CAMPUS LIFE 101
STARTING EFFECTIVE MINISTRY
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERVIEW</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSION STATEMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATEMENT OF FAITH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3STORY®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL MINISTRIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ESSENTIALS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIONAL MINISTRY ACTIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BALANCED LIFE MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATING CAMPUS LIFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOP PRAYER TEAMS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONTHLY TEAMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEKLY TEAMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON-CALL PRAYER WARRIORS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONALISM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURCHES &amp; OTHER LIKE-MINDED PARTNERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOP YOUR COMMUNITY SUPPORT TEAMS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTABLISH A START-UP COMMITTEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY SUPPORT TEAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEARN CAMPUS LIFE MINISTRY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACTING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILDING TIME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLUB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPOINTMENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMALL GROUPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORE TEAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITE VISIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COACH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPORTING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOP A MINISTRY TEAM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECRUITING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCREENING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEETING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE AND RATIO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAINING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIONAL MINISTRY ACTIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STUDENT MINISTRY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACTING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILDING TIMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREPARING TO START CLUB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GETTING CLUB STARTED RIGHT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSISTENT RELATIONAL MINISTRY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARTING A CORE TEAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHARING GOD’S STORY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SAFETY FIRST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUR RESPONSIBILITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BASICS OF SAFETY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This section will cover the following

MISSION STATEMENT
STATEMENT OF FAITH
3STORY
NATIONAL MINISTRIES
5 ESSENTIALS
RELATIONAL MINISTRY ACTIONS
BALANCED MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY
COMMUNICATING CAMPUS LIFE

This resource has been created for the staff person starting Campus Life from scratch. We hope to provide all you need to start ministry right. There are also many pieces included in this resource that could help any staff along the journey towards developing healthier Campus Life.

Youth for Christ began in 1944. Billy Graham was the first full-time employee. YFC is an international movement involving over 100 member countries, each with their own indigenous leadership. In the USA, YFC is active in 180 chapters, including 2,000 different ministry sites where young people are being reached. Engaged in our mission are 1,500 staff, 15,800 volunteers, and 6,300 student leaders.

MISSION STATEMENT

YFC reaches young people everywhere, working together with the local church and other like-minded partners to develop lifelong followers of Jesus who lead by their Godliness in lifestyle, devotion to prayer and the Word of God, passion for sharing the love of Christ and commitment to social involvement.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful people regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in Christ.
3Story is our operating system in YFC. We know that if we seek to abide deeply with Jesus every day and stay saturated in his Word, we will be ready and aware of the opportunities he gives us in a lost world of teenagers. It is who we want to be and how we want to live.

3Story Connections

The connection between God’s Story and My Story is about abiding. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” Matthew 22:37

The connection between My Story and Their Story is about loving others enough to discover their story and disclose my own. “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:39

The connection between Their Story and God’s Story is about introducing my friend Jesus to my friends who don’t yet know him. “For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all and therefore all died. And he died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died and was raised.” 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

3Story is... a way of life that spurs followers of Jesus to BE good news while telling stories of THE good news.

*Stories more than Steps
*Questions more than Answers
*Honesty more than Perfection
*Them more than You
*Love more than Knowledge
NATIONAL MINISTRIES

YFC's National Ministries have proven, over time, to be transferable and reproducible in various settings across the nation.

CAMPUS LIFE HIGH SCHOOL: Ministers to lost students in local high schools.
CAMPUS LIFE MIDDLE SCHOOL: Ministers to lost students in local middle schools.
CITY LIFE: Ministers to lost teens in urban neighborhoods.
DEAF TEEN QUEST: Ministers to lost teens that are deaf.
JUVENILE JUSTICE MINISTRIES: Ministers to at-risk youth in juvenile institutions.
PARENT LIFE: Ministers to pregnant and parenting teens.
YFC CORE: Mobilizes teams of Christian kids to reach their lost friends for Christ.
YFC MILITARY: Ministers to lost military brats on military bases.

5 ESSENTIALS

For the National Ministries to be sustainable and fruitful we believe they must implement these essentials:

WIDESPREAD PRAYER
We deliberately engage lots of Christians to intercede on behalf of the ministry site.

LOVING RELATIONSHIPS
We consistently pursue lost kids & engage them in life-long relationships with Jesus.

FAITHFUL BIBLE TEACHING
We accurately handle Biblical truth, regularly coaching kids to apply it in their lives.

COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY STRATEGY
We intentionally work together with local churches, agencies and other partners to provide sustainable youth and family ministry.

ADULTS WHO EMPOWER
We strategically develop leaders to reach young people from every people group.

RELATIONAL MINISTRY ACTIONS

Campus Life Staff build loving relationships through the balanced practice of 6 Relational Ministry Action’s:

CONTACTING - going into the teenage world to initiate new relationships.
BUILDING TIME - spending time with students to build new relationships and grow existing ones.
CLUB - meeting with a large group of kids in a safe, high energy, non-Christian friendly setting to talk about relevant topics and connect them to God’s truth.
APPOINTMENTS - meeting with kids to focus on their individual needs.
SMALL GROUPS - meeting with several students to have an interactive discussion about relevant topics and connect them to God’s truth.
CORE TEAM - a team of Christian students with a desire to grow in their relationship with Christ and relationally influence their friends for Jesus.
**BALANCED LIFE MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY**

The Campus Life philosophy of ministry equates responsible evangelism with relational evangelism. In the context of a relationship, a “balanced life” is modeled by staff and encouraged in students. Staff strive to develop a mental, physical, spiritual, and social balance in the life of the Christian teenager enabling them to successfully communicate, in action and word, their personal faith in Jesus Christ to their friends, campus, and world.

The Biblical base for the Balanced Life is found in Luke 2:52 and Romans 12:1-2: “And Jesus grew...

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<tr>
<th>Mental Area</th>
<th>Physical Area</th>
<th>Spiritual Area</th>
<th>Social Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In wisdom</td>
<td>And stature</td>
<td>And in favor with God</td>
<td>And men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – which is your spiritual worship (physical area). Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world (social area), but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (mental area). Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, His good, pleasing and perfect will (spiritual area).” Romans 12:1-2

**MEETING THE NEEDS OF TEENAGERS**

The Balanced Life philosophy drives the way Campus Life staff engage the needs of teenagers. Though we are deeply concerned with their spiritual need for Jesus, we are also committed to addressing the variety of needs in a teenager’s life (sometimes referred to as Holistic Ministry). Entering into the deep needs of teenagers often models Christ’s love prior to them choosing to follow Christ for a lifetime.

**ONE ON ONE**

In the context of a loving and caring relationship we are able to determine the needs of teens and are often qualified to help them address those needs.

**COLLABORATION**

By taking the time to build collaborating relationships within the community we are able to refer a teen to someone better equipped to meet a specific need.
What is Campus Life? Get used to this question, and get comfortable answering it to a wide audience. As we talk with the different people who will ask that question, we are never trying to hide who we are. To the contrary, we are trying to avoid unclear words (especially religious phrases that mean different things to different people). Campus Life is impossible to describe, but we seek to speak “their” language so they understand.

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**

**WANT TO KNOW:**

Who is responsible for Campus Life?
Introduce yourself and your accountability structure and leadership.

What activities does Campus Life provide and who is involved?
Campus Life hosts meetings, events, and trips. Any student is welcome (be ready to share the names of some leadership students).

Are you going to create a controversy?
We want to work with the school and support it any way we can.

What would you do with students if you are on campus?
Get to know them better so we can be available to them as they navigate through adolescence.

**TO ADMINISTRATORS:** Campus Life is a non-denominational youth organization in about 180 areas and 2,000 schools. Along with fantastic events and trips, our weekly meetings address the issues teenagers face and relate those topics to basic Christian principles.

**PASTORS**

**WANT TO KNOW:**

Where does Campus Life fit?
Share a quick YFC history including our current core ministries.

Who is responsible for Campus Life?
Introduce yourself, your background, and your accountability structure.

Don’t we have doctrinal differences?
Be comfortable with our Statement of Faith, and with the fact that we address basic Christian truths and avoid controversial doctrines.

