

ENGAGING WITH PARENTS DISCUSSION GUIDE

Youth Ministry Starter Pack



SUPPORTING / RESOURCING
YOUTH + YOUNG ADULT
MINISTRIES

baptistyouthministries.org.au



Using This Guide & Partnering with BYM

How to use this document

How to use this document: This resource is designed for you to use in three ways – together as a team, on your own, and as a launchpad into further learning. Page 1 gives you a team discussion guide you can use in a leaders' meeting, at a retreat, or across a couple of shorter check-ins. Page 2 is for personal reflection, helping each leader sit with God and pay attention to their own life and leadership. Page 3 offers articles, books, and tools you can explore over time. Don't feel pressure to use everything at once pick one or two sections that fit your current season and start there.

How BYM can support and train you

Baptist Youth Ministries exists to help churches across NSW & ACT build healthy youth and young adult ministry, not just run events. If you'd like help working through this module with your team, a BYM team member can come and facilitate a training session, leaders' retreat segment, or tailored workshop in your context, or join you online. We can also walk with you through a Healthy Youth Ministry Assessment and follow up coaching to identify strengths, gaps, and next steps. To explore training or support, get in touch with the BYM team or visit the Website to connect with our team, check out events and explore more resources

Engaging with Parents

Team Reflection

This session explores why engaging parents and caregivers is essential for healthy youth ministry, and how different types of parents can become partners in discipling young people. It highlights research showing parents' huge spiritual influence, unpacks common parent "types," and offers practical ways to build trust, communicate well, and support families, including when home isn't safe.

Warm up questions

- What has been your general experience of parents in youth ministry so far? mostly encouraging, mostly challenging, or a mix of both?
- When you hear "parents are one of the most influential voices in a young person's faith," how does that make you feel as a youth leader? relieved, threatened, motivated, or something else?

The Reality

- The video mentions studies showing that Bible engaged teens often learn to read Scripture from their parents, and that parents strongly influence whether teens re-engage with church after disruption. Does that match what you see in your context? Where is it similar or different?
- How might these findings change the way you think about your role, not just discipling young people, but strengthening families and partnering with parents?

Different Types of Parents

1. Church attending but non engaged
2. Engaged and volunteering
3. Non believing but supportive
4. No real connection (only an emergency contact)

Discuss together:

- Which of these parent types are most common in your youth ministry right now?
- For each type, what might be one realistic next step to build a bridge (e.g. a first conversation, a thank you message, a simple invite)?

Practical Ways to Engage

Reflect on the practical tips from the video:

- Be available, present at pick-up/drop-off, smile, say hi.
- Communicate early and clearly and not just logistics, but what you're teaching and how God is at work.
- Don't pose as a parenting expert - be a humble guide and encourager.
- Tap into spiritual parents, especially when faith support at home is weak.
- Be culturally aware and trauma aware, notice background, family of origin, and safety issues.

Questions for the team:

- Which of these are strengths of your team already?
- Which one or two feel like the most important growth areas for your context this year?
- How could you embed one of these practices into your normal weekly rhythm (so it doesn't depend on just one keen leader)?

Culture and Safety

- How diverse are the cultural and family backgrounds in your group (ethnicity, language, expectations, rhythms, etc.)? What might you need to learn or ask so you can engage parents with curiosity and respect?
- In situations where home is not safe, what is your current pathway (Safe Church / Safe Ministry process, escalation, pastoral support)? Are all leaders clear on what to do if they have concerns?

Engaging with Parents

Personal Reflection

My Role in Engaging Parents

My Current Posture

- When I think about parents in our youth ministry, do I mainly feel: grateful, intimidated, frustrated, distant, or something else? Why?
- In the last month, have I had any intentional conversation with a parent or caregiver about their young person's faith or life? What happened?
- Write down one recent interaction with a parent that stands out to you.

Seeing Parents as Partners

- Do I genuinely see parents and caregivers as partners in discipleship, or do I mostly see them as "gatekeepers" or "logistics people"?
- What might change in my attitude, language, or habits if I really believed parents are the most influential spiritual voices in their young person's life?
- Write down one way you could affirm or encourage a parent this term:

Comfort Zone and Growth

- Which types of parents do I find easiest to engage (e.g. church-attending and engaged)? Which types do I tend to avoid (e.g. non-believing, distant, or complaining)?
- How do my own background and experiences with family shape the way I relate to parents now (culturally, emotionally, spiritually)?
- Write a barrier that holds you back from engaging parents
- Write a small step you could take to grow in this area.

Cultural Awareness and Safety

- Are there families in our group whose cultural background I don't really understand yet? What respectful questions could I ask, and who could help me learn?
- Am I clear about what to do if I'm worried a young person is unsafe at home (who to talk to, what the Safe Church process is)? If not, what's my next step?

Prayer and Commitment

- Take a moment to pray for the parents and caregivers connected to your youth group. Then complete:

Prayer : Today I'm asking God to grow my heart for parents in this way...

Commitment : One concrete action I will take in the next two weeks to engage a parent is (include a name or situation if appropriate).....

Engaging Parents

Resources

More on Engaging Parents

These resources can help you and your team keep growing a family oriented approach to youth and young adults ministry, where parents are supported and engaged as key disciplers of young people.

Articles

1. Home Discipleship Resources: Equipping Parents to Disciple Their Kids – **Youthworks**
This article gathers free tools like the 555 Challenge and points to GrowingFaith.com.au, helping churches encourage simple, sustainable Bible reading and prayer rhythms at home. It's a great starting point if you want quick, practical ideas to pass on to parents or to shape a family discipleship strategy.
2. Five Ways to Engage Families as Partners in Ministry – **Fuller Youth Institute**. This piece helps leaders think through how welcoming their ministry is to parents, and offers simple steps to build trust, connect families with each other, and support overwhelmed parents. It's especially helpful for teams who want to move from "parents on the sidelines" to genuine partnership.

Find More Resource Online

Scan this QR code to see the full, regularly updated list of articles, templates videos, and books on Disciple from the BYM Resource Page.

Books

1. Family Discipleship: Leading Your Home Through Time, Moments, and Milestones by Matt Chandler & Adam Griffin. This book offers a clear, realistic framework for parents who want to build rhythms of discipleship into everyday family life. It's a great recommendation for Christian parents who feel overwhelmed and need something practical and grace filled rather than guilt driven.
2. The Faithful Parent by Martha Peace & Stuart Scott. A biblically grounded book that focuses on the parent's own walk with God as the foundation for parenting, offering practical, gospel centered guidance for different stages and issues. It's helpful for parents who want to think seriously about their role in discipling their children and teens.

BYM support with engaging parents: Baptist Youth Ministries exists to support churches across NSW & ACT as they disciple young people and strengthen whole families. If you'd like help thinking through how to partner with parents in your context, a BYM team member can walk with you through our Healthy Youth Ministry Assessment, facilitate a leaders' training session (in person or online), or help you design simple next steps for engaging parents and caregivers in your church. To explore training or support, get in touch with the BYM team via the website or visit the Resources Page for more tools and ideas



LEARN MORE
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