
BUILDING TRUST

REPRESENT CHRIST

Be a representative of Christ. Use discernment when spending time with students. Remember that you represent Christ in all of your actions and words, and not only to the students, but to the parents as well. You never know God's purpose for your presence in the student's life; parents are watching your every action too and you want to push them towards Christ with all your actions. To the right are some tips to help you out.

CRUCIAL TOPICS

We definitely want to be a safe place for a student to share, **but by law**, we are mandated reporters. If there is child abuse, self-harm or suicidal thoughts we are obliged to let someone know. These are crucial issues to share with your ministry director. If a student says, "you promise not to tell?" A great response can be, "I love and care about you. I am a safe place for you to share anything. But, if I think you are in danger, I will want to make sure that we get you help because I care so much about you."

DO

- Be on time
 - Communicate plans with parents -- make sure it's ok with them and if you're going to be late dropping them off
 - Make sure it is something they want to do
 - Ask them questions
 - See what they respond to and enjoy talking about
 - Meet them at their level
 - Be patient and selfless
 - Let ministry director know if something "crucial" was shared.
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DON'T

- Be late
 - Cancel unless an emergency (let your yes be yes and your no be no)
 - Take them to an R rated movie, an inappropriate concert, participate in a dangerous activity (hunting, etc), or do something that gives the wrong message about the body of Christ.
 - Be overly cautious and make sure the activity isn't something that could cause for concern. And, it never hurts to ask. If you are unsure about something, ask their parents directly
 - Drive dangerously
 - Spend a ton of money without consulting the ministry director
 - Talk the whole time
 - Tell them inappropriate jokes (including political or racial jokes)
 - Bad mouth their parents
 - We may not always agree with something that a parent does. However, we are *partners* with parents and we send the wrong message by diminishing or criticizing a parent's actions. If a student shares about a difficult situation with their parents, give them a safe place to talk and share. Ask questions and help them process.
 - Hangout one on one in private areas (like their room, a closed-door office, etc.) Hangout instead in public
 - Make fun of them or their interests
 - Over share
 - Promise that you won't tell anyone a secret.
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KEY REMINDERS

Be Present-*Show up at group and in their lives. Pursue relationship with them. Do life together.*

Create a Safe Place-*Be consistent and trustworthy. Listen.*

Partner with Parents-*Communicate with parents. They are an asset not an enemy.*

Make it Personal-*Lead them by example: Go to church, be in a small group, have a mentor, be authentic, spend daily time with God.*

I have never seen sustained growth in youth ministry without relationship. Don't be afraid just jump in and seek God's guidance. Remember: God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called.

HOW TO SET UP A HANGOUT

- Pray before you coordinate the hang-out. God uses us and we should never self rely in ministry.
- Ask them at group if they'd want to hang out. Then get their number or their parents' number.
- Parents- Try to meet the parents in person. If they are not the ones to drop students off, call them to introduce yourself. "Hi, I'm John from Grace and I'm Timmy's leader. I was wondering if we could hangout and get slurpees this week."(parents will be creeped out to hear an older person calling for their child so take time and introduce yourself to the parent.)
- Ask what they would want to do. If they can't think of anything, use something that most people enjoy doing (go to In-N-Out, play basketball, paint nails, walk around the mall, etc)
- Land on a date that works for your schedule. It's better to plan far out than to cancel a scheduled hangout. Remember you are earning their trust and that means being consistent and true to your word.
- Clearly communicate to students and parents the time frame that you have to hangout.
- Have fun and enjoy it! Getting to know students is the greatest joy and what makes them different is what you'll come to love.

THAT WAS FUN! NOW WHAT?

Repeat -- Just like any relationship, it's important that you stay in contact. Hanging out with a student isn't a one-time thing. Each week spend some time checking in or just getting to know your students through social media, texting, or calling. If you have trouble remembering to contact your students, create a habit: "every Thursday I call one student and every Sunday I hang out with a student after group." Ministry is a way of life, not just a task, so make it a regular part of your life.



DISCUSSION

Please take some time to answer these questions so you can discuss them with your Apprenticeship Coach.

How can you find out what the students are interested in? (try to come up with at least three ways)

What might prevent you from keeping your word to a student? What can you do to prevent or minimize canceling or rescheduling a hang out with one of your students?

There will be times that you are going to get really busy. How can you stay connected with your students when you don't have time to hang out with them? (Here's a good video for more ideas: <https://vimeo.com/170062895>)