Don’t we compete with the church for the same students?
We target lost students. When Christian students choose to be involved we encourage them in their church involvement, and help them to integrate their faith with their daily life and to reach out to their friends. When kids make a decision, churched students are the natural bridge for the new believers into a church.

**TO PASTORS:** Campus Life is an arm of the church targeting un-churched students. We are supported by many different denominations and have learned to navigate the sometimes tricky waters of connecting to many churches, while staying focused on our mission.
PARENTS

WANT TO KNOW:

Who is responsible for Campus Life?
Introduce yourself and your accountability structure.

What are the staff qualifications?
Tell them your personal story and training, and the screening and training of your ministry team.

What are you teaching students?
We use a national curriculum that addresses the issues teenagers face (they like to hear a couple of actual examples). A staff person relates that topic to basic Christian principles.

Who plans, directs, and supervises your trips and events?
They think you make good decisions, but they want to make sure!

TO PARENTS: Campus Life is a Christian based organization which provides a safe, fun place for their child where they will be accepted, encouraged to make good decisions and provided positive opportunities.

STUDENTS

WANT TO KNOW:

Who are you? Why are you hanging out at a high school/middle school?
As the Campus Life director you are meeting students to see who would be interested in helping get Campus Life started.

Isn’t Campus Life a youth group/ Christian group?
Really it is quite different from most youth groups. It is not tied to a particular church or denomination, and students from several different churches, or no church at all, are involved.

Who goes to Campus Life?
Students are very sensitive about this. A broad cross section of students involved gives you the best opportunity to have a good answer to this question. You hope someone they know and like is already involved!

What happens at a Campus Life meeting?
A fun combination of games, mixers, and discussions that help students address the issues they face every day.

What else does Campus Life do?
Students love to know about the events and trips that we do!

How do you join Campus Life?
You can’t join Campus Life. There are no dues or membership requirements. All students are welcome just come whenever you can.

TO STUDENTS: Campus Life is impossible to describe. You really have to experience it for yourself! Dozens of students cannot be wrong - it must be a fun place to be! Try it - if you don’t like it I’ll buy you lunch.

BOTTOM LINE

You are doing an incredible ministry in a mission field of hurting teenagers. Don’t be afraid to be excited, but be as informed as possible about YFC and about the person you are talking to. We want to give them the most accurate picture of Campus Life possible.
We deliberately engage lots of Christians to intercede on behalf of the ministry site. We should not just think about forming one prayer team, but form a few that will engage lots of Christians at different levels. Have conversations with many people in person, through your support letters, and using social media to explore their interest in supporting your life and ministry through prayer.

Three categories of prayer teams can easily be developed based on the frequency of your communication with them.

**MONTHLY TEAMS**

Monthly teams receive update letters or emails that contain broad stroke information about the progress being made in the mission to reach lost kids through your Campus Life efforts. These letters can be delivered electronically or through snail mail. They ought to stay focused on the mission, keeping kids’ stories front and center. Prayer requests will likely be a bit more general such as an upcoming trip or retreat.

**WEEKLY TEAMS**

Weekly teams will get the chance to look over your shoulder while you plan your schedule each week. Your prayer requests give them visibility into what you’re doing, how you spend your time, and which activities seem to jump off the page as important. This team prays as you head over to the school for lunch on Monday, meet a student at McDonald’s on Tuesday, and swing by the athletic fields after school on Wednesday. God’s assistance at such times is exactly what we need to overcome our own hesitations and be Spirit-led in our actions with students. These weekly teams can easily be communicated to through email or using social media. Make your communication enjoyable to read and you will encourage them in their commitment to pray for you.

**ON-CALL WARRIORS**

On-call prayer warriors may also be a part of your monthly and weekly teams but are committed to pray for you more regularly and specifically. Take advantage of text messaging as a way to offer frontline updates and requests to those who are on call and ready to pray.

God’s people are willing to engage in the mission with you through prayer. Keeping them engaged requires you to honor your end of the bargain—**communicate as often as you promise without fail and don’t neglect sharing with them how their prayers have been answered.**
To have an effective ministry you must know the community in which you work. Each community is different in demographics, resources, culture, and attitudes towards teenagers. To know a community well takes time and energy. It doesn’t happen overnight but is a continual process that is well worth it.

The following are important considerations in the start-up process, but don’t attempt a new start-up alone. Assistance from the National Service Center and/or a chapter with a strong Campus Life history is your best ally. **You start from scratch only once - do it right!** Not only will your ministry be stronger, the reputation your club builds will impact the entire area.

**PROFESSIONALISM**

As you start relationships within the community remember you are an adult. You may work with students but you must dress and act like a professional. This means dressing a little nicer when you meet the principal for the first time and having a humble attitude as you meet parents. You are communicating nonverbally with your dress, attitude, and even the language you use. Your professionalism is important to school and community leaders eventually trusting you with their students.

**SCHOOL**

To administrators, teachers, and students it’s a school, but to you it’s a mission field. A Campus Life staff person’s main goal is to reach every student possible. **Talk to anyone who can tell you anything about the school.** Obtain a school calendar, athletic schedules, and information about other clubs or organizations. Students, parents, and alumni can give you valuable information about your school’s unique history and personality.

**REPUTATION**

It is important to know the reputation that Campus Life might have at your school. Gain as much of this information as possible. You don’t want to learn negative Campus Life stories from the wrong people. Simply ask:

1. Has your school ever had Campus Life?
   a. If so, what was the reputation of the club and the staff? And why is it no longer there?
   b. If not, do other schools in your community or town have Campus Life? What is the reputation there?
KEY ADULT RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

There will always be “key” adults at a school that hold a certain amount of power because of their position, longevity, or loud voice. These are the people you should know:

1. **ADMINISTRATORS.** This is a very important group of people to consider. At the beginning of a ministry especially, it is important to get this right.

Make an appointment to meet with the principal. If a parent or teacher, who is respected by the principal, can call ahead or go along, you will gain credibility. On the other hand, a parent or teacher who has been a problem in the district or is perceived as particularly “religious” could bias the administration against you from the start.

The primary goal at this appointment is to simply inform an administrator, preferably the principal, what Campus Life is all about. They want to know that you are accountable to a responsible organization, that you are not going to create constant controversy for them, and that you are not there to proselytize or pressure students in any way. **Principals do not like surprises.** Leave an attractive brochure with a non-Christian-friendly description of Campus Life, endorsement letters from other area school administrators, and a business card.

Secondary, ask about school policies for clubs and different ways to connect with students. You should try to accomplish the following:

1. Ask if you need to fill out a form in the student activities office. The more you function like the other clubs in the school, the more quickly the school will accept you.
2. Without assuming any privileges (because you are guaranteed none) ask which channels of communication the school makes available for clubs (P.A., posters, bulletin boards, newspaper, yearbook).
3. Request permission for staff to be in the building during lunch (campus visits). **Your primary purpose is to remind students you already know** about club and other Campus Life events and trips. As club grows, you will know hundreds of students. Being present in their world is the best way to stay in contact with them.

If the principal is hesitant to allow campus visits, offer to:

- Restrict your contacts to only students you know (and the friends they introduce you to)
- Come in only once or twice a week
- Hang out in one or two designated areas

These will alleviate the fear of you “pressuring” students.

None of these “concessions” significantly lessen the benefits of campus visits. It is always worth whatever process you need to go through to end up with the privilege of being in the school. In the worst case, an after school campus visit is better than nothing.

Offer to serve at school events. Chaperoning dances, taking tickets at a game, or working concessions all give you visibility in the community. Helping out in an area of interest or expertise such as sports, cheerleading, drama, music, debate or language clubs can also be a great “in.” On the other hand, taking primary responsibility, as a coach or advisor, can become a huge distraction and confuse your role in the school. While discussing school events, ask whom you should see about requesting an athletic pass.

Encourage the administration to give you feedback throughout the year. Make sure they feel free to call if they have questions or hear of any problems associated with Campus Life. This lets them know you value a good relationship with the school.
2. **SECRETARIES, CUSTODIANS, AND SECURITY GUARDS.** These three groups of people hold the keys to the school. Many times doors are open to you when you have good relationships with these individuals.

From the first time you are in the school make sure you have the mindset that it is a privilege to be there. In no way treat it like you have the right to do what you want. Always introduce yourself keeping in mind that God has you there for a reason.

