We explored how the church can equip parents personally with resources and tools. In this section we will look at practical ways churches can support families by creating spaces for children to explore their faith through two parallel "tracks."

First, each individual's faith journey is unique. While no one template works for every person, we will discuss some common approaches that can be customized to individual faith development. Remember these are descriptive, not prescriptive approaches and guidelines. Within each child's personalized path, there are opportunities for leadership development and opportunities to share life (refer to page 18).

Second, we will explore transitions between ministry groups. Churches can create structured opportunities for children to explore their faith in different ways. While we won't look at the structural elements of programs themselves, we will explore the transitions between them. The focus of this section is what churches need to be aware of when considering structural elements in transitions with the understandings of each key age group.²³

The following resources are something to chew on as you process your church's engagement with children and youth. They are just a few resources that reaffirm the messy and wonderful journey of partnering with families to see their children grow in discipleship.

- "Bringing the Generations Together", Holly Catterton Allen (bit.ly/1ICfwdD)
- *Generations Together*, Kathie Amidei, Jim Merhaut and John Roberto (bit.ly/1HkMoqX)
- *Intergenerational Christian Formation*, Holly Catterton Allen and Christine Lawton Ross (amzn.to/1QOZTkP)
- Messy Church website (www.messychurch.org.uk)

Before we tackle the "how" of church structure, we must establish our values and the approach we're taking to children in general. Children's ministry can no longer be a form of babysitting. It is critical that churches intentionally invest in the spiritual development of children. A vital part of this investment is equipping parents to take the lead. While there are many different approaches to discipleship, the important thing is that churches affirm the presence and participation of children in our corporate bodies.

The next section will help you understand the different ages and stages of ministry, providing a framework to address the transitions between the stages.

2. Ages and Stages and the Transitions That Follow

It is our desire for churches to grow in their understanding of the characteristics and needs of children at different developmental stages. As we cultivate this understanding, and our understanding of age-specific discipleship, we can develop a deeper focus for each individual in those age groups. This section focuses on that customized, individual track mentioned on page 18. We will define characteristics of the stage, recommend some growth resources, offer possible leadership development opportunities and reference the applicable Sharing Life degrees.

²³ See ASAP: Ages, Stages, and Phases by Patricia D. Fosarelli

For our purposes, we will define the stages as toddlers (2–4 years)^[24], elementary/grade-school children (4–10 years), middle school (10–13 years), high school (13–17 years) and young adulthood (18–25 years).

Ages and Stages

a. Toddlers: 2–4 Years

Toddlers are beginning to get a sense of their capacities and a feel for what their bodies can do. They are gaining an awareness of their surroundings and experimenting with relationships between people and between objects. Association (such as understanding what labels represent) happens at the physical and spiritual level.

Growth Resources: To Help Kids Interact with Jesus Relationally

- *The One Year Book of Devotions for Preschoolers*, Crystal Bowman
- *If Jesus Lived Inside My Heart*, Jill Roman Lord
- *The Jesus Storybook Bible*, Sally Lloyd-Jones

Leadership Development

Toddlers are discovering their own autonomy. A key focus is taking responsibility for oneself, which gradually extends to responsibility for peers. Consistently giving toddlers ownership of their actions and environment builds that self-responsibility. Leaders can facilitate this by encouraging toddlers to help with the set-up of a lesson or ensuring they clean up their toys.

Sharing Life

A toddler's language and level of thinking is generally very concrete, but always growing. Focusing on the 1st Degree solidifies a relationship. At this point, having leaders who are a consistent presence builds that trust and familiarity. Speak at the toddlers' level and ask lots of questions about them. Some toddlers may be ready for deeper conversations.

There aren't always a lot of resources that acknowledge the relationship building that begins in the toddler room. However, children's ministry voices really affirm that the seeds of relationship are nurtured at this age. If you are unsure where to start with this age group, this article by Greg Baird can be of encouragement: childrensministryleader.com/7-ways-to-break-the-ice-with-kids/. It looks at the importance of eye contact with little ones, using physical touch (appropriately) to build connections, referring to them by name and joining them in play. These are the building blocks of a safe and secure relationship that has the capacity to continue growing over time.

b. Elementary Children: 4–10 years

We'll define childhood from ages 4 to 10 or 11 (i.e., from kindergarten to the end of middle school, which may be grade 5 or 6 depending on your school board). Developmentally,

²⁴ The nursery stage, while distinct as a ministry setting, is not included because the Sharing Life and leadership development opportunities are very similar to the toddler stage.

during this stage children are starting to make connections and correlations about the world they see. Language skills are reinforced. They're building key foundational blocks that will seem to be overturned when puberty hits. Some begin to phase into puberty with body changes, although cognitively they may still think and act "like a child." Tangible understanding helps to solidify key truths.

Growth Resources: To Help Kids Interact with Jesus Relationally

- *Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions for Kids*, Sarah Young
- *The Action Bible*, Doug Mauss, ed. and Sergio Cariello, ill.
- Seeds Family Worship website (<https://seedsfamilyworship.bandcamp.com>)
- "35+ Service Projects for Kids", Kid World Citizen (bit.ly/1dBSabc)
- "Serving Others and Service Ideas" Pinterest board (bit.ly/1QP0WAK)
- "The Compassion Series", StreetLevel (www.streetlevel.ca/program/education)
- Playtime with Jesus, Jessica Bessica (playtimewithjesus.com)

Leadership Development

Even as young as 6 years old, some kids exhibit leadership qualities. Not all children are built to be the primary leader (i.e. the up-front person taking charge). However, all children need to lead to some degree or another. Look for opportunities to begin to stretch them outside their comfort zone. Peer leading can be a key component. Encouraging them to direct or coordinate a group of peers allows them to practice both giving and taking directions from one another. The scale of that directing depends on the child. For some, the next step is more logical (e.g. coordinating a group to move chairs from one location to another). Others can be given a bigger scope of responsibilities involving interpersonal supervision. For example, older children (i.e. 9+ years old) can also begin directing multi-aged groups and be responsible for them.

Sharing Life

With deeper language development and a broadening of extracurricular activities at this stage, adults can stretch towards the 2nd and 3rd Degrees of Sharing Life. As kids grow older, they're able to have lengthier conversations. Given recent studies on the effects of screen time and social cues,^[25] having opportunities for deeper conversation effectively develops their social engagement skills. Additionally, children are growing up in a relationally tumultuous world. For a few ideas on how mentors can be the consistent, affirming adults, check out "Five Ways You Can be a Good Mentor for a Child": bit.ly/1AT1Th1.

Also, as kids become involved in extracurricular activities and don't require as much parental supervision, the opportunities to step into their world increase. Maybe mentors will be able to attend soccer games or piano recitals. Even if they're not able to commit regularly, mentors should identify one or two key events in the year, and ask the parents if they're allowed to attend. (They may choose to involve their own families as well.)

For kids this age, the world is starting to grow broader and deeper. Let's make sure we're on that journey with them.

²⁵ See article from Newsweek: bit.ly/1lk98O9

c. Middle School: 10–13 Years Old

With the onset of puberty, life for tweens will never be the same. They are beginning to test their independence, identifying their own gifts and passions, and wrestling with who exactly they are outside of their parents' construct. With the earlier onset of adolescence, the sexualizing of preteens, and the pressure to be vocationally successful (many grade 8 students are taking aptitude and career assessments and choosing courses that have a bearing on their post-secondary career), the stability and belonging within a faith community is crucial. Spiritually, kids this age begin questioning the faith of their parents and deciding whether or not to internalize this faith.

Growth Resources: To Help Young Adolescents Interact with Jesus Relationally

In the same way adolescents relate to each other differently,^[26] they also relate to Jesus differently. We call these different languages or outlets spiritual disciplines. One child might relate to Jesus deeply through prayer, while another experiences God more vividly through worship or through service. All of the disciplines are important for us as believers, but it is good for kids and youth to explore how they uniquely relate to God best.

Kurt Johnston's book *Middle School Ministry Made Simple* has a chapter that summarizes key distinctions with this age group and ways to respond. He also includes concrete suggestions for how to involve parents effectively.

