



# How to ...

## Share the Gospel with young people

72% of people who decide to follow Jesus in Britain do so under the age of 18<sup>1</sup>. This means that young people continue to be an incredibly fruitful mission field and, as a church, we should try to make the most of the opportunity to share the person and message of Jesus with them. There are lots of ways to do this. This guide contains a few helpful starting points.

### Church-based outreach

Every church can reach out to young people. You don't need an employed worker or young and trendy people, but you do need people who care and are willing to listen and be there for young people. You also don't need to be young. 85% of young people look for a 'parent or grandparent-like figure in a youth worker<sup>2</sup>. Church based youth work can be attractational or detached.

Attractational youth work is more common, where churches run an evening meeting for young people in the community to have fun in the church building and hear about Jesus through relationship with leaders or an upfront short message. These times can be open or more structured. A model like Rock Solid gives you all you need to start something like this...

[www.yfcreources.co.uk](http://www.yfcreources.co.uk) A meeting like this should be:

- Fun – play some games
- Relational – ask questions and engage young people in meaningful conversation
- Intentional – be seeking opportunities to ask questions and talk about faith
- Invitational – always be asking more young people to come

Detached work is where teams of youth workers go out onto the streets and talk to young people, build relationship and check they are safe. Done regularly it can be a really effective way of meeting young people on their terms, sharing faith and signposting them to other church activities. A good site to see what this can look like is <http://www.fyt.org.uk/projects/streetspace/>

### Equipping and empowering young people

The most effective way of reaching young people is through young people. When they come to faith, the most frequently cited influence is a peer. So therefore, like the old adage says, 'Teach a man to fish...', an incredibly fruitful investment of our time is inspiring and equipping young people to share their faith. If there are young people in our churches we should be loving them, intentionally discipling them, but also helping them reach out to their friends.

A great way to do this is teach them to be great listeners to others' stories, to tell their story, and to share God's story – a really simple model of evangelism. More can be found on the free trial section of [www.yfcreources.co.uk](http://www.yfcreources.co.uk) in Lumen and Mettle. It is also important to create a culture of faith sharing, so as leaders we need to be communicating how important this is, and sharing stories from our own life.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.eauk.org/church/resources/snapshot/upload/Confidently-sharing-the-gospel-final-report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> *Disappointed with Jesus*, G. Calver

## Schools

The vast majority of young people spend many of their waking hours in schools and the church has a really valuable role to play in supporting schools. Schools are not a place to share the Gospel without invitation, but through serving schools, valuable relationships can be developed and in some instances opportunities are given to help young people explore faith. Schools are obliged to support the spiritual and moral development of students. Here are a few ways in which churches can serve their local schools:

- Delivery of RE Lessons - <http://request.org.uk/> is a great website to consider using.
- Mentoring of students
- Delivery of assemblies
- Help with Christian Union

In every instance, the starting point of a relationship with a school should be a posture of service and asking how we might help. More schools' resources can be found at <http://www.schoolswork.co.uk/>

## Language

Young people will not care how much you know until they know how much you care. This is absolutely true and our actions have a profound effect on young people's lives. However we do also need to talk and here are some tips:

- Be a great listener and question asker. Think about 'go-to' questions for young people and be genuinely interested in their lives.
- Don't try and use youth vocabulary... but do try to understand it and ask what it means.
- Tell stories – especially how God has impacted your life.
- Assume they know very little about the Bible.

## Training

There are some great training opportunities to help you share the Gospel with young people and explore issues affecting young people. In a world where youth culture moves so quickly, it is so important to continually know what is happening in their world and ask how we might most effectively reach them. Here are a few regular events and resources:

- Youthwork the Conference - <http://www.youthworkconference.co.uk/>
- Youthwork Summit - <https://www.youthworksummit.com/>
- CRE – <https://www.creonline.co.uk/> has a youth zone and youth day as part of its event
- YFC Training Wall – <https://www.yfcreources.co.uk/training-wall> videos on subjects related to youth ministry

## Help!

Youth work is not an individual pursuit, but a team game. Get a good team around you, pray regularly for young people and get help where you can. There are a good number of people and organisations who exist to help you reach young people. These include:

- Your own Diocesan Youth Officer - <http://www.bristol.anglican.org/who-we-are/whos-who/#external>
- Youth for Christ - [www.yfc.co.uk](http://www.yfc.co.uk)
- Scripture Union - <http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/>
- Urban Saints - <http://www.urbansaints.org/>

We would all be delighted to help where we can and hope and pray that through you, young people can hear about Jesus and come to know him.

Written by: Phil Knox