

Building Bridges: Helping parents and their teenagers have a better relationship

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20% of kids say parents are the #1 influence on their life. Only 7% say pastors are, according to Barna.

1 Corinthians 12:12: We all have gifts to contribute to the whole of the body.

1. Invite parents into a relationship

Parents are just as intimidated by youth workers as we are by them. We go to the places kids are, but what if we went to the places where parents are and said, "I want to have a relationship with you."

Ephesians 6:1-3 – Parents use this passage to tell their kids they need to obey them, but this passage as a whole in context is about servanthood. It's about how we serve other people. Parents need to invest time into their kids. Youth workers need to think about how they can meet and serve parents where they are.

2. Cultivating community is important

Lock arms with parents and create community with them.

Matthew 25:35-40

Sometimes it's good to take parents to a place where it's comfortable for us and uncomfortable for them.

3. Foster integrity and transparency

Don't hide anything, even if it's controversial. Show parents how something will affect their teenager and show teenagers the truth of what they need to see and hear. If God calls you to say something that could be controversial, you have to say it, but don't stir controversy just for the heck of it.

4. Encourage big dreams

We are so small in our thinking and have a limited vision concerning parents and teenagers.

Luke 10:8-9

Bano dreams big about addressing AIDS in Africa. After a certain amount of time we can really put together a solution for this.

Dream big dreams with your parents. Have them help identify the problems.

4. Big team, little me

I really don't matter much in the grand scheme of things, but we can be successful with a team of parents in watching students grow up and go out to be successful and impact others for Christ.

Show parents how to dream big for their students. And show them how not to just impress their dream on their kid but communicate together about it.

Ask parents how you can join them and be a team together. “How can I help serve you and how can we serve your family together?”