The following is a list of a few spiritual disciplines and resource ideas that connect with both the discipline and the adolescent. For more reading on this subject, read the article "Dare to Disciplines" found on the Sticky Faith site: stickyfaith.org/articles/dare-to-disciplines.

- Bible Study: "Student Devos" website (studentdevos.com)
- Prayer: *God, Girls, and Getting Connected*, Robin Marsh and Lauren Nelson
- Service: A Rocha Environmental Stewardship website (www.arocha.ca/school-resources)
- Prayer: *The God Girl Journey: A 30-Day Guide to a Deeper Faith*, Hayley DiMarco
- Bible Study: "Devozine" online devotionals done by teens (devozine.upperroom.org)
- Scripture Reading: *Manna & Mercy* Graphic Bible (www.mannaandmercy.org)
- Scripture Reading: *Manga Bible* (bit.ly/1B12LRT)
- Scripture Reading: *The Action Bible Study Bible* (theactionbible.com)
- Prayer: *Between God and Me*, Vicki Courtney
- Service: CBOQ Family Compassion Experience (cboqkids.ca/experiences)
- Service: Salvation Army Toy Drive (Ontario) (www.salvationarmy.ca/tag/toy-drive)
- Service: "Teaching Kids to Care" article (huff.to/1FihcGw)

Leadership Development

Many middle schoolers are becoming more adult-like and need their responsibility skills extended. This allows for the testing of their gifts and gives them opportunities to develop, question, reject, embrace, succeed and fail in the context of a loving community. Their scope can begin to extend beyond one-off leadership opportunities to a more time-invested role and responsibility. They can serve in a short-term ministry role such as being a junior leader

²⁶ The premise of Gary Chapman's book *The 5 Love Languages* is people relay and receive love in different manners.

in the Sunday school or a staff member at VBS. These intermediate “stepping stones” of opportunity can enable healthy transition into broader ministry and leadership contexts as they grow in maturity and experience.

Sharing Life

Tweens begin to seek some separation from their parents. They are gradually given more freedoms in what they can do and where they can go. It’s also the time when they begin questioning life and faith. Having other adult connections beyond their parents and family is vital. Sharing Life can begin to extend up to 5D (see page 29). We must continue to intentionally enter their world, especially as their extracurricular activities broaden. Mentors can begin to include them in more areas of their lives. For example, a mentor could invite the tween’s family for dinner, have the tween join in grocery shopping or serving needs in the community, or invite a few tweens over for an afternoon of baking. Ministering together creates natural spaces to share life.

Because tweens start making a gradual separation from their parents, some parents may feel threatened by other adults who seem to be closer to their kids than they are. For this reason, it is valuable for those investing in tweens to connect with the parents regularly to understand where they believe God is leading this child. This isn’t to say that mentors are just mouthpieces for the parents, but it affirms and respects the parents’ role as the primary caregivers and the mentors’ support. Sharing Life adults will not be keeping secrets from parents, but appropriately encouraging children to be forthcoming about certain issues. If possible, this role should not try to referee the parent-child relationship. There may be times when mentors feel inadequate while handling a situation. It’s not their job to deal with those situations by themselves. Enlist the help of a pastor or another trusted, appropriately trained adult to address the situation.

There are many articles, surveys and tools out there for mentors of this age group. Good resources include:

- “3 Tips for Teaching the Bible to Middle School Students” article (bit.ly/KPtVbk)
- “Awkward! The tough transition to middle school” article (cnn.it/1vGR1Ct)
- “Getting inside the mind of a Middle School student” (bit.ly/13cR4fh)

d. High School: 13–17 Years Old

High school can be the most memorable and/or most tumultuous four years for many young people. There are numerous factors that impact a teen’s development, including life, physical, spiritual, psychological, relational and external influences. Erik Erikson, a renowned psychologist, refers to this part of life as “Identity vs. Confusion” (i.e. the individual seeks to find his identity, and if he is not able to by the end of the stage, he will carry confusion until it is resolved).^[27] While some of those identity questions have already begun with early adolescence, often they extend well into adulthood. Cognitively, they’re stretching their abstract-thinking skills. Spiritually, their faith internalization continues, especially as they face more profound life issues and circumstances.

27 See www.simplypsychology.org/Erik-Erikson.html

Growth Resources: To Help Adolescents Interact with Jesus Relationally

- *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, Brennan Manning
- *Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence*, Sarah Young
- *Make Me Like Jesus*, Michael Phillips
- *The Beautiful Disciplines*, Martin Saunders
- *Healing Emotional Wounds*, David Benner
- *The Irresistible Revolution*, Shane Claiborne
- *Simple Spirituality: Learning to See God in a Broken World*, Christopher Heuertz
- Coldest Night of the Year, an event where youth learn compassion for those living on the streets (<https://coldestnightoftheyear.org/homeless>)
- Servant leadership opportunities through CBOQ and LEAD 222 (bit.ly/1GbXVHF)
- YFC/YU's Project Serve, youth serving locally and globally (yfcprojectserve.com) How Do I See Myself After High School" bit.ly/1FF5GFf
- *The Be-With Factor*, Bo Boshers and Judson Poling
- "Tools for Mentoring Adolescents" article (bit.ly/1KaccH2)

Leadership Development

During this stage, teens are testing their burgeoning adulthood. With the development of abstract thinking, they have the capacity to embrace more long-term roles. For some, this might be a role as a student leader shaping the youth ministry's direction. Many are able to take on significant responsibilities. There is still a safety net, as youth lead while receiving coaching and mentoring from caring Christian adults. These leadership opportunities are a step towards taking directorial responsibilities as adults.

Sharing Life

With the onslaught of developmental changes, adult friendships—especially with mentors—are crucial. These relationships provide space for teens to wrestle with life and faith questions as they internalize faith for themselves. These relationships become lifelines as teens sometimes feel like they're barely treading water. Teens have the capacity to engage in the 6th Degree of Sharing Life (i.e. mentoring defined as intentional, time-based exploration of God's directives for an individual). Even if teens are not in formal mentoring relationships, churches need to be aware of how their faith is shaping and provide space for them to work through the person and message of Jesus.

e. Young Adulthood/Post-Secondary: 18–25 Years

Reaching the age of majority, these former kids will soon have all the rights and responsibilities of adults. Post-high school is a new chapter in life. For a variety of reasons (whether it's the individual, the parents or other influences), some people stagnate in adolescence.^[28] This stage is the final shift before they become independent, contributing members of society (some perhaps faster than others).

28 This trend has been thoroughly documented with both positive and negative consequences (e.g., in this NY Times opinion article: nytimes.com/2014/09/21/opinion/sunday/the-case-for-delayed-adulthood.html).

Growth Resources

- *After High School* online book (cboqyouth.ca/postsecondary)
- *Before You Say Goodbye*, David Sawler
- “Anxiety in the In-Between Stages of Our Lives” (bit.ly/1PKy6iE)
- “Vision Plans”, Sticky Faith (stickyfaith.org/blog/vision-plans)
- “10 lessons to nurture faith beyond high school” curriculum lesson (bit.ly/1EKFEeU)

Leadership Development

Essentially, young adults can serve in any capacity just as older adults do as long as they have the qualifications that determine a person’s viability in a role. Age isn’t a barrier because, as mentioned before, they are adults. Continue to find those next-step opportunities in their development. For example, if young adults are assisting in Sunday school, provide opportunities for them to teach a class. If they are already doing that, have someone apprentice under them or include them in higher levels of leadership such as a Christian Education committee. You may even consider sending young people into other ministry settings for learning opportunities, for example a student exchange program to another church. The learning benefits both the individual and their sending churches. (See cboqyouth.ca/postsecondary for a template of this arrangement.)

Sharing Life

The effects of age-specific, corporate programs become less influential as a person gets older. The continuation of Sharing Life relationships is vital, even though students likely have less available schedules than they did before. The shift comes when that former teen becomes more of a peer than a mentee. But many of the Sharing Life principles remain, as people never stop shaping and reshaping their faith (until they meet Jesus one day). There may be higher highs and lower lows. It becomes that much more critical to continue these Sharing Life connections, even if the young adult has moved away from church.

