

Groundbreaking

A How-To Guide for Building a Comprehensive Youth Ministry Program

(Part 4): Roles in Youth Ministry

*This resource is provided through the courtesy of the
Archdiocese of Baltimore's Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry*

*This resource has been revised for use as a general
youth ministry resource in parish settings*

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Key Roles in Youth Ministry Programming

The previous chapters described the actual process of developing a youth ministry program and some of the important issues that a team must consider. Within this process, however, there are several very important functions and roles that are integral in developing a comprehensive approach to youth ministry. Though these roles have already been mentioned, each requires more specific description.

Coordinator of Youth Ministry

This role is crucial for providing coordination for a parish's youth ministry efforts. This person can be full time or part time, salaried, volunteer, or receive a stipend. It is **not** the function of this person to **do** the entire youth ministry in the parish. It **is** this person's responsibility to **enable** the parish's ministry to young people. Five key areas for the coordinator to focus their attention on include:

- a) Direct Programming
- b) Seasonal Programming
- c) Leadership Development
- d) Sacramental and/or catechetical programs
- e) Administration

Essential tasks of the coordinator include:

- a) Coordinate the parish's ministry to young people
- b) Facilitate the youth ministry team in its efforts
- c) Serve as the liaison with the parish council and/or the pastor
- d) Coordinate the recruitment, training, support, and evaluation of volunteers in the youth ministry program
- e) Provide resources (print, video, web, training opportunities, diocesan events, etc.)
- f) Advocate for using *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry* in the parish

Youth Ministry Team

Youth ministry is a team effort. The team usually consists of committed adults and young people, many of whom are involved in the program as program or activity leaders. Sometimes there is an adult advisory committee that oversees the youth ministry efforts and provides resources and direction. The planning team, itself handles the practical implementation of the program. Sometimes the function of the advisory committee is absorbed into the planning team. Regardless of what model is utilized, the planning team has the following tasks:

- a) Responsible for needs assessments, setting goals and objectives, and designing programmatic responses
- b) Handles the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the designed program
- c) Watches for holistic programming, which might include the following: including scouting, sports, adolescent catechesis, confirmation, parent involvement and programs, justice and service activities
- d) Fosters the involvement of young people in the life of the parish, including serving on various parish committees and being involved in parish activities

Program and Activity Leaders

These individuals have the responsibility for specific areas or activities within the total youth ministry program. Their responsibilities include:

- a) Direct responsibility for the planning, implementation and evaluation of critical areas within the program, for example: confirmation coordinator, justice and service coordinator, parish sports program director, youth group coordinator, scoutmaster
- b) Direct responsibility for specific activities, for example: catechists, coaches, scout leaders, youth group advisors, trip leaders

Chaperones

This important role is often where the relational dimension of youth ministry is most evident. These individuals provide the necessary supervision and involvement for programs to exist. Their tasks include:

- a) Provide a consistent adult presence at youth ministry activities
- b) Provide appropriate supervision, as outlined by the planning team and/or coordinator
- c) Interact with the young people, developing relationships of respect, trust and care
- d) These are **not** just drivers or guards, their role is to build relationships with the young people