

# What Students Need from Caring Adults

Changing the youth world happens one student at a time. Students do not connect to programs; they connect to people. The most effective way to influence students is through significant relationships with key people in their lives. Our goal is to develop leaders who minister to students.

Students need adults who will:

- Love God and live for him
- Be interested in their lives
- Take initiative to spend time with them
- Pray for them
- Be real
- Say encouraging words
- Believe in them
- Laugh
- Go to “their world”
- Remember their names and care for them
- Share God’s love through personal experience
- Be consistent to the programs
- Be patient
- Enjoy life



## How to be Involved in Students' Lives

We will later explain the application process, but first it is important for you to understand what commitment we ask from our staff. For effective ministry with students, you need to:

1. *Understand the Purpose and Planned Values of our Ministry.* Take a look at the values and goals that make our youth ministry effective in reaching and caring for students.
2. *Commit to a Program.* Consider the role in which God is leading you to build relationships with students.
3. *Grow as a Minister.* Develop your personal ministry, which will ultimately influence students.

# Understanding the Purpose and Planned Values of Our Ministry

## Purpose Statement

We exist to help students become fully devoted followers of Christ, who **LOVE** Jesus, **REFLECT** his kingdom, and **RESPOND** with abandon to his personal call.

For a further explanation of this vision, look at the Vineyard Youth brochure included in this packet, or check out our website at [www.milanvineyard.org/youth](http://www.milanvineyard.org/youth)

## Planned Values

Planned values are descriptive words that reflect our values, attitudes, styles, and beliefs that influence our purpose. We try to incorporate these key elements into our programs and our lives. It is all built on **RELATIONSHIPS**.

R.E.L.A.T.I.O.N.S.H.I.P.S.

**R**elational approach

**E**ncouragement

**L**aughter and celebration

**A**cceptance

**T**ransparency

**I**nvolvement of students

**O**utreach oriented

**N**o hype

**S**piritual growth

**H**ealthy choices

**I**ntimacy

**P**rofessionalism

**S**trategic follow-up

love reflect respond

**Program Option: Bible, etc—Weekend Celebrations**

This is one of our weekly senior high events. We meet after worship at the celebrations for a bible study/discussion to help students apply God's truth to their lives.

We need adults to greet students, learn names, talk to students, contribute to the discussion, encourage students to attend other programs, and help create an accepting atmosphere.

**Program Option: lovereflectrespond—Sunday, 10:00 a.m.**

This is our weekly middle school event. It happens each weekend after opening worship at the 10:00 a.m. celebration. It's a chance for students to relax and get to know God. We have a lot of fun, study God's word, and pray together in small groups.



We need adults to lead and care for small groups, greet students, learn names, talk to students, encourage students to attend other programs, and help create an accepting atmosphere.

**Program Option: Events—Various Times**

Throughout the year, we have various service, outreach, retreat, and social events for students.



We need adults with flexible availability to drive vans, to welcome and greet students, to set up and clean up, and to help supervise youth ministry events.

# **How to Become a Youth Ministry Volunteer: The Tag Along to Pass It On Process**

## **1. Express Interest**

You may have an interest in serving God by loving students, but are unsure as to where you can help. We will help you with this. Some of the most “unlikely people” make the greatest youth workers, so take the next step as you prayerfully consider this ministry.

## **2. Initial Contact by Ministry Leadership**

This is an opportunity for us to briefly connect and hear your desire to be involved in ministry. We will also give you a general overview of the ministry and arrange for you to visit and observe one of our programs.

## **3. Receive Youth Ministry Material**

This packet gives you the basic information that will help you make decisions about our ministry. We have tried to explain as much as we can, but the clear picture happens when you tag along to observe a program.

## **4. Tag Along**

Before you fill out the application, we encourage you to “tag along” to one of the youth ministry programs. We’ll connect you with one of the other volunteer leaders that you can hang out with during the program. This is a good opportunity to get a better feel for the ministry without having expectations or responsibilities placed on you. You will have a chance to meet students, other staff, and write questions for our future meeting. It will be natural for you to feel uncomfortable while observing a program (students won’t typically go out of their way to make you feel welcome until you get to know them). You may want to Tag Along to several different program options to experience different parts of the ministry.

## **5. Complete Application Packet**

This application packet was developed to obtain appropriate information for our screening process. We request two references. You can choose a (1) pastor, (2) close friend, and/or (3) an employer within the past year.

## **6. Interview with Youth Pastoral Staff**

This is an opportunity for you to share thoughts from your observations, describe your spiritual journey, and communicate your gifts and desires for working in student ministry. We will discuss a more specific role that fits your interests, gifts, and availability, and the needs of the youth ministry.

## **7. Try It On**

We will discuss the beginning date after you've turned in the application. This date may vary depending on your intended involvement. This will begin a "trying it on" phase, where you can try the commitment and the ministry on for size, and see how it fits your life and God's purposes for you.

## **8. Evaluation Meeting**

After Trying It On for 1-3 months (depending on what role you're starting off with), we will meet to talk about how it's going, and give you the opportunity to Take It On

## **9. Prayerfully Consider Taking It On**

We want you to take time to pray and think through taking on the ministry for at least one year. We also encourage you to seek the counsel of family and/or friends regarding this commitment.

## **10. Take It On**

After you have decided you want to Take It On, sign the Take It On commitment sheet and return it to us. You will now be an official part of the team—welcome aboard! We will continue to evaluate throughout the year and adjust your role to better fit your style, personality, and strengths. Eventually, you can move into the "Pass It On" stage where you learn to teach others to do what you are doing and help grow the ministry.

## **When I eventually move into the Take It On stage, what am I committing to?**

- Consistent attendance at a program. (We ask that you arrive at least 15 minutes early and stay at least 15 minutes late. These extra minutes become key relational times with students.)
- Relational ministry with students during the week. (One hour additional time commitment for follow-up with students through notes, phone calls, meetings, etc...).
- Attendance at monthly staff meetings.
- Growing as a minister

Our goal is to help volunteer leaders move from program-directed ministry (dependent on the program) to self-directed ministry (independent minister). A few keys to help you develop as a minister are:

- Time: Be patient; feeling comfortable and connecting with students takes time.
- Participation: Going on special events and retreats will help intensify and solidify your relationships with students.
- Initiative: The more you invest, the more you will get out of it. Your relationships will grow deeper as you invest your time.

## **What You Can Expect from Our Church**

- Structure and leadership
- Encouraging words
- Training and learning opportunities
- A sense of humor
- Prayer and accountability
- Challenge to develop your ministry
- Some candy, from time to time

Congratulations! You have almost made it through this packet. I know it seems like a lot of material, but through this process you will learn valuable information to make your transition into our youth ministry much easier. Now, please complete the application and send out your reference forms. Again, if you have questions or need additional assistance, please feel free to contact Jon Bartholomay at (734) 730-1687.