3. Effectively Maximizing the Transitions Between Stages

Transitions are inevitable within systems and relationships. For many, transitions of any type can be stressful, but this stress need not cause the entire system to crack and splinter. The healthier the system, the less likely transitions will cause distress. In the church, there are things that can be done from a leadership level to develop stability and unity, so that when change does happen (no matter the type), it causes healthy growth, not brokenness.

The following are a few resources that may assist your leadership team:

- *Simple Church*, Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger
- *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, Ruth Haley Barton
- *Smart Church Management: A Quality Approach to Church Administration*, Patricia Lotich
- “Transition Prayers”, Sticky Faith template for church services addressing transitions (bit.ly/1cDwiLI)
- “Milestones of Faith”, Sticky Faith article on understanding rites of passages (www.stickyfaith.org/articles/milestones-of-faith)

While it is important that churches and leadership teams grow in their unity of vision and

spirit for the overall body, there are also action steps that they can take to support child and youth transitions effectively. The following are five significant transitions that children and youth encounter in their development and ways that the church can engage them within their ever-changing reality.

a. The Toddler to Elementary Transition

The transition between the toddler ministry and children's ministry can be a challenging one for young kids. It is important to note that while a church may set a certain age at which children move out of the preschool room, not all children will be ready at the same time and it may take months to fully transition. It is important for leaders to work with parents closely during this transition. Often parents have an indication of how their children will respond to change (some parents are reluctant to let it happen). Give clear instruction to parents as to what they can expect of the church ministry program and also what the church expects of them.

This can be a challenging transition because young children are often moving from an environment they are used to, perhaps since birth, to a new routine and structure. For some children this new environment can cause anxiety and stress. There are new leaders, a new room, a new schedule and new expectations. Some children are ready for this and others take a little longer to get used to it. Therefore, it is important for staff and volunteers to lead well through this transition. Some suggestions include:

- Using Consistent Teaching Tools Across the Age Groups: There are many curriculum tools that provide resources from infants into childhood. Using a familiar style and structure with children will help them adjust more quickly to new classrooms and leaders.
 - Tru*Blessings and Tru*Wonder: <https://tru.davidccook.com/Age-Levels>
 - First Look, 252 Basics and XP3: thinkorange.com
 - Godly Play (Church Montessori): www.godlyplay.org
 - Also, www.YourChurchZone.com can connect you with many more ideas.
 - Orientation Sunday: Kids, perhaps with their parents, are invited to the new room and are shown the new routine and structure and meet the new leaders.
- Sharing Articles with Parents and Teachers: Short, encouraging articles like "Smooth Transitions" by *Children's Ministry Magazine* (bit.ly/1FikRUM) can help reassure and encourage the adults involved in the transition.
- Positive Reinforcement: As kids are learning the new routine, it is important to use positive reinforcement. Affirm them often as they learn and follow the new expectations.
- Presenting a Long-Term Plan: It is important for parents and volunteers to decide where to take kids in their growth process over the long run. In the book *Connecting Church & Home*, Dr. Tim Kimmel outlines how his church developed its philosophy of discipleship and mapped out a plan of how to walk alongside kids in growth.

Just like the transition from daycare or home-parenting to a more formal school structure, children need to gain confidence while entering this new chapter with affirmation from their parents, other adults, and the church. Helping to make this transition a smooth one sets a good precedent for other changes ahead.

b. The Elementary to Early Adolescence Transition

The developmental transition into adolescence usually corresponds with a transition from learning environments at church: from children's ministry to junior high ministry or at school from elementary school to middle school. This is a very critical time in the life of young people. It is important to develop a transition strategy for moving up children to junior high ministry.

Some important details to keep in mind include determining when the transition will actually take place and then preparing for it through transitional mini-steps, beginning about six months before the actual transition. This will help prepare each child socially and spiritually rather than making it a one-time event. There are a number of ideas churches can adopt to ease this transition. Look at how the educational system and other social services journey with children and adolescents in their transitions. Children and youth specialists have noted increased stress and risk for emotional distress in children and youth when transitions occur. Different agencies have investigated ways to nurture mental and emotional health in this period. Here are some resources that inform big-picture transitions:

- **Helping Kids with Early Transitions**
Best Start Resource Centre (Ontario's health promotion organization): bit.ly/1L71oap
- **Transition Resources for Parents, Teachers, and Administrators**
Matt Davis, Edutopia, George Lucas Educational Foundation: bit.ly/1guTKut
- **Transitions to and from Elementary, Middle, and High School**
UCLA Center, Mental Health in Schools, Program and Policy Analysis:
bit.ly/1FilbCS
- **Group and Transition Services**
Geneva Centre for Autism, Children-Youth: bit.ly/1EKKucf

While these resources do not come out of a Christian background or church, they can inform Christian leaders about the stressors involved in transitions and the different needs that arise in children.

Functional Stepping Stones

There are also functional stepping stones for churches to consider as they explore the transition of children into adolescence. For some churches, this transition will mean starting up new ways of engaging kids as they develop. For instance, a smaller congregation that has not had structured experiences for youth may begin to see each youth get mentored. This can be an exciting season of birthing new ideas for the same group they have been working with all along. Resources for churches in this situation include Junior High Ministry by Wayne Rice and Middle School Ministry by Mark Oestreicher and Scott Rubin. For other churches, the transition might have more to do with bridging between an established children's class or small group and the junior high ministry. In this scenario, churches may be looking for resources that consistently build on one another through the age groups and tie everything together. Examples of curricula that bridge between age groups well are the Tru* (truminsty.com), Orange (whatisorange.org), LIVE (live.simplyyouthministry.com), Flyte (bit.ly/1RP2V9z), and The Story (thestory.com).

We all have different transition needs in our congregations. However, we all need some stepping stones to keep kids moving along the path of discipleship. Here are a few examples

from churches that have provided for elementary kids transitioning into junior high: “In our church the children meet in the church basement and the junior highs meet outside in a portable. ‘Going to the portable’ is an exciting transition time for our kids but it can be intimidating. Usually late spring we introduce grade 5 students to the portable environment by throwing a pizza party for them hosted by the junior high group. Then over the summer we have a few blended events where those graduating elementary kids can socialize with the older junior high students”

-Elaine, Youth Pastor

In Elaine’s case, the challenges with transitions are largely environmental. Kids are intimidated to have to go to an entirely different place that operates much differently than what they are used to. By exposing them to this new environment and these new faces bit by bit in their last six months of being a part of the children’s group, they can adapt more naturally.

“In our church we hadn’t had a youth group for a few years so when a cluster of elementary kids reached pre-adolescence, we didn’t want to lose momentum and see them walk away. We first celebrated the end of a season with this group and the parents threw them a graduation BBQ. Then in the fall we started with having a once-a-month ‘hang-out’ for the kids to bond together as peers. Up until this point they usually had just seen each other in a classroom environment on Sunday morning. We knew that if we wanted them to solidify as a youth group they would need space to relate to each other as friend.”

-Patty, parent of a “new” junior higher

In this example, the graduation BBQ at Patty’s church is a rite of passage for the growing children. Additional ideas for this approach may be to host a time in a worship service with a prayer of blessing or a small gift to the students moving into junior high. If you have a separate children’s worship time, have younger children involved in blessing the outgoing children as they move into junior high ministry.

“In our church we have ‘youth ambassadors’ who come and meet with the incoming students and share what junior high ministry is like, what happens. We also try to have our older students involved in children’s classes Sunday morning and our summer VBS each year. Our hope is that by the time a child has developed into an adolescent they are completely familiar with older faces because they have related to and interacted with older kids all the way along.”

-Brandon, Family Ministries Pastor

In Brandon’s example, there is an effort to create cross generational relationships and connections between the children and youth. In this way, the hope is that kids will naturally continue progressing along the path of development in church and don’t walk away out of intimidation from having to join an older group of strange faces.

Whatever your church’s circumstances are when it comes to the elementary to early adolescence transition, there are a few practicalities to keep in mind.