Go above and beyond to gain favor in the school. Make sure to ask security guards where to park and what procedures must be followed when checking in, ask custodians about building policies, always clean up your own mess after club and pick up the flyers left on the ground.

3. **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT, GUIDANCE COUNSELORS, AND TEACHERS.**

There are many people that you need to work with to accomplish healthy and sustainable ministry through Campus Life, these are just a few examples. Be attentive to all the relationships that God may be providing as you get to know a school and community.

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**PARENTS**

You cannot have a really successful youth ministry without involving and relating well to parents. Parents that understand the purpose and potential of Campus Life can make a huge difference by encouraging staff, representing Campus Life in the community, and helping grow the ministry.

**CONNECTING TO PARENTS**

You have many opportunities in your regularly scheduled Relational Ministry Actions to meet parents. Introduce yourself at school events and activities. Have a staff person at the curb where students are dropped off and picked up for club, to be available if parents have a question about Campus Life or an upcoming event or trip. Ask your students to introduce you to their parent(s) when you bump into their family at a restaurant, at the mall or when dropping them off at home.

**Parents have a story too.** Don’t be afraid to live your 3Story life in front of them. You never know when you might be the best support they have. At the very least, knowing the parents helps you better understand your students.

**CONNECTING WITH PARENTS**

Even if they don’t call you and ask directly, parents do want to know something about this crazy Campus Life thing their student can’t stop talking about. As the ministry gets off the ground look for opportunities to keep them informed.

- Hold a meeting for interested parents before you even begin, or as you get started.
- Send a September, January, and May letter or email each year. Give parents an update on the scope of your Campus Life club, a calendar of upcoming events, and a list of ways they can help.

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**HIGH SCHOOL:**

Helping coach is a great way to meet students.

**TIP:**

You may be able to get a student/parent directory with names and addresses from the school.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

Early (and often) communication with parents, students, and the school is expected and necessary for healthy ministry.
• Create a monthly email or use social media to give an update of events and trips.
• Hold an informational meeting before major trips.
• Invite parents to an actual Campus Life meeting on family. Include them in appropriate crowd breakers, role plays, and in a discussion and wrap-up. Consider a brief Q&A with a couple of staff immediately after.

**INVOLVING PARENTS**

Many parents are used to participating in the activities their children are involved in (especially in Middle School). Getting their help doing various tasks, or serving on necessary teams may be easier than you think.

**Tasks parents could help with:**
- Open their home as a meeting place for club, building times or small groups.
- Drive a van for an event or trip.
- Provide snacks for club or breakfast for student leadership.
- Help with a student fundraiser to raise funds for trips.
- Help with a fundraiser for staff support.
- Represent Campus Life to a missions committee at their church.

**Team parents could serve on:**
- **Ministry Team.** Some parents simply relate well to teens, are respected by their kid’s friends and can lend a little maturity to your staff team.
- **Special Event Committee.** This can be a good way to engage the expertise and energy of a few parents for a short period of time as you plan and pull off a larger event or fundraiser.
- **Community Support Team.** In a later section we’ll look at the importance of this team to help grow the ministry, and support it financially.

**CHURCHES & OTHER LIKE MINDED PARTNERS**

As you begin to establish Campus Life in your school or community, remember that Spirit-led unity is crucial for fruitful and sustainable ministry. It is critical to establish positive relationships with churches and other youth workers. The Body of Christ was created to work together. And “together” means all of us - youth workers, student leaders, teachers, parents, other adults - everyone who loves Jesus and loves teens. We must stand “side by side” for the sake of the mission of sharing Christ with lost students.

In order for you to establish this type of unity, you will need to develop an attitude of humility and a spirit of unity.

- YFC seeks to humbly serve the local church in the mission of reaching lost young people. We are not trying to become an alternative youth group, rather a strategic extension of existing youth ministry in the area.
- YFC seeks to partner with “like minded” followers of Jesus. Some churches will be excited to stand “side by side” with Campus Life, others may not agree with YFC’s strategy or statement of faith. We desire to communicate our mission clearly and do our best to unite the Body of Christ.

As you begin consider the following:
1. Identify all the churches that may be interested in ongoing youth ministry at the school.
2. Join the National Network of Youth Ministries at [www.nnym.org](http://www.nnym.org) - it will connect you to other youth pastors in your area. Also join [www.everystudent.com](http://www.everystudent.com) - it will connect you to other ministries in your community.

Attend, or host, a youth ministry network gathering or start by having coffee with two or three other youth workers.
DEVELOP A COMMUNITY SUPPORT TEAM

This team is crucial to the fruitfulness and longevity of the Campus Life ministry because they own the ministry at a level designed to outlive any one individual Campus Life director. This team is the manpower behind the process of funding the ministry. These team members should become your greatest allies and advocates in the community.

ESTABLISH A START-UP COMMITTEE

To begin ministry, we need to organize informational meetings for Christian adults covering a wide cross-section of the community. This meeting communicates the mission of YFC and the process of establishing a start-up committee to launch Campus Life in their community.

This start-up committee needs to include 6-12 individuals or couples representing several churches in the area. They should meet 1-2 times a month for the following purposes:

- Prayer for God’s guidance and direction.
- Updates concerning the response of people who have been informed about YFC since the last meeting. This would include faculty from the school, churches, business people from the community, parents etc.
- Updates concerning how much money (in pledges) have been committed.

A healthy goal for a start-up committee would be to raise at least half of the needed funds for that ministry site. As this group gathers for their meetings, it is important to always have pledge cards available. Money is often raised through those who are involved as committee members in this beginning stage of the ministry. It is also important to let the church community know what Campus Life/YFC is attempting to accomplish.

The role of the YFC leader is to attend all committee meetings, answer questions about the process, and be available for appointments with faculty at the school, business people in the community, and staff at local churches. The community has to be active in opening doors to key relationships.
Once Campus Life ministry is started in a community under the direction of a Campus Life director it is time to transition from a Start-Up Committee to a Community Support Team. A healthy Community Support Team includes the following:

**Who:** 6-12 Christian adults/couples who believe in the mission of YFC/Campus Life and live in the community.

**Where:** Focused on one community (one main high school and the middle schools that feed into that high school).

**When:** Teams usually meet 6 times a year (meetings are 90 to 120 minutes each).

**Why:** To support and grow Campus Life in their community by having these 3 responsibilities:
1. Advocating for Campus Life
2. Caring for the Campus Life Ministry Team
3. Ensuring financial health and sustainability for Campus Life

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**LEAD COMMUNITY SUPPORT TEAM MEETINGS**

Each team meeting should involve the following key pieces:
- Update on current ministry
  - Student testimony demonstrating a changed life
- Update on current budget situation
- Ministry team update
- Discuss future community support:
  - Fundraising events
  - Fundraising appointments
  - Community awareness
- Assign tasks and next steps to team members
- Set next meeting
- Spend time in prayer

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**HIGH SCHOOL:**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

If you have schools in the same community this may be a great way to keep key parents involved.
Campus Life 101: Starting Effective Ministry

Campus Life staff build Loving Relationships through a balanced practice of the 6 Relational Ministry Actions:

- **Contacting** - going into the teenage world to initiate new relationships.
- **Building Time** - spending time with students to build new relationships and grow existing ones.
- **Club** - meeting with a larger group of kids in a safe, high energy, non-Christian friendly setting to talk about relevant topics and connect them to God’s truth.
- **Appointments** - meeting with kids to focus on their individual needs.
- **Small Groups** - meeting with several students to have an interactive discussion about relevant topics and connect them to God’s truth.
- **Core Team** - a team of Christian teenagers with adult coaches who together, follow Jesus in a way that naturally invites friends to discover Jesus with them.

**CONTACTING**

Going into the teenage world to initiate new relationships.

“For the son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” Luke 19:10

**WHY**

**Mass visibility on a regular basis**
Contacting helps you be seen as a part of the school. You are an "adult IN the teenage world." It makes meeting someone for the first time easier and more natural when they’ve "seen you around." Contacting promotes Campus Life by enlarging the pool of students aware of Campus Life and by reminding students already involved of upcoming meetings, events, and trips.

**Meet new students**
Students can tell their friends about Campus Life, but there is no substitute for meeting the staff first-hand. With every student you meet, you gain a little more knowledge about "your school." There’s probably more truth than cynicism to the adage, "It's not what you know, it's who you know."

