

Parents and Youth Ministry

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Parents are the greatest assets and liabilities to youth ministry. You need them. Often they want you to do their job for you, but your job is more to the parents than the teens. I love what Brian Gilley said, "youth ministry is not different than big church," this is so true. There is this heretical fad in the church today to strip the youth ministry from big church as its own program. Youth ministry is the church and the youth are ministers. I know I am preaching to the choir. I love parents. I try to get them involved as much as possible. These are some helpful ways I have bridged parents into the youth ministry:

1. Teach from the pulpit on occasions the importance of family ministry and youth as ministers.
2. Have regular parent/teen POW WOW's where I update the parents of youth on youth happenings.
3. Send out weekly email updates on what is happening.
4. Have parents as leaders or volunteers for events.
5. Give the youth homework on Sunday School lessons that they have their parents contribute towards.
6. Develop a manual for youth leaders and student leaders. Within share biblical expectations.
7. Survey the church about youth ministry to get feedback and criticism.
8. Involve the youth in big church ministry: singing, reading Scripture, teaching lessons, praying, casting vision.
9. Respect the parents and let them know you do [write notes, call them up, have them over for dinner].
10. My motto: ministry is both a privilege and responsibility. Privilege that God would use sinful-scum like me. Responsibility because I am accountable to a holy and righteous God. This goes for youth and their parents.

We are such a work in progress too.

We have started one-on-one discipleship this year. Each leader has 2-3 teens they work with 1-on-1. It is working. No teen is slipping through the cracks and the leaders are useful instead of bench warmers.