First, remember to include everyone in the transition process: children, children’s ministry leaders, youth leaders and parents. Have a plan for good communication and connection. Partner with parents by sending letters or emails that explain the coming transition. Include a note from the new leaders. Host an activity or theme night to explain the transition. In some

cases, you may want to meet individually with parents to discuss their children specifically. Ensure parents are well aware of the changes and expectations of them and their children. Clear communication with parents is essential.

Second, friendship remains an anchor for adolescents as they are experiencing so much change. It is important to recognize that, developmentally, children in this transition stage can be experiencing a challenging time with so many physical, emotional and social changes. Their friends are very important so it is crucial to connect kids and facilitate relationship building. With so many things in their world changing, it is helpful to create a sense of security and familiarity as much as possible in the midst of the program changes.

Finally, remember that post-transition is just as important as transition. Ensure there is follow up with the children that have moved into junior high ministry. Encourage former leaders from the children's ministry to check in with the newly transitioned kids. Ensure their new leaders intentionally invest in—and connect with—the new students to the junior high ministry.

Some key stepping stones to ensure an effective transition include:

- Have an attendance database to use as a reference for who is transitioning
- Invite junior high workers to participate in the children's ministry, especially with the graduating class.
- Have some leaders move with the graduating class (like a cohort). Host a commissioning service where the graduating students are acknowledged in the Sunday service as they move into the youth ministry.
- Encourage some older junior high youth to “buddy up” with incoming junior high students.
- Have a weekend retreat that includes some of your key junior high student leaders, adult leaders and all the incoming junior high students.
- Host the children's ministry graduating class at a junior high meeting before they move on from the children's ministry.

c. The Early Adolescence to Adolescence Transition

In many ways, this transition is similar to the previous transition. And, much like the transition from elementary to early adolescence, the success of this transition depends on the stepping stones put in place. Likely the change from junior high ministry to senior high ministry is not as challenging a transition as the one out of children's ministry. These young teens are continuing to develop and grow in new ways in their thinking. Friends continue to be the more important influence in their lives. Identity formation and independence are shaping their thinking.

Some stepping stone ideas for this transition could be:

- In late June, hold a youth event to welcome the incoming students.
- Involve older teens in planning and welcoming.
- Involve older teens as “youth ambassadors” who intentionally get to know and mentor new students who will be joining the group.
- Invite incoming students to join in the summer youth ministry activities, which can become part of the transition time.

- Mark the transition with a rite of passage in a worship service, during which you recognize this move of young teens towards adulthood throughout the senior high years.
- Host a social event for both the junior high and senior high students
- Have a Sunday School class that overlaps between junior and senior high.
- Have some of the youth leaders “move on” with a group of students (like a cohort).
- Provide an overview of the transition to parents with follow-up questions they can use with their children.
- Host a “holy ground moment” event for students to debrief on their first few months in this new chapter (stickyfaith.org/blog/holy-ground-moments).

There are lots of ways these ideas could be tweaked and personalized. Some additional resources that may help equip you as you process the needs of your youth and their families at this stage are as follows:

- *Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry*, Doug Fields
- CBOQ Youth curriculum: cboqyouth.ca/curriculum
- Example of a youth parent ministry, Trailview Alliance Church: bit.ly/1E9k0AH
- “Transfusing Life”, EFC Roundtable: transfusinglife.com
- *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, Christian Smith and Melina Lundquist Denton

Simply put, remember to celebrate the small steps that kids have taken to get to this point. The steps forward can vary, but consistency of approach and relationships are key factors.

d. The Adolescence to Adulthood Transition

As young people transition from high school to young adulthood it is important to recognize this as a new chapter in their lives, whether they will be leaving home and going on to post-secondary studies, staying home and working, or doing a fifth year of high school. Churches can signify this new change through a rite of passage, such as a recognition and celebration of high school graduation, as an important way to mark this transition.

Some stepping stones as they prepare for post-secondary life could include:

- Arrange a “senior summer” where recent grads can help the upcoming grads prepare (stickyfaith.org/blog/how-do-you-prepare-seniors-for-college1)
- Give a small gift from the church and a prayer of blessing.
- Plan a time of commissioning when the church community recognizes this move by praying and blessing the students who will be moving on.
- For students moving away from home, assist them in connecting with communities of faith in the new cities they will be moving to—this is a great way to continue to invest in these young adults. (Use the interactive campus groups map found at cboqyouth.ca/postsecondary, which lists all the campus groups for colleges or universities in Ontario and English-speaking Quebec.)
- Help them create an “emergency plan” for responding to crisis situations, especially when they are on their own (stickyfaith.org/blog/emergency-response-plans).
- Provide a “College Transition Package” for their first week away (stickyfaith.org/blog/back-to-school-college-transition-packages).
- For those staying home, facilitate connections, perhaps with other adults in the

workforce, who can offer wisdom and guidance. Connections could also be made with other local churches or ministries for a short period of time, to help young adults gain a different perspective and experience.

- Have a young adult exchange with another church to help mark a new chapter, as they will be experiencing a new church context (similar to their peers going to school out of town). This is not a “send them away from your church” moment but rather an opportunity to extend their faith experiences while maintaining a relational connection through those Sharing Life with them.

In 2015, CBOQ Youth partnered with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Power to Change and Ambassadors for Christ to host a segment of the Canadian Youth Network Youth Workers Resource Lunch Tour. We had over 450 participants provide insights on how key components a grade 12 graduate needs when transition to their post-secondary chapter. See Section 7 for those suggestions.

For more helpful articles about this area of transition, check out this page on the Youth Worker website: bit.ly/1ICcYdQ, as well as a transition strategy at cboqyouth.ca/postsecondary.

e. Children and Youth with Exceptionalities

There is an increase in students who have some kind of exceptionality designation (from physical exceptionalities to neurological ones like autism or ADHD). Transitions for these individuals become that much more individualized because no two children, especially those with exceptionalities, will transition exactly the same. Many churches do not have the resources to address all special needs issues adequately.^[29] However, churches can assist with some key steps in the transition of these individuals, complementing the previous guidelines:

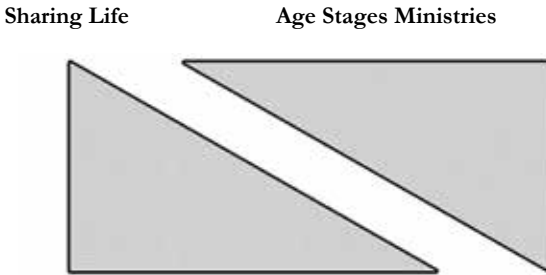
- It is vital to gain understanding of the exceptionality from the parents. Those who are supporting their children will have the best knowledge of how to engage them and in what manner (especially if they have had the diagnosis for a long time). Adaptation and accommodation are key factors in working with parents to identify the most appropriate transition methods.
- Utilize community resources. While not all agencies may have the capacity to assist you as a ministry leader, they may have guidelines to supplement the process. Some agencies may be able to provide training for your ministry staff and volunteers in this area.
- Seek potential financial funding from other agencies. Most churches do not have the expertise to manage special needs. Some individuals have access to respite funding. If you are looking to extend your ministry group uniquely to those with exceptionalities, there may be grants available through community agencies and possibly through CBOQ grants.

²⁹ This document will not be able to engage fully with the topic of special needs supports. One recommended resource is Stephen Bedard's book *How to Make Your Church Autism-Friendly* (amzn.to/1ICxqve).

SECTION
Changing Influences



Traditionally, churches have focused on ministry programs as the primary way of ministering to people. Typically, these ministry programs are geared towards age-specific audiences. It seems to work generally when children are younger. However, as research has shown, as people get older, these ministry programs seem less and less effective.