**Grow existing relationships**
Meeting new students is the key purpose of contacting but it also provides opportunities to grow existing relationships. Staff are able to touch base with regular Campus Life students, those who have not been involved for a while, and those they’ve met recently.

**WHERE**

**Campus Visits**
Campus visits are aimed at the times students are free to talk: before and after school, and at lunch time. They are based on an understanding between you and the school administration. Never start campus visits without first meeting with the principal to introduce them to Campus Life, and to get their permission and guidelines for promoting Campus Life. It is a privilege to have access to your school—treat it responsibly. Your freedoms will increase as you gain the administration’s trust.

**School Events**
Our presence at school events (home and away), demonstrates to adults and students, that we are interested in every aspect of student life. It enables us to discuss the events with participants we know and to carry on a knowledgeable conversation about school life. Attend a variety of events to reach the largest cross section of the student body possible. Large events provide mass visibility while less attended events provide opportunity to talk at length with spectators, parents, and even get involved with the event itself.

**Community Hang-Outs**
Don’t overlook popular “hang-outs.” Away from the structure of the school hallway or event, the local hang-out is a more relaxed setting and will often provide opportunities for more extended conversation.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

To make contacting as effective as possible be sure you:

**Meet someone new**

Don’t fall into the trap of spending all your time with students you already know. Target key leaders who could help promote Campus Life if they get involved.

**Give students space**

Relationships take time. Be sensitive to the students’ response and don’t wear out your welcome. "Be seen, be known, be gone!"

**Remember names**

Making the effort to remember names demonstrates that you are interested in each student as an individual.

**Follow up contacts**

Consciously (or in writing) keep track of new contacts and seek out opportunities to build on the relationship.

**Make use of relationships you already have**

Students you already know are your best connection to the rest of the student body. Introduce yourself to their friends (or train them to) and arrange to attend events with them so you don’t have to go by yourself.

**Remember your mission**

Believing that students will be better off if they get to know you will give you confidence and help you focus on accepting them rather than fearing rejection by them. Be patient--it does get easier with every student you meet.

**Use publicity wisely**

P.A. announcements, printed materials, and/or promotion through technology can inform students while building your image. Be sure all communication pieces are well designed, accurate, creative, and available when needed.
BUILDING TIME

Spending time with students to build new relationships and grow existing ones.

"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." I Corinthians 11:1

WHY

Develop relationships through a shared activity
Building times are opportunities to GET TO KNOW students you MEET through contacting or at club. They also get to know you, enabling you to break down religious stereotypes and "win the right to be heard."

Model a relationship with Christ
We demonstrate a relationship with Christ whenever we spend time with students in real-life situations i.e. playing basketball, driving, ordering fast food, hanging around home. Students we spend time with see the credibility of Christianity, develop a positive attitude toward the Gospel, and are more likely to respond to Christ at a future appointment, Campus Life meeting, small group, special event or trip.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

To make Building Times as effective as possible be sure you:

- Involve as many students as possible.
- Avoid spending all your time with a few students that you feel comfortable with.

Plan the right building time
The best building time is simply doing an activity that a group of students enjoy. A building time will be especially memorable if the students experience something new i.e. water skiing, paint ball, etc.

Set a good example
Just as being a positive example "wins the right to be heard;" setting a negative example loses the right to be heard.

Act like an adult
Some activities students would enjoy i.e. toilet papering, Chinese fire drills, egging, snowballing cars could damage your reputation with parents, administrators, and donors. If it is a Campus Life activity, adults expect you to be in charge of and responsible for the activity.

Play it safe
Never take a short cut when planning potentially dangerous activities i.e. repelling, water sports, paint ball, winter sports, biking. If you cannot do it safely, don’t do it.

STRATEGIC RELATIONAL MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Strategic relational ministry opportunities are extended times that you spend with students. They don’t happen on a weekly basis like the rest of the RMA’s but may happen quarterly.

Trips
Campus Life Trips take young people out of their environment for a shared experience. Trips provide an environment where God transforms lives through memorable experiences, authentic Christ-centered relationships, and a clear presentation of the Gospel.

Events
An Event is a Campus Life sponsored activity that enhances the ministry program’s image. During events, we take students out of their normal environment for a shared experience that creates memories and provides opportunities to share Christ.
Meeting with a larger group of kids in a safe, high energy, non-Christian friendly setting to talk about relevant topics and connect them to God’s truth.

“He welcomed them and spoke to them about the Kingdom of God.” Luke 9:11

The craziness, discussions, and creativity of the weekly club meeting are what most people know as “Campus Life." Club, however is just one activity in the weekly ministry at any school. Since club is the place where many students first come in contact with the Campus Life staff, we put great emphasis on making the meeting the best, most creative, and well-planned event of the week.

**Why**

To the student body, Campus Life club is a place to go.

**Creates community**

Club’s non-threatening atmosphere gives students a place to belong. Meetings give students a chance to discuss issues important to teenagers and learn how a relationship with God affects all areas of life. Club is a place to be heard.

**Provides opportunity**

After experiencing a meeting, students are more likely to participate in other Campus Life activities, making Campus Life a place to get involved. Club is the regular point of contact around which the other RMA’s naturally revolve.

**What you need to know**

Although the weekly Campus Life meeting will to some extent take on the personality of the staff, school, and students involved, to make it as effective as possible, be sure you consider the following:

**Preparation**

Know the topic at least a few weeks in advance (use a year-long curriculum for the best results). This gives staff time to find crowd breakers and illustrations from current events or the media that relate to the topic. It also allows time for better publicity, and for staff to think of the little extras (ie. music, props, decorations). Get materials together early in the day and arrive at least 45 minutes before club starts. This helps staff be relaxed and able to handle last minute problems.

**Location**

Club can take place in multiple settings, i.e. host homes, school campuses, churches, community centers, YFC teen centers, etc.

**Pre-club visit**

When considering a new location, be sure the available room will work for a meeting, before agreeing to have club there.

**Club site**

Contact the site to make sure they are still expecting you and will help the meeting run smoothly by eliminating distractions: pets, little children, noise, etc. Always check with your site before moving furniture, using TVs, DVD players and stereos or hanging anything on the walls. Plan ahead for parking and always leave the room as clean as you found it.

**Meeting room**

MIDDLE SCHOOL:

- Ratio of students to staff is higher than High School.
- Recommended club ratio is 8:1, trip ratio 5:1.
• Arrange the room so that students will feel like “this place is packed.”
• The “front” of the room should be opposite the main entrance to reduce the distraction of late comers.
• Remove breakable items and extra furniture. Keep only furniture that can be the back row.
• Use banners, posters, and calendars to make the room “Campus Life’s.”
• Consider the use of a sound system with crowds of 50 or more.
• Turn on all available lighting.
• The temperature will inevitably rise 5-10 degrees when students start packing in. If possible, start cooling the room if it is above 70 degrees.
• Playing popular music as students arrive helps them feel comfortable and provides a background of sound. Pre-recording the background music allows you to select songs that fit with the topic and don’t include objectionable lyrics.
• Ask the host student, a student leader, or a ministry team member to meet students at the door, and direct them to the meeting.

**Informal**
Although the meeting is carefully planned and prepared (staff know exactly what is going to happen), there is a structured casualness to all we do. Using music appropriately (before, after, and during the meeting) and hanging posters, pictures, and flyers are two ways to help create an informal setting.

**Weekly**
Meeting every week provides a consistent place for students to “belong” and keeps them involved and interested. Promotion is easier because one meeting can build on the next and students don’t have to ask “is there Campus Life this week?”

**Time**
Years of experience have proven that a unique starting time, such as 7:17pm, helps publicize club. The high school club meeting should last between 60 and 75 minutes, middle school between 30-60 minutes. Club can take place at a variety of times, before, during, or after school, as well as in the evening. All these times can be great options, make sure to choose the best time for your situation.

**Non-Christian friendly**
Our goal is to have the majority in attendance not know Jesus and to create programming that communicates to their level, without “churchy” language and assuming no knowledge of the Bible.

**Open “membership”**
Students don’t “join” Campus Life and there are no dues or membership fees. Everyone is welcome to come whenever they can.

