**Equipped: The Importance of Training Your Core Team**

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A long time ago, in a parish far, far away (5 hours), when I first got hired as a youth minister, I was very excited to get to do direct ministry with teens. No doubt about it, I wanted to lead teens to Christ. I knew there would be other adults involved, but my understanding of my role as youth minister in relationship to them was a bit fuzzy.

You are probably way ahead of my younger self in knowing that the youth minister needs to minister to and train a Core Team. In fact, a significant part of a youth minister’s job is to lead the Core Team, so they can then do the work of ministering to the youth.

However, we still come up with plenty of excuses not to train the adults we’ve worked so hard to recruit.

“I signed up to work with teens, not adults.”

“I can just as easily do it myself; it will take too much effort to teach someone else how to do it.”

“There are so many teens to reach; I don’t have time to train the other adults.”

“Almost the whole team has some youth ministry experience.”

No matter your favorite excuse, you owe it to yourself, the Core Team, and the teens to train your team. While the head-knowledge part of training is certainly important, there are other benefits of providing Core Team training.

Confidence

By telling the team what is expected of them, how to do it, and when to do it, we are helping build the confidence they need to actually be the Core Members we recruited them to be.

**Having a clear set of directions and expectations eliminates the fear and hesitation that comes with being in the dark.** It is unfair of us to expect our Core Team to figure out their role on their own or by us throwing out last minute instructions. Spend the time needed so everyone knows how to do relational ministry, give talks, facilitate small groups, plan nights, and pray with teens.

Community

Another fruit of training your Core Team is community. While this may happen somewhat naturally during times of training, youth ministers should not leave it all to chance.

Deliberately adding time for fellowship, ice breaker or get-to-know-you questions, prayer requests, and prayer during training will help strengthen relationships amongst the team. And, we all want to be where our friends are. If Core Members are also friends with one another, then they will be more excited and eager to come together to serve the youth of the parish.

Vision

Providing training for the Core Team also clarifies the vision for the ministry. Presumably, the youth minister knows the goal, but it must be communicated to the team. As Core Members are trained in the methods and practice of youth ministry, the vision is brought into focus for them.

Not providing a clear goal can actually be detrimental, as each person is left to choose a goal and figure out the best way to get there on their own. For the Core Members to function as a Core Team, it is critical to let the team know where we are going and how we are getting there.

We train our Core Team so they are equipped with the knowledge of how to be youth ministers. We need to give these incredible volunteers the tools and skills and resources they need to lead teens to Christ.

If you are wondering what topics to cover during training, log in and check out these great resources:

* [Online Training Videos](http://catholicyouthministry.com/training-videos/)
* [Core Training](http://catholicyouthministry.com/resources/life-support/core-training/)

***About the Author***



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I only first went to youth group in high school because my mother made me. Little did I know that the Lord's plan for my life would be directly related to that one Wednesday evening. I don't eat bananas, seafood, or the white sauce that comes with chips and salsa.

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