The diagram above demonstrates that a church can still have a great influence in people's lives as they transition from youth to being older. In order to continue that influence, the means of achieving it needs to shift. On the left are the individual relationships (i.e. Sharing Life and a person's individual leadership development opportunities). On the right are ministry programs and in particular the transitions between them. All things being equal, a church can have a significant impact on a young person's life throughout all stages. Those collective ministry programs will likely be most significant in a child's faith development. The individual relationships, while important, will not yet be as impactful due to the nature of the adult-child relationship. However, notice as a child gets older, the ministry programs' impact begins to decrease. This is not to suggest that they aren't useful. But their overall impact will not be as significant. Inversely, those individual developments (both in Sharing Life relationships and in their own leadership development opportunities) will have a larger bearing on that individual.

A few observations to note here:

- Ministry programs are still worth doing and play a critical role despite the changing emphasis over time. Opportunities for collective learning and growth should be encouraged.
- Individual relationships are worth fostering at an early age. Adults can't automatically assume all teens want to enter a mentoring relationships when they turn 14 years old. However, by building that relationship at an early age, the level of trust needed has already been growing.
- Church leaders need to ensure there are sufficient energies in both areas to foster a faith-sustaining environment.

FINAL WORD (FOR 2.0)

What became apparent over the last year is that there is the desire in many churches to see children and youth flourish in their faith as God created them to do. Ultimately, that relationship depends on individuals and their responses to the God who constantly seeks to draw them near as he redeems, restores and empowers. This book isn't a fail-safe in faith development and transitions. No one can guarantee the faith sustainability of any individual. Jesus warns us all that while his good news will be widely preached, many will not choose it.^[30]

What we are charged to do is to provide that groundwork and space so that all children and youth in our care can consider the person and message of Jesus for themselves, and in their own timing will choose to follow him. We simply need to recognize what areas of responsibility God has entrusted us with and fulfill them honourably.

This is our prayer for you and with you:

*May you as an individual and as a church guide this upcoming generation
to the Father who loves and created us,
to his Son Jesus Christ who redeemed us through his death and resurrection
to the friendship, the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit,
now and forevermore, Amen.*

30 Matthew 7:13-14

SECTION

Appendix of Resources



The following is an example of the “whole picture” of discipleship in a child or youth’s life. “Hemorrhaging Faith” identified four key drivers that influenced faith development: parents; experience of God; community; and the church’s teaching. In correlating those four influences with the various stages of development, the hope is that we can create resources that will enrich a child’s faith formation along his/her journey of development. The following is a list of resources that you may find helpful. This may also give you a template or idea for brainstorming your own resources.

Resources	Children 2 - years	Tweens 8 - 12 years	Young Adults 13 years into Adulthood
Big Picture			
Parents	Transforming Your Children into Spiritual Champions Parenting Beyond Your Capacity: Connect Your Family to a Wider Community Revolutionary Parenting: Raising Your Kids to Become Spiritual Champions Dedicated: Training Your Children to Trust and Follow Jesus Sticky Faith HomeFront Magazine Thriving Family Magazine		
	Parenting through Age-Specific Seasons		
	The 5 Love Languages of Children Emotionally Healthy Spirituality My Monastery is a Minivan Sacred Rhythms Boundaries with Kids The Practice of the Presence of God	The 5 Love Languages of Teenagers A Love Worth Giving Time Out for Parents “Tween Us” blog The Gift of Being Yourself Tending the Family Heart	The Parent of Your Teen Parenting Teens Help, Thanks, Wow And Then I Had Teenagers The Blessing Boundaries with Teens Youth Ministry: Now and Not Yet
The Corporate Relationship			
Community/ Mentorship	Messy Church “Bringing the Generations Together” Generations Together: Caring, Praying, Learning, Celebrating and Serving Faithfully Intergenerational Christian Formation		
	Personal Relationships		
	Five Ways You Can be a Good Mentor to a Child 7 Ways To “Break The Ice” With Kids	How Do I See Myself After High School The Be-With Factor	“Tools for Mentoring Adolescents”

Experience of God	God in their Day-to-Day		
	Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions for Kids	Manna & Mercy Graphic Bible	Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace...
	The Action Bible	The Action Bible Study Bible	Make Me Like Jesus
	The Jesus Storybook Bible	Between God and Me	The Beautiful Disciplines
	Seeds Family Worship	Manga Bible	
	The One Year Devotions for Preschoolers	The God Girl Journey	
	If Jesus Lived Inside My Heart	Every Day Deserves a Chance	
	God in their World		
	35 Service Projects for Kids	CBOQ Family Compassion Experience	The Irresistible Revolution
	"Serving Others and Service Ideas" Pinterest board	Salvation Army Toy Drive (Ontario)	Simple Spirituality: Learning to See God...
		"Teaching Kids to Care"	Coldest Night of the Year
		A Rocha Environmental Stewardship	LEAD222
			Project Serve (YFC/YU)
	God in their Hurt		
		Student Devos website	Ragamuffin Gospel
		God, Girls, and Getting Connected	Healing Emotional Wounds
		Online Devos done by Teens	Hurt: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers
	Big Picture		
Program/ Christian Education	Church+Home		
	Simple Church		
	Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership		
	Smart Church Management		
	Helping Kids with Early Transitions		
	Transition Resources for Parents, Teachers, and Administrators		
	Transitions to and from Elementary, Middle, and High School		
	Group & Transition Services: Children-Youth		

Pieces of the Big Picture

Program/ Christian Education

Tru*Blessings and
Tru*Wonder
Godly Play (Church
Montessori)
Relevant Children's
Ministry
YourChurchZone
Smooth Transitions

Tru*Story and
Tru*Identity
Flyte Curriculum
The Story Curriculum
LIVE curriculum
Junior High Ministry
Middle School
Ministry

A Ministry to Youth
Parents
Transfusing Life
Purpose-Driven Youth
Ministry
CBOQ Youth
Curriculum
Soul Searching
Youth Ministry: Now
and Not Yet

Resources Cited

“7 Ways To ‘Break The Ice’ With Kids”

Baird, Greg, Children’s Ministry Leader: www.childrensministryleader.com/7-ways-to-break-the-ice-with-kids

“35+ Service Projects for Kids”

Kid World Citizen: kidworldcitizen.org/2013/02/20/35-service-projects-for-kids

A Love Worth Giving

Lucado, Max. Nashville, TN, Thomas Nelson: 2013

“A Rocha Environmental Stewardship”

www.arocha.ca/school-resources

Adolescents in Crisis

Rowatt, G. Wade Jr. Louisville, KN, John Know Press: 2001

And Then I Had Teenagers

Alexander Yates, Susan. Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Publishing: 2001

Between God and Me

Courtney, Vicki. Nashville, TN, B&H Publishing Group: 2010

Boundaries with Kids: When to Say Yes, How to Say No

Cloud, Henry and Townsend, John. Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan: 1998

Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No

Townsend, John. Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan: 2006

“Bringing the Generations Together”

Catterton Allen, Holly. Faith Formation Learning Exchange: www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/uploads/5/2/4/6/5246709/bringing_the_generations_together_-_allen.pdf

Church+Home: The Proven Formula for Building Lifelong Faith

Holmen, Mark and Barna, George. Menasha, WI, Regal from Gospel Light: 2010

“Church Vision – How to Write a Church Vision, Mission and Values Statement”

Smart Church Management: smartchurchmanagement.com/church-vision-mission-and-values-statement

Coldest Night of the Year: <https://coldestnightoftheyear.org/video>

Dedicated: Training Your Children to Trust and Follow Jesus

Houser, Jason, Harrington, Bobby and Harrington, Chad. Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan: 2015

“Developing a Vision”

Malphurs, Aubrey. Building Church Leaders: Practical Training from *Leadership Journal*: www.buildingchurchleaders.com/articles/2005/042705.html

“Devozine” (online devos done by teens): devozine.upperroom.org

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Unleash a Revolution in Your Life in Christ

Scazzero, Peter. Nashville, TN, Thomas Nelson: 2014

Every Day Deserves a Chance Teen Edition: Wake Up and Live!