**Involvement**
Campus Life is not a lecture series or just a staff performance. Meetings need to allow students to laugh, be actively involved, and express their opinions and ideas. Most meetings include crowd breakers, discussion, and a wrap-up.

**Hang-out time**
Be careful not to overlook the importance of hang-out time before and after club. This is prime time to meet students, get to know them better, and interact with them in a safe, non-threatening environment. Video games, a pool table, ping pong, basketball, volleyball, etc. are great extras. Many clubs make good use of a local pizza place or fast food spot as an after club hang out. Be sure to get parent permission or make them aware if you are hanging out after club.
Meeting with kids to focus on their individual needs.
"We instructed you how to live in order to please God..." 1 Thessalonians 4:1

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**
All one on one ministry is done MALE: MALE or FEMALE: FEMALE. When necessary to do an appointment with a student of the opposite sex take a ministry team member that is the same sex as the student. Just one accusation (true or false) of inappropriate behavior can discredit your ministry and damage the reputation of Youth for Christ. It is also a great idea to let parents know you are meeting with their teen.

**WHY**

**Know more about a student**
Generally you will learn more about a student in an one hour appointment than from their involvement in weeks of other Campus Life meetings and activities. For some students you may be the most trusted adult they know. The individual attention encourages students to open up and allows staff to give honest feedback.

**Address a specific need**
Appointments can address an issue raised by the student or personalize a discussion from a recent club meeting or small group. They are also effective for follow up, checking up on new Christians and the discipleship of growing Christians.

**Present the Gospel**
Youth for Christ veterans will attest to the extreme value in having a student’s undivided attention while discussing the most important issue in all of life: A personal relationship with Jesus Christ. (You may want to read the Sharing God’s Story section)

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**
To make Appointments as effective as possible be sure to...

**Pray**
Although no RMA should be done without prayer, it is especially important in an appointment to be sensitive to God’s direction in responding to the student.

**Select appropriate location**
The meeting place should be free of distractions or interruptions and allow for relaxed conversation. A meal or snack may provide the most comfortable setting.

**Assume nothing**
Be careful not to guess what the student is thinking, project how they will respond, or expect them to be as spiritually mature as you are. Also remember there are two sides to every story.

**Get to the point**
Appointments should be set up with a specific purpose in mind. Avoid the temptation to begin with a lot of small talk which postpones and de-emphasizes your purpose. Sit down and get to the point.

**Use listening skills**
Be genuinely interested in what they say and listen carefully to understand what they mean. Don’t be shocked by what you hear, and always accept them unconditionally.
Help them solve
Teach them to be independently dependent on Christ. Help them list possible solutions, instead of giving them all the "right" answers.

Use un-churched sensitive language
When applying biblical principles avoid "churchy" vocabulary and Christian clichés. Recognize that many students have little Bible knowledge and need a detailed explanation of Bible stories or references.

Know your limits
Don’t claim to know more than you do. If you can't answer a question, offer to find an answer and get back to them. If you feel you cannot help them, refer them to someone who can and help them make the transition if necessary.

Maintain confidentiality
Promise confidentiality except in cases of a student being hurt or threatening to hurt themselves or others. Your chapter should have a policy that meets your state's requirement for reporting abuse.
**SMALL GROUPS**

Meeting with several students to have an interactive discussion about relevant topics and connect them to God’s truth. "...we were delighted to share with you not only the Gospel of God but our very lives as well." 1 Thessalonians 2:8

**WHY**

**Address a specific need**
Small groups focus on a common interest or need. The possibilities are as varied as the students with whom you work (follow up, evangelistic, Bible study, topical--relationships, sex, self-image, divorce, etc.).

**Create a safe place for honest sharing**
The staff person is not teaching a "lesson." He/she is honestly sharing his/her life, heart, feelings, convictions, experiences, and ideas just like the other members of the group.

**Provide personal attention and interaction**
Each student has the opportunity to express themselves, as well as, to more fully interact with the thoughts and opinions of others.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

To make Small Groups as effective as possible be sure to...

**Set them up intentionally**
Ask specific students (usually 6-12) to meet for a specific purpose with a specific time frame (60-90 minutes per week for 3-6 weeks).

**Follow small group rules**
- Be honest or be silent
- Be totally confidential
- Be there each week

**Be authentic**
Do not try to be something you’re not and be VULNERABLE- your failings do not damage the Gospel, they demonstrate God’s grace.

**Be flexible**
Don’t be afraid to set aside your plan to pursue a hot issue that surfaces or to take advantage of a teachable moment related to events in the life of the group.

**Use good listening skills**
Help the group to understand each other clearly. Try to control group members who interrupt, dominate discussion or always have the "right answer."

**Start and end on time**
Students are busy and their time is important to them. Be sure the scheduled small group time really is a small group. Don’t frustrate group members by starting late, going long or wasting their time.

**Use a student host when appropriate**
Allowing a student to help select the group, and be responsible to remind everyone weekly usually increases participation and makes our job easier.
A team of Christian students with a desire to grow in their relationship with Christ and relationally influence their friends for Jesus.

“And whatever you do or say, let it be as a representative of the Lord Jesus, and come with Him into the presence of God the Father to give Him your thanks.” Col 3:17

WHY

Helping kids grow in their daily relationship with Christ
Surrendering to, listening to, loving, and obeying Jesus together are first priority as we work to actively love others into His Kingdom as a Core Team. (John 15)

Mobilizing students to share their faith
A Core Team is an effective way for us to mobilize students and adults to reach teenagers at a high school or middle school. Many Christian students have a desire to share Christ and have been told they should share Christ. A Core Team equips them to make the most of what God is already doing in their relationships.

Shared ownership of the Campus Life mission
The Campus Life Director alone can impact a limited number of students during a limited number of hours per week. Relationships take time, and time is limited. We need more workers, and students are in prime positions.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Recruit the right students
Students considered for a Core Team should have a growing relationship with Christ and have a desire to make an impact for Jesus with their lost friends. This doesn’t mean these kids have reached a “level of Spiritual maturity.” These students could be new believers or students that have known Jesus for a long time.

Structure
Core Teams are comprised of a handful of students (2-12) with an adult coach who meet weekly from 20 minutes to 2 hours. When a Core Team reaches a number around 12, we would suggest that the team splits into multiple Core Teams.

Share, Pray, Discover
Share, Pray, Discover are the three elements that are always included in a Core Team gathering time. These elements are more than agenda items and are founded on Scripture (Heb.10:24-25). They are organized in a way to help students share stories, live a life of prayer, and discover how to tangibly love Jesus and others as pictured in 3Story®.

Adult Coaches
We develop adults, who empower teams of students through nurturing, mentoring, modeling and mobilizing them for relational ministry. These adults have meaningful relationships with lost peers as well.

Have “coaching” appointments
We need to remember that Core Team Members are still students. At least twice a year meet with each of them to give individual attention to their relationship with Christ.

Key places to influence
Encourage Core Team members to invite their lost friends to key Campus Life trips and events throughout the year. These events are not only a great way for your Core Team members to have fun but live life naturally with their lost peers.
One of the best ways to learn Campus Life ministry is to see it in action. We recommend that you visit an effective Campus Life ministry.

It is not only important and valuable for you to see great ministry but it is also helpful if a National/Regional Campus Life Leadership Team member comes to see you do ministry during your first year. They are a great asset to your success in ministry, giving you encouragement and helpful feedback. Contact the National Campus Life directors to get the names of sites to visit and team members.

A coach in any area of expertise can be extremely valuable. This could be a person you are most honest with in sharing your fears and failures in ministry. It could also be a person that has been around long enough to have answers to some of your questions. Contact the National Campus Life directors to be paired with a potential coach in your area. We would love to assist you.

YFC Impact is an important way to track ministry practices around the 5 Essentials that will give us real time feedback on how to improve our ministry efforts. This effort to input your local site information joins you together with the entire movement of YFC/USA allowing us to count your ministry effort toward reaching lost teens across the nation. The “how-to” of using our online Impact reporting system is embedded in the system itself. There are scores of instructional videos to help Campus Life leaders learn how to use Impact (www.yfcimpact.net). YFC/USA has also provided extraordinary personal support to aid you in your growth as an Impact user. You can schedule customized tutorials or webinars to help you to benefit from this online tool.

