

THE HEART OF PARENT-TEEN

Leader's Notes



Written by
Murray Brown

copyright © 2001
YouthTRAIN

YouthTRAIN
gratefully
acknowledge the
financial
assistance of the
BAPTIST
SAVINGS AND
DEVELOPMENT
SOCIETY
in making the
production of this
parenting series
possible.

Youth Ministry and the Family

- 2 -

Preparation

- 3 -

Leadership

- 4 -

Follow Up

A Ministry to the Whole Family

As society places increasing pressure upon families the task of youth ministry has extended beyond teenagers themselves to the whole family. The youth leader of today is required to give counsel and advice, not only to teenagers but also to parents.

Many youth leaders feel inadequate for the task. Perhaps they themselves are not long out of their teens and feel they lack in knowledge and experience when it comes to counselling families. Others would like to see parents get together and learn from one another, but lack the time to develop suitable resources.

“The Heart of Parent Teen” is a resource which has been developed to assist all youth leaders and church leaders in working with families in their churches and communities.

It is a ready to use resource that does not require the leader to be an expert in parenting teenagers. All that is needed are good skills in facilitating discussion so as to lead participants to understand, discuss and apply what they learn.



AT A GLANCE

The role of the leader is vital to the success of the forums

Leaders must pray and prepare well for each session.

Preparation

Your role as a leader of **“The Heart of Parent-Teen”** is critical to the success of the programme.

In order to ensure that the series is a success, good preparation is vital. Before commencing the series consider the following:

1. Ensure that the church leadership is supportive of you running the series and understands the benefits it aims to deliver.
2. Decide what schedule of sessions suits you and potential participants best. Some options might be:
 - Weekly sessions held over 12 weeks
 - Fortnightly sessions held over 24 weeks
 - Monthly sessions held over one year
 - Three sessions per quarter held one or two weeks apart
3. Decide on a suitable venue (church or home) and any cost that will be charged.
4. Publicise the sessions in your church and community. To help you monitor attendance it is a good idea to have people sign up. It also tends to make them more committed to attending.

Prior to each session you should:

1. Read through the session notes and familiarise yourself with its contents.
2. Estimate how much time you will devote to each section so that you don't have to rush to finish.
3. As much as is possible, anticipate questions or issues that may arise given the people you expect to attend.
4. Spend time in prayer being as specific in your prayer requests as possible. Pray for yourself, for the upcoming session, and for individuals in the group and their family.

The leader is the most important ingredient in these forums. They must commit themselves to pray for each session and for the families represented.



AT A GLANCE

As a leader you do not need to be an expert in parenting. You do however need good facilitation skills.

Leadership

While you do not need to be an expert in parenting, you do need good skills in facilitating discussion and sharing. Note the following points:

1. You need to carefully read through the Aims and Principles of the Forums (pages 4 & 5 of Session 1). Your role is to be sure all participants understand these well. It is a good idea to regularly review them throughout the series.
2. Read through each session before leading it and familiarise yourself with its contents.
3. Begin each group time with a brief prayer and look back at the revision questions found at the end of each session.
4. Invite participants to discuss insights and experiences arising out of the “Parent Teen Heart to Heart” assignment(s) described at the end of each session. Encourage everyone to attempt this but do not exert undue pressure.
5. Read through the notes together. Give people regular opportunities to comment.
6. Invite discussion on the questions set.
7. Keep an eye on the clock and don't get bogged down on one person's difficulties. If necessary arrange follow up counselling.
8. At the end of each session allow for a brief time of open prayer for those who wish to pray for any families facing difficulties.
9. If possible, have tea and coffee available at the end of the session. People will often talk more freely in the informal time after a session.
10. Finally, be sensitive to the range of people involved in your group. Some will be married, others divorced or widowed. Some will be Christian and some will not. Some will have good relationships with their teens, others will not. Think before you speak!

Your role as a leader is to discern God's leading and take the group in the direction He is headed.



AT A GLANCE

Leaders must ensure they have a good follow up strategy in place before beginning the series.

Follow Up

It is a good idea to have a follow up strategy in place to deal with issues that arise within the sessions. Some issues will be minor and may require only casual contact between sessions. Others will be more serious and may even need intervention by a skilled family counsellor.

Generally follow up will be done by one of the following:

- You the facilitator
- A parent in the church (preferably one within the group)
- A pastoral staff member or elder

In order to ensure that the most appropriate follow up is given consider the following:

1. Know your own limits of expertise. Don't take on more than you are equipped to handle.
2. Know your own time limitations. Don't take on a follow up load that is heavier than you can handle.
3. If you yourself are not a parent of teenagers, have a suitable parent as part of the group who has successfully raised teenagers so that they can assist with first hand insights and follow up.
4. Make yourself aware of which pastoral staff members or elders are best equipped to handle referrals, and discuss with them their availability to provide follow up before beginning the sessions.
5. Develop a set of resources such as books, tapes and videos which you can lend to people to supplement their learning in specific areas of need.

To order further copies contact:

YouthTRAIN
139 Anders Rd
RD 5
Palmerston North

Knowing yourself and those around you is an essential part of effective follow up.