Lucado, Max. Nashville, TN, Harper Collins: 2007

“Five Ways You Can be a Good Mentor for a Child”

Ahern, Kaitlin. NYMetroParents: www.nymetroparents.com/article/Five-tips-to-being-a-great-mentor-for-a-child-in-need-20120821#.VPE2XvnF98E

Generations Together: Caring, Learning, Praying, Celebrating, & Serving Faithfully

Amedei, Kathie, Merhaut, Jim and Roberto, John. Naugatuck, CT, Lifelong Associates: 2014

God, Girls, and Getting Connected

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SECTION

Results from the 2015
CYN Youth Worker
Resource Lunch Tour



In May 2015, CBOQ Youth, in collaboration with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Power to Change and Ambassadors for Christ, sponsored a segment of the Canadian Youth Network lunch tour. This tour had 450 participants hosted in 11 cities in Ontario.

In this segment, we curated suggestions from youth leaders on this question: What does a grade 12 graduate need to successfully transition to post-secondary life? We used a placemat format. All participants at each location were placed in groups of 4-5 people. Dividing their chart paper into the number of sections equal to the number of people and drawing a circle in the middle, they wrote their suggestions (areas A-D represent what was written in each of the 4 sections) then provided feedback on others' suggestions. Together, they came up with suggestions for their top 5 elements (which are compiled in the centre column). We have included each person's answers as it was written on the paper.

There are many recurring themes such as ensuring the church and leaders provide support (whether that's in the form of mentoring or otherwise), on-going prayer and ensuring a strong foundation is built ahead of time.

This section is all the data collected. We are grateful for all the responses from the 2015 CYN Youth Worker Resource Lunch Tour.

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
leaders doing life	support from family	home church support	reading levels	fun, food, free lunch, activities
mentor	closer friends	follow up gift cards	studying habits	discipline, studying, faith, finances
books on apologetics	lunch meals program	connection relationships	social skills	connections, church, faith group, mentoring, friends
prayer	church praying for others	partnering old students	computer	support, paster, family, friends, church, small group leader
christian friends	email letters from the church	parent involvement	food	prayer, devotional, online
campus groups	foundation in faith	BCF christian fellowship	save money	
ministry involvement	job opportunities	leaders do life		
resources that allow them to question faith				

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
discipline				
fun				
accountability partners				
conference to regenerate				
knowledge of scripture				
personal devotional life				
continued support-spiritual, emotional	successful transition	information about schools	guidance	mentoring by mature doers
a believer - a follower	be a Christian	lots of counselors	options	true follower of Christ
connection	know about churches in area	good spiritual foundation	connect to christian ministries	connection with a new local church
good church in area	christian worldview	knowledge about different paths you can take in life	strong spiritual foundation	information/ preparation helps
	connection with current church	apprenticeship, college, university	training of what to expect next	continued relationship from local church
	connection with other believers	christian support base		
	how to stay connected in college			
	old people to speak into life			
	understand the will of God			
	free will and responsibility			
home support	parents	Jesus	siblings	mentor

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
grades, school support	emotional support		youth pastor visits	rents
church sending receiving	counselor		grandparents	church
christian community	communication		best friends	healthy living
mentors	mentorship		room mates	peers
purpose, vocation, calling	open and safe discussion		books for support	
confirmation from others	good peer group		healthy living	
	church community		financial support/ awareness	
			freedom to attend church	
			camps	
encouragement	understanding of future	clear worldview	mentors	relationships- family, friends, mentors
notes-cards	process of planning	prayer support	plan	prayer
community at schools	vocation who am I	relationships with others- extended church	church group	community- belonging
followups from leaders			someway to stay connected	plans
			safe place for advice	ongoing support
			proper friends	
			relationships with other adults	
grade 12 bible study	a reason to continue faith	church bible study	build a plan for you to have	community and belonging
transition before post-sec	serve	accountable partners	game plan	personal relationship with Jesus

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
prayer partner at church	safety net	activities to just create friendships	hear success stories, vision of what could be	awareness of future
care package	friends to journey with	alone time	hear challenges, dangers, regrets	realities of life
serve to belong	chances to live out passions		be aware of ways to get plugged in	grace, freedom to fail and explore
leaders checking in	grace from family		strong independent walk	non-hammered fun
	space to figure out who they are		accountability partner to connect during first month till student is engaged in group	
	knowing how to repent and return to Christ			
	knowing how to get in touch with God			
	someone to challenge them			
discipleship	Gospel transformation	knowing where they are going	God	prayer implied
build in them the ability to replicate this	solid Christian community	getting them connected	mentorship relationships	strong Christian foundation
leader-student relationships	sending-receiving place	start process in grade 11	strong faith friends	get connected into community before they go
stick around for future		build good habits early	connected to groups	check in mentorship routinely
communication skills		multiple connections of faith	money for food, resources	start early

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
understanding the importance of Christian relationships		social media	bible	physical needs
being able to know people in social skills		good resources to use		
being able to find those relationships		work through plan together		
making friends				
	support network	high feeling of self worth	pass off connections	plan-work, financial, spiritual dev, church
	biblical foundation	support from home	facebook, text	support-family, friends, church
	potential career path	plan	invested relationships	staying connected-establishing connections for years
	support from current church	able to self-sustain		build healthy relationships before leaving
	strong work ethic	knows who to access on campus when need help		establishing spiritual life-years prior
	ability to be independent	organization skills		bible reading, mentors
	goal setting	finances		
		focus on future positive		
		embrace change		
confidence	life skills	support	community	money
empowered	good peer group	engagement	money	life skills

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
loved	sense of career	firm foundations	scholarships, loans	mentor community support
	support of family	goals	faith	strong faith foundation
	confidence	finances	confidence	goals
	grades			
	grounded in faith			
support network	solid foundation	relationship that continue	skills writing reading	information about groups
church praying	bible, prayer, discipleship	self discipline	informed decision	support networks
academic competency	resources	motivation	events-information to make	keeping relations
a place to reside/stay	relationships	commitment	someone who believes in them	foundation of discipleship
money for food necessities	connection follow up	ability to trust older wise people	inviting organization to visit groups before they leave	sense of identity
care packages	provide-devos, podcasts, blogs, books	be vulnerable		money
find a church to call home	open doors, let them know you are still supporting them	roots to grow, wings to fly		spiritual support
help them to find home-groups	lots of prayer	freedom to fail		
	prayer teams	questioning spirit-firm foundation		
		moral fibre		
		secure sense of self		

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
laundry hamper	church connect	information	family support and visits	food-home cooked
supportive parents	everything you need to know about college book	someone else to turn to besides parents	good friends-meet new ones	community at school
pushing-prodding	talk with students in grades 11 & 12	community pushing them	church helps with moving and settling in	community that invests in them
space, computer	get students in post-sec to talk with grades 11 & 12	community embarrassing them	resources, knowledge of counselors	counselor-academic, faith, personal
love	find out who their God group of people are	a sense of belonging	motivation to do well and be involved	
coach, mentor	keep in touch regularly	either a car of someone to drive them	get connected to groups	
	mama's blessings-daily verses	commute-local community buses	exercise	
	comment-prayer	outlet-group activity	proper books-computers	
		sports	lots of snacks, food	
spiritual temperature gauge	student finances	bible grad gift	grade 12 sessions	church support
intentional conversations	types of housing	find p2c at school	leader roles	prayer
map questing to locations	school choice	parents church family	campus ministry	box of exams
retreats of rest and intent	communications	know that they are loved and can call/visit	talk about it	budget tips to visit
tools of networking	parent expectations	person to connect with at next place	cc affairs	bible as gift

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
introductions to campus ministries	setting up accommodations	basic needs-house food	introduce teens to church	find connect with a person
disciple base tools		prayed for-church send off	invitation from YACC	new place, campus ministry, local church
prayer partnered support		friends community	post-high grads share to grade 12	grade 12 sessions
introductions to possible links of support			exam boxes	budget credit cards
providing placement opportunities				parent guardian set up
church budget inclusion for trips				basis needs, expectations, love
gospel foundation	encouragement from church	influential peoples	alumni visit	one on one mentors
strong sending church	campus visits	involvement in local community	campus visit	strong identity in church
supportive receiving church	follow up transitions	strong biblical foundation	career exploration	strong receiving church
prayer	youth leaders	prayer	job fairs	prayer-biblical reliance
one to one mentorship	devotions	talking with others in post-sec	quizzes	campus ministry involvement
explore all Christian universities	positive friends		hearing from others	
not just secular ones	confidence in experiences		website exploring programs	
			budgeting finance	
			location	