You can make the commitment to lead your Campus Life ministry team by reflecting regularly on reports that help you think about what you’re doing well and what needs improvement. If you do, you will find that YFC Impact, especially the robust version where data is collected person-by-person and meeting-by-meeting, is an incredibly rich asset to your leadership.

Any ministry site will also benefit from:
- Tracking each activity in your schedule hour by hour every week. This will help you and your supervisor to see positive patterns and surface areas for improvement.
- Keeping track of the number of Relational Ministry Actions done by you and your ministry team. You can use this information to monitor areas of healthy consistency and also identify weak spots.
- Making sure contacting includes a variety of activities (i.e. sporting events, choral concerts, plays and even teen hang outs).

Making sure building times and appointments are strategically involving as many students as possible.
You started in youth ministry because of the students. You desire at your core to tell kids about Jesus and see him change their lives forever. You might not have considered that part of your job would be leading a ministry team of volunteers. It is not just a part of your job, it is KEY to reaching every possible student in a school. You HAVE to multiply yourself to reach as many students as possible, to be prepared in times when you are absent, and to really minister to the deep needs of students.

**It does not start with forming a ministry team, it starts with our hearts. We have to believe that we are called to lead teams of people to reach kids.**

Ephesians 4:11-12 says, “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.”

What if we inserted “Campus Life leaders” in the place of “evangelists?” Now read the verse again. This would mean that we are responsible to equip the saints.

**RECRUITING**

Thankfully God doesn’t call us to walk through the ministry journey alone. He knows we will suffer emotionally, financially, and spiritually if we don’t invite others to lead with us. He also knows our needs and promises to provide. A good realization to come to early in ministry is that you will have to recruit and empower others AND it will require time, patience, and prayer.

Carve out space in your schedule to make a plan, and ask God to provide exactly what you need. Don’t relegate empowering others to whatever time you can “take away from ministry” to scrounge up some help.

**SCREENING**

Adults interested in joining your ministry team must complete an application. A YFC staff person must check references, perform background check, do an interview, and file all information.
After the screening and application process is completed you should hold a ministry team meeting. The first one should be held before student ministry starts. At this meeting discuss the mission of YFC/Campus Life and everything you have learned about the school. Update everyone on contacts made in the community, and plan your next Relational Ministry Action’s providing them with a school calendar and schedule of upcoming events. Ministry team meetings should always include relational time, student stories, training, and next steps in ministry. In addition to weekly meetings, consider quarterly training meetings, annual retreats, and a couple meetings a year to show appreciation.

**Pace and Ratio**

Early on, it will be harder to engage your ministry team in direct ministry due to a limited number of teen relationships. The best way forward is to invite adult volunteers to join you as you begin to make initial contacts with students. This will make contacting new students more comfortable for both parties and start connecting other adults to teens right away. At the same time, you need to see yourself as primary in leading the charge toward meeting and developing new relationships with lost teens. Your early work should set the stage for others to follow in your footsteps with more ease.

You will always be limited in your overall growth by the number of committed adult volunteers you have on your team. One person can only know and go deep with so many teenagers. Once club starts try to have a healthy dose of adult help but not so much that it overwhelms new teens.

Basic guidelines for student to adult ratios:

- High school trips: 7 students to 1 adult
- High school club: 10 students to 1 adult
- Middle school trips: 5 students to 1 adult
- Middle school club: 8 students to 1 adult

**TIP:**
Make a point to meet a couple times a year individually with each ministry team member.
**TRAINING**

We need to value training and expect our ministry team to be regularly involved. There are many ways to train including classes, retreats, and before club. One of the best ways to train a ministry team is to model it for them. As you train your team make sure you go through 3Story as our operating system and the Relational Ministry Action’s.

**3STORY**

3Story means living in a fresh, abiding, moment by moment dependence on the Father and joining him in the work he is already doing in the lives of lost students all around. It is largely focused on creating space in my life to hear from God and creating space in my life to listen to and love others well.

There are three resources which will help you as you begin to understand this 3Story life.

1. Go to [www.3story.org](http://www.3story.org) and click on the “Lawn Chair Boy” video. Then take some time to read the sections labeled **God’s Story, My Story and Their Story**. Be sure to check out the Daily Bides, which are new five days a week and aimed at helping kids follow Jesus.
2. Request a copy of the 30-minute 3Story video (303-843-9000). This video will give you an overview of 3Story as well as interviews with kids and staff who are living it.
3. Host a 3Story training in your area. A list of Master Teachers is available on the website. There are 3Story training experiences offered regionally and nationally.

**RELATIONAL MINISTRY ACTIONS**

3Story is what we live out when we do any of the relational ministry actions with students. It is in these intentional times of getting to know students that we use great listening skills to better understand their stories. As we learn their stories, we can make connections to our own story and even more importantly make connections from their stories to God’s Story.

Training, modeling, and coaching your ministry team how to do the relational ministry actions is extremely important. Some resources that would be helpful in training your ministry team are:

One page descriptions of the RMA’S in the **Learn Campus Life** section of this Campus Life 101 resource.

- **Student2Staff Leadership Development Plan curriculum**
- Campus Life RMA videos located on the website
  - Contacting
  - Building Time
  - Club
  - Appointments
  - Small Groups
  - Core Team
- Local and regional training opportunities

These are all available at [www.yfc.net/campuslife](http://www.yfc.net/campuslife) or [www.yfc.net/campuslifem](http://www.yfc.net/campuslifem)

**TIP:**

The main focus for our ministry team at all times is to engage in relational ministry in addition to club. Set this expectation from the beginning.
We assume that by this point you have taken the time to digest Campus Life 101. Let’s get started in student ministry. Remember that relationships with lost teens are always primary and excellent programming can be added once those relationships are developed.

**Contacting**

Build your schedule around the teenage world to meet teens on their turf. Show up to cheer on and meet students at athletic events, band concerts, and plays. Regularly visit lunches, *if your school administration allows*. Your consistent and intentional presence speaks volumes and will eventually help connect you to more students.

Take advantage of your team’s natural gifts. If you played a sport growing up you might consider talking with the Athletic Director about being a volunteer coach a couple days a week. If someone on your team is gifted in the area of music see if you can help them get connected to the band, school musicals, etc.

Serve in the school as a volunteer. Go through the formal process to become a school volunteer and look for a place to get involved. This creates some easy ways to meet a need for the school and build relationships naturally. Use any existing connections to start meeting students. For example, if you know a couple students and see them at a school event or lunch, ask if they can introduce you to their friends.

**A Few Tips to Consider**

- Set a personal goal to meet and remember names of 100 kids prior to starting club. Push yourself to meet a variety of teens knowing that you will have a deeper connection with some.
- It is always easier to meet teens while in a group; go with other adults on your ministry team and meet students together. Or even go with other teens to meet their friends.
- Remember you are not only meeting teens, but you are also meeting key adults (administration, secretaries, etc.) along the way.
- Contacting can grow existing relationships, while intentionally meeting new students.
- Be aware of non-verbal cues especially from the opposite sex. Students will usually make you aware of when they are done talking.

**TIP:**

Be careful not to meet students in only one clique or social circle. Try to pursue teens in a variety of teenage groups.
**BUILDING TIMES**

Listen carefully when meeting teens and look for natural ways to take the relationship to the next level. One of the easiest ways to initiate a deeper relationship is to invite several students to share an activity with you they already enjoy doing. If several guys mention they love playing basketball you might try to set up a fun 3 on 3 game one day after school with several of their friends. Make sure to introduce yourself to parents or get their permission, especially with middle school students.

Building times are a great place to engage ministry team members right away. Try to always bring other adult volunteers along to help foster more connections between teens and adults. If you are a male staff hanging out with all girls make sure to bring a female ministry team leader.

If you are starting Campus Life in a school/community that is in close proximity to an already existing Campus Life site, be sure to leverage this club for your launch. As you meet teens and develop relationships invite them to join you at this neighboring Campus Life club. This will help them understand what Campus Life is and what it might take to start one at your school. If nothing else, it is one more shared experience with some teens and possibly another place to naturally connect them to some of your ministry team.

**PREPARING TO START CLUB**

Typically it is good to give yourself 3-6 months to contact and do building times with teenagers- especially when starting a brand new club with lost teens. Don’t try to complicate this time period by adding programming. The goal is to have enough of the right kinds of relationships with lost teenagers that when you introduce Campus Life club it will feel natural, exciting, and give students a great first impression.

