

If you have a desire to start some new ministry with young people, then this guide will help you to consider the first steps to making this happen. This guide aims to support you in the visioning, thinking, and planning and signpost you towards appropriate resources.

As an initial step, we advise you to get in touch with a member of the Mustard Seed Team - to talk through your plans, seek advice and so they can pray for you. They are happy to be involved at different stages, according to your needs.

<https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/children-youth/mustard-seed-team>

Youth ministry could be:

- an organised youth activity (a weekly, monthly or other regular group)
- engaging with young people in the choir, worship band or as servers
- a church-based, home-based, school-based, street-based setting
- connecting with uniformed groups

Anything that connects with young people (roughly ages 10-20 years). The possibilities depend on your commitment, enthusiasm, support from your church (or local churches) and some preparation work.

Youth ministry is fundamental to the ministry of every church, and we should delight in and cherish our young people, giving them opportunities to grow in faith, serve alongside others, participate in worship and build good relationships with other members of the church.

Youth Work is a challenge and a wonderful opportunity and when done well can be transformative, life enhancing and faith building. However, it is also a huge responsibility, and this Practical Guide aims to assist you in avoiding some common pitfalls and ironing out any issues as you develop your vision and put the practicalities in place.

Where to Start?

What is your vision for young people? Does it come out of an individual idea, a whole church vision, a request from parents, schools or young people or from identifying a need in the community. It's important to make plenty of time to consider these questions as they will form the foundation of your work going forward.

Principles

Though the context might be different there are some common principles to bear in mind regardless of where you start from.

- **Pray** and seek God with a small group or as a church...obvious but often forgotten in the excitement.
- **Include** the young people you hope to engage from the beginning. Find out what they want and need.
- **Know** your area? What are the needs? What is a relevant and appropriate response to those needs? Who is already doing what? Where can you partner with others? Church, school, council
- **Identify** those who may want to be involved in youth work.
- **Canvass** opinion by possibly hosting an event to invite people to (parents, young people, other churches etc). The Mustard Seed Team or other outside support could help to facilitate a vision day or evening.

Consider some of these issues:

- Define the purpose of the group - What is the group for? Ages, content, aim. What are you trying to achieve and who has decided that?
- Who should be involved? How can you recruit people to help? What training and support might you offer? What skills do you have or what skills do you need?
- Venues for meeting and equipment required.
- Staffing, safeguarding and DBS requirements – how will this be managed?
- Policies and Procedures – Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Behavioural Policy, Membership etc.
- Finances – where will it come from? How much might you need?
- Programmes – is it a discipleship group, an open club, or centred round a sports or food related activity? (This will depend on those who you wish to invite)
- Keeping in touch and keeping up momentum – ongoing training and development for leaders, communication, and publicity to attract and maintain members.
- Remember to thank your volunteer team and treat them when you can!

Contact the Mustard Seed Team: <https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/children-youth/mustard-seed-team>

Other Useful Resources

A Guide to Youth Ministry – Exploring the Needs of Your Church, Katie McDaniel, National Society, 1999

Christian Youth Work, Mark Ashton and Phil Moon, Authentic Media, 2007

No Guts No Glory – How to Build Youthwork that Lasts, Alan Stewart, Matthias Media

Young People and Mission – A Practical Guide, Ed. Alison and David Booker, Church House Publishing, 2007

Starting Right – Thinking Theologically about Youth Ministry, Ed. Dean, Clark, Rahn, Zondervan, 2001

This Way to Youth Ministry – An Introduction to the Adventure, Duffy Robbins, Zondervan, 2004

http://www.going4growth.com/growth_in_skills_and_knowledge/good_practice_with_young_people