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
			spiritual discernment	
			meet professors	
			talk to mentors	
			sports teams	
			friends	
			what community is like	
established relationships	meet and greet people from school	consistent stable intentional community	multigenerational	relationships
connections with those ahead	extra curricular activities	solid relationships that continue	use of media	bridge the gap
monthly events to help gap	program designed to generate discussion on dears excitement about grad and future	rooted church	strong sr high ministry	longterm transition
games	organizational tools to vision prayer about calling	network of Christians	strong y.a. ministry	challenge individual
adopt-a-grad	care for individuals	follow ups	diversity in programs offered	develop and experience Jesus
out of town students	grow as a group of students	plugged in	tools to assess what different people we are serving	community-multigenerational
facebook connections			leaders to bridge the gap	opportunities to serve
make leaders help younger			allowance to discover life apart from parents	excitement of being involved
stay connected			program designed to challenge this	

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
program designed for transition			grow, encourage, foster, challenge, individual faith	
			love being able to make their own faith	
			leaders disciple making disciples	
			relationships grounded in discipleship	
			opportunities to learn and grow	
			mixer parties with other Christians	
			church that cares and values them	
			congregation involved in them	
support accountability	continued contact with people	program	connect mentor	Christian relationships
prayer team	encouragement-phone, visits	community	go to person	apologetics
face to face care	faith growth-alpha	relationship	knowing the difference between high school and post	
connection to another	connection to church groups etc	understanding	wisdom apologetics	
Christian on campus connect	sense of belonging	challenges to face	belong	
church locally		questions they might ask	resources how they find this info	
opportunities available		transportation		
how new kids find churches		welcome connected		

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
recognize their responsibility		servicing and belonging		
seeking to find those who care				
bible college options	support from home and community	celebration parties	environment discussion	support from home community
good mentoring	food	equip for non-Christian enviro	social parties	connections to new community
connect with people in other towns	connect to peers	Christian connection	bible study group	training and equipping before and during they leave
prayer	place to go to weekly service	plan to touch base	encouragement	celebration food
family support	Christian counselor	care packages	engaging teaching on relevant topics	connecting at end of years
talent, gifts, loves, discussion		develop life long connections	meaty biblical truths	
	Christian world view	parents	intergenerational connections	healthy adult mentors
	healthy adult friends	mentors	local church attendance	social church attendance
	student leadership experience	money	leadership in youth ministry	tims card
	personal relationship with Jesus	continued connections	touching base with student	continued connections
	strong family ties	prayer partners	family interactions away from home	perparation
		connect to student groups	preparation expectations	prayer
		tims card		
		chaplin		

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
knowing Christian campus groups	mentorship relationships	advice from older	a thriving devotional life	community connect
feeling of connection	program/ organization to connect with	needs for next stage evaluation	individuals owning a bible	devotional life
sense of journey	personal spiritual growth	goal setting	good books	person pre/ heads up others
good foundation of faith	positive peers - role models	follow up plan	connection to a parish	transitional ceremony
ongoing mentorship	family who are an anchor	ceremony clear cut	supportive parents, friends	follow up
	connect with church	preliminary prep	adequate preparations	
			honest conversations - beer, sex, etc.	
supportive family	accountability	support	counseling	financial direction
group of friends	biblical foundation	place to ask questions	encouragement	support/ encouragement
work ethic	people to encourage	a way to serve	need assistance	make decisions
discipline	desire to learn	sense of belonging	job	goals - self achievements
think and make decisions	know direction - plan	financial goals		spiritual foundation
understand about self	finances	clear understanding self		
know what they want to do		freedom to make mistakes		
contact info	relationships contact	know they have a purpose	have the opportunity to use gifts	ccountability
plan to meet at key intervals	resources	know their gifts	habit of reading/ praying	develop spiritual discipline now

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
thanksgiving	foundational discipline	know what they can offer	good supportive friends and family	identify new Christian communities
Christmas	parent resources	how to ask for help	encouragement to pursue talents	parental support
bible	provide media assistance - podcast, blog, etc.	belonging	calling - opportunity	know self - gifts, serve
devotional plan	open door policy	know selves	be challenged to think through faith	
plan to find compass group	family support	build bridges		
know friends they can rely on	connect when they are home and school	connect		
personal commitment to Christ	check ins	welcome home events		
find a church		stories from before		
		mentor		
		habit of connection		
		spiritual disciplines		
		time management		
		priorities		
		in a pattern of mentorship		
the right information	find a local church	place to question	a sender gives info - has prepared them	real faith experience
a good support system	info about Christian groups	identify formation	receiver made to feel welcome, know what they get into, integration	initial positive connection in first weeks

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
godly people	equipped to know what and why they believe	group of people that they identify with		community support
prayer staying connected to God	convinced that Christ is worth following	church to attend		questions wrestled with in high school
to be in the world	Christian peers	connect with university people		peers
	support	real faith experience in high school		
church foundation	solid foundation	good grades	Christian friends	inhaling God's word
good habits	responsibility	good habits	bible discipline	discipleship
reading a lot	faith in Christ	strong relationship with Christ	supportive parents	solid foundation
leaving to pack	encouragement	learn to inhale God's word	supportive youth leader	support and encouragement
meeting new people	time management	worship God and to be with him daily	confidence	confidence in faith, boldness
discipline	healthy routine	hygiene		
grades		creating disciples		
faith				
family and friends				
support	community to be a part of	mentorship - genuine leader to follow	ministry support	account support
resources	safe people	prayer	adequate resources	word - don't water down, follow Christ not own
guidance	accountability partners	options on resources	rapport	resources - network

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
community	mentors	prayer team local church	communication	follow up consistently
mentorship	clear next step		peer mentorship	efficient strategies life skills
direction			adequate teaching of the word	
independence			practice the word	
confidence			balance of fun and accountability	
able to change			follow up	
understanding			leader - understand relationship with Christ	
purpose			availability	
			connect with family	
			strategies - where they belong	
ensuring the young person connects to local church	faith	be yourself, be a follower	encouragement to get invovled	keep in contact with former
ensure the discipler stays in relationship with student	encouragement	keep in contact	bible studies	connect to campus groups
in the teens years teach the word	a bible - devos	visit	prayer groups	connect to local church
go back to school	support	help with any needs	faith - mentor	
	solid foundation	prayer		
	contact - phone numbers			
	prayer circle			
	mentor			

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
strong foundation	summer ministries	strong relationships	support	relationships
strong fellowship	relationships	challenges	good influences	support
money	discipleships	ownership	guidance	guidance
accountability	daily reading	money tool	future thinking	
social skills	mentoring	confidence		
love	accountability	schedules		
a plan	know limits	family conversations		
	know weaknesses	ownership		
		time management		
relationships	connection to church	grounded in faith	biblical foundation	
right understanding with God	transition strong strategy	somewhere to land	family support	
with church - be invovled	personal walk	contacts to meet	model and encouragement	
with world - mission	comissioned well	ties back at home	mentorship	
with family	knowledge of direction	income	God in mind	
accountability	disciples continue	identity		
mentorship	spiritual habits	boundaries		
		goal for school chosen		
pre-making decisions	place to choose	future goals	support group	connection to new location
visit church	church community	opportunity to study, live, serve	accountability	maintain connection
support family	support	academic, social, spiritual encouragement	responsibility	

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
talk with others who have gone before	social		structure devotions	
intergenerational connections	counseling		place to go, live, school	
prep expectations			finances	
life skills equipping				
counselor training	firm foundation	resources	relationship	mentor
applications	strong parental support	support groups	biblical knowledge	support
university tour	navigators on campus	prayer support	resources devotionals	firm foundation of faith
transcripts	prayer	know your short term goals	community	practical guidance
survey for jobs	church	get long term goals	mentor	solid Christian community
courses	Christian friends	Christian support leaders	plan/strategy	
student advisor	bible college first	mentor	foundation	
instructors	lots of dialogue		info where to go	
supplies for school			own faith	
location to live				
Christian support				
small group				
church				
mentors				
bible resources				
connections for getting settled				
text books				
transportation				