When your Campus Life ministry team is in relationship with 100+ teens you can expect to start Campus Life club with 25 or more students. Remember that on any given night you choose to start club some kids might be busy, some might forget, and others won’t really be interested yet. Your goal should be to have at least 50% of your club as non-Christian students.

**TAKING OVER AN EXISTING CLUB**

It is one challenge to start a brand new club but a very different challenge to take over an existing one. There are 3 options when taking over an existing club:

1. Continue going strong because club is in a good place and your transition was smooth. You will still have to be intentionally meeting students but club can continue.
2. Take a small break, get acquainted with more students and start things back up while momentum is still with you. It might be helpful to delay club a few weeks and be intentionally contacting with your team and spending a lot of time in building times.
3. Take a longer break, (6 months) because club looks unhealthy (not very many students, no lost students, etc.) and needs to get a healthy restart. Even you are taking over an existing club you can take a break to start it off on the right foot. YOU only start once, do it right!

**START-UP TEAM**

A start up team is a small group of students (5-15) that is comfortable with you or someone on your ministry team and is excited for Campus Life to start. This team should reflect the type of teens you want to show up for club: plenty who don’t know Jesus, some who do know Jesus, a variety of ages and backgrounds, and all committed to seeing Campus Life start.

As they own this fun adventure, they will help you spread the word and make sure the first club starts on the right foot. We recommend this team meet for at least a month, possibly longer, prior to starting club. Don’t forget that this team is not just a means to an end but also a great place for you to develop deeper relationships and begin to share the hope of Christ. This team should continue to meet once club starts on a weekly basis.

**GETTING CLUB STARTED RIGHT**

The first few club meetings set the tone and first impression for months to come. Plan carefully and take time to make sure students are well aware of when and where club will be. We recommend that you do one informational club meeting before having your Kick Off. Invite your Core Team and other students your ministry team has a deepening relationship with to this meeting. This will serve as a way to rally the most committed students while also giving them a taste of what a Campus Life club can look like. You can also use this informational meeting to get this committed crew excited about inviting their friends back for the Kick Off the following week. See the National Campus Life club curriculum for great ideas for an informational meeting at [www.yfc.net/campuslife](http://www.yfc.net/campuslife) or [www.yfc.net/campuslifem](http://www.yfc.net/campuslifem).

**THE KICKOFF**

Typically we go the extra mile to give teens an experience they won’t soon forget. Be sure to see the Campus Life Club curriculum for a lot of Kick Off ideas. Take time to provide food, prizes, and dream up any extra fun ideas to make sure students are engaged. Following your Kick Off be ready to invite kids to come back weekly at the same time for Campus Life. This weekly focus is very important for building consistency and momentum with teens. We even suggest picking a strange time (7:17pm or 6:58am) so that it is easier to remember.

**FIRST CLUB SERIES**

We strongly suggest looking at the Campus Life club curriculum and the natural way the first several club series are planned to bring more depth. Remember you will have many lost teens attending that you and your team will need to build trust with as you continue to share increasingly more of God’s Truth. Talking about God should be natural and relevant. And remember to always allow teens the chance to be heard. This is our way of listening to where teens come from and gently connecting God’s Truth to their real life circumstances. Oh yeah, club should be fun!

**TIP:**

Give teens a chance to respond to club talks at the end of each series. For instance, hand teens a half sheet of blank paper and ask them to write their name and response. Then help your ministry team to follow up with individual kids asking to hear more of their story and reaction by having an appointment.
Just because club has started doesn’t mean you get to put a hold on building relationships. This is when your team should begin moving at full speed. Work hard to make additional connections with teens that are coming to club outside of the weekly meeting. Also continue your hard work of connecting with new students, especially the friends of teens you already know.

Though you are the point person for Campus Life at your school, one of your main focuses early on is to NOT allow Campus Life to rotate around you. You need to purposefully grow, develop, and connect your ministry team to students. Set up club so that they play an important role, introduce them to students, involve them in the full relational ministry process, and always be intentional about setting them up for success.

As Campus Life continues to develop in this first year begin to implement other key relational ministry actions that are part of Campus Life. Work with your Ministry Team to start small groups with pockets of teens. Initiate appointments with teens to have deeper conversations. Plan your first trip (an extended building time) and make them a regular part of your ministry calendar. You will often need to do a lot of initiating to form small groups, set up appointments, and get teens on trips.

**Some hints to help foster relational growth:**

- After a couple club series ask teens to sign up if interested in a Campus Life small group that will go a bit deeper on the subject matter you just covered. Use this small group to connect key adult volunteers to students in a smaller setting.
- There are 27 high school and 27 middle school small group meetings available on yfc.net. Some other good small group curriculum is “Honest to God” by Bill Muir.
- Make sure to bring adult volunteers on your first trip even if numbers are lower so that they can make great connections with teens. This longer shared experience will launch them forward into deeper relationships.

**A balanced approach of RMA’s**

Each week a full time staff person should attempt to practice a nice blend of all the RMA’s:

- Contacting: 4-6 contacting events
- Building Times: at least 1 strategic building time
- Appointments: at least 2 appointments
- Small Group: lead at least 1 regular small group
- Club: have club weekly
- Campus Life Core Team: grow into having Core Team weekly

Certain times of the year may call for an altered blend of RMA’s. For example, many staff might ramp up their contacting and building times in the fall and transition to an increased number of appointments and small groups as the year moves on.

Each week a part time staff person (15-20 hours) should attempt to practice a nice blend of all the RMA’s:

- Contacting: 2-3 contacting events
- Building Times: at least 1 strategic building time every other week
- Appointments: at least 1 appointment
- Small Group: lead at least 1 regular small group
- Club: have club weekly
- Core Team: grow into having Core Team weekly

**TIP:**

If you are a part time or volunteer staff person these RMA’s will be adjusted according to your hours. It is important that you are still practicing all of the RMA’s and doing them with your team.
**STARTING A CORE TEAM**

We recommend that you grow into a Core Team and wait at least one year. For the first year you should focus working with a Start-Up Team (mentioned previously). Once the first school year is over, use the summer as a natural break to evaluate next steps. You should plan to start a Core Team when you have enough relationships with the right kind of Christian Students that have a heart for Jesus and for their lost friends. Once you have enough students that fit this description (4-8) start the team. The start of a Core Team feels most natural at Christmas break or summer break. Take time to look into the why, what, and how of a Core Team discussed in the Learn Campus Life section. *Make sure to look at curriculum, online training resources, etc. that can be used found at www.yfc.net.*

**EXISTING CORE TEAM**

Many will start leading Campus Life ministry in a school that already has a Core Team. If you inherit a Core Team there are two actions you can take: keep the existing group going or take a break for 6 months to a year and then start again new. If you feel like the existing group is full of the right kinds of kids, then continue. If you inherit a Core Team that is not full of the right kinds of students and feels unhealthy it may be better to take a break.
The most important relationship to point a student to is their relationship with Jesus. Knowing the highpoints of the Gospel and being comfortable sharing them may be our most important responsibility. We summarize God’s Story with four words Relationship, Resist, Restore, and Respond. They are not a formula, or a linear process we must always walk through. Different students respond first to any one of the truths these words communicate. All four truths are important, however, to ensure students are making an informed decision.

**God’s Story in Four Words**

**Relationship**
God loves you and created you to have a personal relationship with him!

“You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body, and knit them together in my mother’s womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex.” Psalm 139:13-14

“I know the plans I have for you. They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

**Resist**
Even though God wants a relationship, we naturally resist him. Sin is our attitude of ignoring, or resisting God.

“Knowing what is right to do and then not doing it is sin.” James 4:17

“Yes all have sinned; all fall short of God’s glorious ideal.” Romans 3:23

“The trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God.” Isaiah 59:2

**Restore**
Only through Jesus can our relationship with God be restored.

“For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son so that anyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.” John 14:6.

