

Ideas for Engaging Parents

Host a Strong Catholic Families: Strong Catholic Youth parent session . . . or even a series!

Consider adapting some of your existing youth programs (service projects, regular gatherings, prayer services, social opportunities or trips) to be family or parent-teen programs.

Youth Ministry Access (Center for Ministry Development) includes parent/youth sessions.
www.youthministryaccess.org (online subscription service for youth ministry activities)

Detailed outlines of sessions below found at <http://www.dobyouth.org/AboutUs/Resources.aspx>

Check out www.faithformationlearningexchange.net for trends, research, articles, podcasts, models, best practices, tools and resources for all ages, especially Families & Parents.

RESOURCES TO PROVIDE TO PARENTS

CPYU Parent Page – Center for Parent/Youth Understanding

Subscribe to monthly CPYU Parent Page (\$24 per year for 12-monthly issues). Each month you can download a new issue from our website (in PDF form) to hand out to the parents of teens in your church. Each 2-page issue will keep parents up to date on the latest youth culture news and information. Downloaded file can either be emailed to parents or printed out for distribution (not posted to church web site). Each issue will include Youth Culture Hot Lists, Quotes, analysis of news and research, and more. <http://www.cpyuresourcecenter.org/cpyu-parent-page.html>

God's Word, Your World! Digital Reproducibles for Catholic Teen Reflection & Action from Liturgy Training Publications

Can be posted to a web site, or attached to emails to youth and/or parents.

No longer available from the publisher, but go to www.google.com, type God's Work, Your World in the box, click on "Books" on the left, and you will find the link!

The Word To Go – Liturgy Training Publications

Similar to above – available for purchase

<http://www.ltp.org/p-2206-the-word-to-go-2010-2011-reproducible-sunday-scripture-reflections-and-activities.aspx>

Contributed by Denise York, Immaculate Conception, East Aurora

Family Faith Conversation Starters

Questionnaire and booklet of questions designed to get family members talking about faith. Found online at <http://www.dobyouth.org/AboutUs/Resources.aspx>

Contributed by Sr. Lori High, Annunciation Parish, Elma

Book: *The Winter of Our Disconnect* by Susan Maushart

Author challenged her kids to unplug for 6 months to look for other ways to engage socially and academically. If they needed the computer, they went to the library. They spent more time together as a family – having dinner together, reading books, playing board games, talking to each other. Author encourages families to consider this even just for one night each week.

Contributed by Judy Dankert, St. Joseph, Fredonia

GATHERED ACTIVITIES FOR PARENTS

Parents Bible Study

Held while the kids are in religious education classes. It has been very successful and the parents really seem to enjoy it. We surveyed the parents at the beginning of the school year to see what they would be interested in doing: 1. Service/social justice projects; 2. Bible Study; 3. Parent-led discussion forum; 4. Other ... The parents choose Bible Study! They also have muffins/fruit and coffee/tea (provided by parish).

Contributed by Mary Ann Newark, Immaculate Conception, Wellsville

Inspiration and Sharing Opportunity . . . Video – “Breathe”

Used within a Generations of Faith gathering. Our usual format for the K thru 4th graders is to have the parents and kids remain together for the entire session. At last month's meeting, however, I had our music teacher & a couple of aides take the kids to learn some songs while I took the parents to a separate room. I told them that I wanted to give them a Christmas gift & showed a 15 minute Rob Bell video called “Breathe”

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvqphwM_oL0 . I opened up to comments & sharing afterward and it was incredible. There were teary moms AND dads... good tears... and a beautiful moment shared together. Simple, but really meaningful!

Contributed by SueAnn Saltarelli, St. Francis of Assisi, Tonawanda

Parent Teen Conversation During Confirmation Preparation

We asked candidates to bring a parent and/or sponsor. Because many had not as yet chosen a sponsor, most brought a parent along. During the sharing, we had about 6 in each group. We did not separate candidates from their parents. We had candidates and parents speak to one another one-on-one, with questions such as candidates saying to parents: What do you remember about your Confirmation? Tell me a story surrounding my birth.

Parents asked: What do you appreciate about our family? What's important to you? What's difficult for you at this time in your life? Then there were questions for the small groups to discuss.

Contributed by Sr. Therese Chmura, St. Andrew, Sloan

Parent Faith Formation Sessions

Sessions are offered for parents while youth are in faith formation sessions. Descriptions of three sessions can be found at <http://www.dobyouth.org/AboutUs/Resources.aspx>

Contributed by Jack Leo, St. John Newman Mission Community

Adding Parent Workshops to Curriculum

We were revising the Tenth Grade Curriculum for faith formation, and decided to require a mandatory workshop and make it part of the schedule (parent had to come in order for child to be confirmed). It was presented as part of the Parent Student Information Meeting in the fall with dates. We set offered three dates they could choose from (68 students). When explaining the addition to the schedule, we cited some information from the NSYR about the importance of parents. Our parents were open to the workshop; once the first one happened the word began to spread that it was a good experience.

(Outline at <http://www.dobyouth.org/AboutUs/Resources.aspx>)

Next, we are going to offer an optional workshop for the Confirmation Parents and Teens at the end of March. It's an experiment to see how many would come by choice.

We are also adding a mandatory parent-teen workshop for the ninth grade families. These will happen in the first week of April during their regular class time. It will most likely focus on communication.

Next year our plan is to add workshops at seventh and eighth grades. The pastor would like to see us do something with the school parents and children too. That will probably be an item for next year.

We also held an optional Parent Orientation Session for Youth Ministry. (Handout at <http://www.dobyouth.org/AboutUs/Resources.aspx>)

Contributed by Denise York, Immaculate Conception, East Aurora