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
solid friends				
sending church to stay in touch	prepartory event how to survive	community	financial discussion	community
send care packages	one-one mentoring	ownership	info sharing	care packages
make sure students still feel love/belong	resource support	fun	conversations with ex-students	good send off
mentor support	connection to local church	cascade discipleship	university talks	prayer
parents	history of service	connection to all church as body	discernment workshop - programs	mentoring discipleship
opportunity to serve	involvement in church	collaboration of graduation	one-one talks	
tools while away	prayer	celebration	parent convo	
media	accountability	intentional follow up	career counseling	
connecting point for students	strong faith foundation			
fellowship	sending, grad gift			
money/job	network	God faith	connections	acceptance
God	desire - motivation	family church	support network	opportunity
knowledge	awareness	friends	transportation	network
friends	advocates	knowledge	money	drive
connections	confidence in self	opportunities	schedule	support - resources
direction	good marks	acceptance	furniture	
acceptance	opportunities	good grades	friends, church, family	
housing	new housing	support	follow up	
belonging	money helps	confidence	introduction	
wisdom	a sense of adventure		go through expectations	

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
know their options	relationships	connection	connection with people - 2nd, 3rd year students	knowing options
connect to people	mentors	understanding of what is to come	resources	connections with churches
follow up periodically	accountability	follow up	options - school, jobs	accountability
encourage to get involved	prepare for course	graduation	support, prayer	help with budgeting
grow in relationships	place to hangout	continual relationships	campus group	prayer
to be loved by people who have gone to same course	help with finances	help with what is next	encouragement to start prayer group	
pray for them	connect with church			
	campus group			
start in grade 9	rites of passage grad ceremony	help students search out Christian groups	connect university fellowship	connect with Christian fellowship on campus
get them to think about future	adult connections from church	connect with them regularly	get them plugged in at high school in grade 9	connect with local church be involved
	care packages	connect with Christian fellowship	provide local church info	establish prayer partners with seniors mentorship
	intro to new campus	follow up spiritual walk	celebrate milestone	rites of passage - grad celebrations
	prayer partners with seniors	info about challenges		consistent follow up
pick your friends wisely	encourage	love your classmates as yourself		church family
find g/f b/f	pick college	direction		share experiences

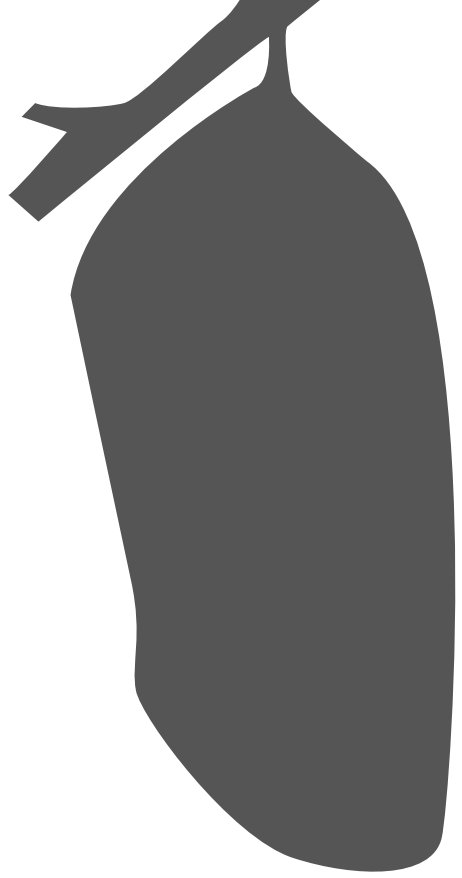
Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
	summer jobs	apply for program		talk about realities
	boldness to step out	no procrastination		boldness
	church family			pick friends
	share experiences			stay active
	connections			find hobbies
	talk about realities in world			
bible studies	apologetics	conversations about future plans	mentorship program	equip
mentorship	media	encouragement once at university	dates	mentor
coaching through life experiences	game night	lunch tea dates in high school	visits	visit
passing truth		visitation	bible study - taught	blueprint
		see who they hangout with	coaching	connect
		see how they conduct themselves	training to be a leader	
		see what challenges their faith		
keep connected	solid biblical foundation	connecting them with churches and groups	show the importance of making a living	keep connected with students
older and younger students	connect campus ministries	intro to Christian communities	teaching about the importance of surrounding with positive peers	connect with campus ministries and local churches

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
leadership roles	support from church	senior students connect with high schoolers	reading/studying the word	servicing others and outreach
building relationships	media		outreach	having students connected intergenerationally
ministry involvement	prayer		getting outside walls	prayer
offering tutorial	strong faith			
peers	stress management	older siblings	vision goals	practical support
parental guidance	availability	community	support	firm faith foundation
	making right choices	expectations	volunteering	finances
		faith	transportation	peace about choices
be accessible	support friends family	build many relationships	grounding them in community	preparedness
prayer consistency	preparedness - what to expect life skills	know who they are in God	give them opportunity to ask	support accessibility
give examples of previous transitions	passion commitment to what you are doing	how to have healthy relationships	help them connect	community help them find one
share own questions	why are you there	think through questions	give tools to begin/continue spiritual journey	spiritual development
stories of going through	faith hope to get through	personal relationships	opportunities to discuss	learning what they believe
offer resources for transitional situations	connect like minded	experiences, encounters	others who have been through	
	independence		prayer support mentor	

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
connect with university ministries	connect with parents	invite high schoolers to university event	post-secondary support group	current university students to share
plugging them into adult small groups	fellowship night	encourage students to disciple others	invite staff to share	support group to discuss practical
discipleship opportunities	share stories		curriculum to help students	involve parents in discussion
			understand self	make use of ministry staff in universities
			orientation	
			life skills	
senior breakfast	SOSH	mentors	celebration	mentors
exit celebrations	transition to young adults	graduation	books	care packages
ministry outings for connections	Skype	follow up gifts	facebook	visitation
leaving care packages		get connected	enews	exit celebrations
		summer programs	social events	srs breakfast
mentor support	follow ups	communication	self dependence	community mentorship
equip inform	support to connect	strategy	financial management	rooted in identity healthy discovery
relations community	rooted in identity	relationship	self worth	mentorship discipleship equip and guide
decision making	decision making skills	follow up	academics	decision making skills
choice influence		mentorship	fun	vision follow ups
			community support	
process understanding	base sending church	retain faith	intergenerational community	parents

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
older students to support	home friend support	direction future education	family discipleship	church at home and sending church
leaving strategies	local church connection	work career	service mission leadership	local church at school faith
faith challenges	parents	ongoing family relationship	camps fellowship involvement	core faith and values adapt to new surroundings
purpose - big picture	time to ease into program	church relationship	continuing relationships	
	demands and new surroundings	ongoing personal growth		
		holistic healthy living		
identity	choosing a church	define next step	support connections	keep in touch
network with and for them	accountability partners	servicing	church family	inform them of local churches
keep in prayer	mentor advice	get connected to people to help	mentorship friendship	pray
help parents	service outreach	family friends	discipleship	getting students to come to youth groups
coach them	ask for help		grounded in faith	
ask if they can be involved			prep training	
weekends summers			sense of direction	
			own faith not parents	
prayer	intentional	ownership of faith	belonging	connection to camps campus
follow up	support	good habits	mentoring	strong foundation
move transitions	dates	spiritual disciplines	use of gifts	church

Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Centre
community abroad	vision	accountability people challenge	desire for more growth	knowledge info about transition
communication before and after	resources	commitment to Christian community	good options destination	continue in relationship with family
moving buddies	ambition		bible believing and spirit filled	
painting a picture	accountability			
setting goals				
develop prayer life	church family support	church community		
apologetic support	support models mentors	support		
change tool kit	prayer with others and personal	goals - spiritual physical emotional		
transformation expectation	group support	personal faith		





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