“He died once for the sins of all us guilty sinners, although he himself was innocent of any sin at any time, that he might bring us safely home to God.” 1 Peter 3:18

**Respond**
We personally choose to trust Jesus as Savior and Lord.

“Now change your mind and attitude to God and turn to him so he can cleanse away your sins.” Acts 3:19

“To all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God. All they needed to do was to trust him to save them.” John 1:12

“And now just as you trusted Christ to save you, trust him, too, for each day’s problems. Live in vital union with him.” Colossians 2:6
**FAQ’s**

**What if I try to start club and barely anyone comes?**

We suggest three things:

1. Move this meeting to more of a shared experience using the same time slot every week for high school students. Maybe meet for bowling one week, then ice cream the next, and so on.
2. Ramp up your investment in contacting and building times. Work hard to get volunteers joining you in this activity to create more healthy connections. And remember you can now invite teens to a regular shared experience that is in place of your club meeting. Make sure to get parent permission especially with middle school students.
3. Begin to plan your next club for 1-2 months down the road. This time make sure you go the extra mile getting the word out (social media, text messages, phone calls, etc.) and getting committed kids excited about this club night.

**What if I start club and things look good for a month or two but then the numbers dwindle pretty significantly?**

Ask yourself three questions:

1. Have I stopped doing contacting and building times? Have I gotten my ministry team involved in doing relational ministry outside club with teens we are meeting?  
   *If this is your weak spot... the answer is easy. You have to continue to have a deep investment in pursuing lost teens and building deep relationships (contacting and building times). You must work hard to connect more and more adult volunteers to teens.*
2. Is club excellent? Is club fun? Is club geared for lost teens?  
   *If club is struggling because it isn’t excellent or safe for lost teens then you must make adjustments. First make sure you have taken time to look at the National Campus Life curriculum for ideas toward making club great. Secondly, go visit someone else who runs a successful club to see it in action. If you have no idea who to go visit make sure to get in contact with someone on the National Campus Life leadership teams.*
3. Is something happening in teens’ schedule that is not allowing them to attend anymore? Do I have the right night? The right time? The right location?  
   *Teens will always be busy and you will never find the perfect time slot but work hard to find the best option! Be aware of the ebb and flow of the school year. Remember this is relational ministry, continue contacting and build relationships with other students.*

**What should I spend my time doing with my Start-Up Team?**

First, give them some ownership by discussing where to have club, what building times to plan, and what key friends to invite.

Second, invest in them using the Scriptures. Let them know early that they have potential to be leaders and you want to talk to them about leadership each week from the best source- the Word of God. Take small pieces of Jesus’ story in the Gospels and use that to communicate leadership nuggets. Also know that you are communicating Truth about the life of Christ!
**What if no one will join my Start-Up Team?**

Chances are strong you don’t have strong enough relationships with a cross section of teenagers to engage them on this team. They don’t trust you yet. They don’t see the vision for Campus Life yet. Make some deeper investments in building times to continue to share experiences with key teens. If possible, take them to see a Club down the road or on a trip where other Campus Life students will be - this will often help them catch the vision.

**When should I meet with my Start-Up Team?**

Choose a day, time, and location that allows for the least amount of conflict and distraction. Get feedback from students you want to join about the best time to gather this team. The more depth you have in relationship the more willing teens will be to meet a time before school when there are no scheduling conflicts.

**What if I have been meeting students for several months but I still feel like I have a long way to go?**

Ask the students. Do they feel like they would attend Campus Life club and/or bring their friends? How many actual students do you know? At some point you will have to take a risk and start Campus Life club. If you aren’t sure, take advantage of a member of the Campus Life National Leadership teams for further counsel on timing.

**What if I am having trouble getting my Ministry Team to connect with students in this start-up phase?**

This will always be difficult. It is hard for most adults to move into a teenager’s world to make deeper connections, especially with lost teens. Our best advice is to always take adult volunteers along with you to do relational ministry. When you go contacting - take them along. When you do a building time - take them along. When you start a small group - have one adult volunteer join you. Set them up for success at club by doing small group discussion times where they help facilitate. Work hard in all areas of the RMA’s to involve them and begin to coach them into natural connections in relational ministry. You pave the way, then set them up, and slowly move out of the way!

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<td>Do not let this Start-Up Team run Campus Life or make every decision. You are still the director and you are most deeply committed to the purpose of Campus Life - connecting teens to Jesus. You want these Start-Up Team members to help inform your decisions and direction. You then lead in that direction and allow these teens to experience Campus Life alongside their friends.</td>
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You didn't come into youth ministry so you could think about safety. Of course not, no one comes to YFC for that reason. But taking a little bit of time to think about it now can save you a lot of time thinking about it later. What will you do if a guy takes that awesome game a little too far and breaks his arm? Or if a girl has an asthma attack in the middle of your talk and she’s turning purple on the floor? Or worse yet, what if one of your kids confides in you that her dad is sexually abusing her? What will you do? Who can you turn to? Unfortunately, these situations and worse have happened at Campus Life. If you can prepare in advance it will dramatically improve your chances of handling the situation appropriately when it happens.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

First and foremost, you need to recognize that the responsibility for the safety of the students, volunteers and other staff at your ministry site is yours. It is not your Executive Director’s, not the YFC National Service Center’s, not the ACLU’s responsibility. It’s a serious and significant responsibility before God and the truth is parents trust you with their teens. Teens trust you with their stories. Youth for Christ trusts you to follow our policies and to be smart. What happens at your club meeting or with students is up to you.

RESOURCES

The single best resource you have is your own God-given common sense. Before you put a kid in a position where they could be hurt, stop and ask, “Is this a good idea?” Have a plan in place for how you will respond if there is an emergency. Seek accountability to make sure you are thinking this through, and offer mutual accountability to other staff and volunteers. You may want to read the book “Better Safe Than Sued” by Jack Crabtree. This is would be very helpful before starting ministry with students.

YFC is also here to be a resource for you. You don’t have to do this alone; your peers and Executive Director are here to help. Call the National Service Center’s Risk Management Department at 303-843-9000 if you have questions about safety standards, best practices, our liability insurance coverage, or if you just need someone to help you think through a problem. We are here to help!

1 Peter 5:8 calls us to “be sober and vigilant, for your adversary the devil roams around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.” God won’t ask you to be sober and vigilant without giving you the ability to do it. Be smart, be accountable and follow the guidelines on the next page, and you will be fine. 99% of the injuries and lawsuits we face happen because no one was thinking.
**Basics of Safety**

**Background Checks** - Our national board has mandated that every staff person or volunteer who spends time with kids must have a background check. No exceptions. This process is pretty simple and straightforward; your chapter is already set up to do it.

**Mandated Reporting** - When a minor is being abused or neglected, and you become aware of it, you have a legal and moral responsibility to report it to the authorities. It doesn’t matter if the young person thinks it’s ok, and if they told you in confidence. You must make a report to Child Protective Services or the police. Contact your Executive Director, and make the report together.

**Behind Closed Doors** - One adult should never be behind closed doors with one young person, including in a vehicle. Whether your intentions are good or not, an accusation of wrongdoing could derail your ministry and irreversibly stain your reputation. Avoid the appearance of all evil, protect yourself and your kids, don’t be alone with a kid or allow a volunteer to be.

**Who Can Drive?** In order to be a volunteer driver for any YFC or Campus Life event, a driver must be at least 21 years old, have a valid driver’s license and meet a certain standard of auto insurance ($100,000/$300,000 limits) on file.

**Permission Slips** - YFC has a standard “Parental Permission and Release Form” which is required for all trips and special events. A copy is available on the YFC website, or someone in your chapter may already have a copy.

**15 Passenger Vans** - Several years ago, our board, attorney and insurance company adopted a mandate that we cannot use 15 passenger vans in YFC. There are no exceptions to this rule, and it doesn’t matter if someone wants to let you use it for free, these vans have an unacceptably high rollover rate and we do not use them.

**Incident Reports** - If someone gets injured or something illegal happens at Club, notify your Executive Director and fill out an incident report. A copy is available on the YFC website, and it’s important that you gather information thoroughly. Unfortunately, we sometimes have to use these in our defense if there is a lawsuit or legal action.

**Be Diligent** - As you remain diligent about following policy and thinking through safety issues, you protect yourself, your kids, your reputation and YFC. It’s amazing how often problems come up “that one time” when we didn’t follow our policies! Don’t take a day off on safety. And don’t allow your coworkers or volunteers to either. Mutual accountability makes us all better.