



Ongoing Preparation for Short-term Youth Teams

November 2006

The Great Ideas listed below are a follow-up to the story of Mililani Community Church and the multiple youth teams that they produce each year. In order for youth to be ready for missions, they need to mature in many different areas. These Great Ideas will help to provide a framework of key areas that must be developed. They are adapted from Mililani Community Church's comprehensive plan of preparation for short-term youth teams, which they call *Developing Kingdom Warriors*. These items should be a continual part of the youth program in order to develop servants and leaders for short-term ministries.

- 1. Teach right relationship with God.**
Be sure that students are believers who are spiritually prepared and have a right relationship with God.
- 2. Provide training in personal disciplines.**
Teach and model a daily quiet time: personal time in the Word and prayer. Allow frequent opportunity for students to share with peers or ask questions about what they are learning in their time alone with God.
- 3. Assign a mentor to each youth.**
Each young person should be assigned a same-sex adult of maturity to whom he or she is accountable. The mentor should be prepared to guide the student and pray with him or her. The pair should meet together weekly.
- 4. Assign a "project" to each youth.**
Each youth should choose or be assigned to a younger person of the same sex. The youth is then responsible to reach out to, regularly pray for, share with, and encourage this younger person in the faith.
- 5. Give opportunity for development of leadership skills.**
Involve students in planning and leading their youth group meetings. Plan *with* them rather than *for* them. Provide opportunity for them to design, plan, implement and evaluate regular meetings and events for their own group or for the church. Allow them to make decisions and then deal with consequences of their choices. Recognize, respect, and encourage the gifts and skills that have already been developed, allowing them to use these in ministry. Encourage them to try new things. Give them training and support as needed. Model good leadership and work alongside them. Child Evangelism Fellowship training includes leadership development for teens working with younger children.
- 6. Teach good relationships within the family.**
Teach the youth to honor, respect and obey their parents.
- 7. Educate the students in interpersonal skills.**
Teach teamwork, interpersonal skills and conflict management. This could also include right relationships with the opposite sex, personal purity, social skills and the value of

- manners, posture and grooming. For team-building resources see http://www.missionsresources.com/category/Team_Building.htm.
- 8. Encourage each youth to develop two different worship skills.**

The Mililani Community Church presses each young person to work on worship skills, and each is expected to develop two different skills, depending on individual gifting and interest. These might be leading worship, singing on the worship team, drama, hula, sign dance, banner creation, instrumental accompaniment, or using technical skills running the sound system or developing PowerPoint to be used in the worship service. Additional options include singing in the choir or ensembles, choral reading, ushering, taking the offering, greeting visitors, serving communion, telling children's stories, leading children's worship, or helping to prepare the worship bulletins.
 - 9. Help students identify, understand and develop their spiritual gifts.**

Provide teaching and opportunities to serve, along with role models to coach students in developing their spiritual gifts. Giving them opportunities to volunteer will often help them identify what their gifts are. Provide affirmation and feedback as you observe their gifts being used. See <http://mintools.com/ministries.htm>
 - 10. Give instruction in the fruits of the Spirit.**

Teach the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Help students to understand that though spiritual gifts differ from one believer to another, all Christians should exhibit the fruits of the Spirit.
 - 11. Teach character traits and godly attitudes.**
 - a. Gratitude (instead of grumbling)
 - b. Humility
 - c. Integrity
 - d. Commitment
 - e. Sacrifice
 - 12. Provide training in methods of evangelism.**

Youth should learn one or more methods of evangelism: Wordless Book, Gospel Hand, Evangecube, Roman Road, *Four Spiritual Laws*, The Bridge, Evangelism Explosion, *Life's Greatest Adventure*.
 - 13. Provide practical experience.**

After they have studied the method or methods of evangelism, provide opportunities for the students to apply what they have learned through practical experience. This could be in Vacation Bible School, at sports courts or parks or the beach, or going door to door.
 - 14. Give opportunities for service ministries.**

Teach a servant heart through opportunities to serve the needy from within the church and within the community. Youth can do home cleaning, yard work, or car care for the elderly in the congregation. Allow them to serve in projects at the local rescue mission or as a part of an Angel Tree Project.
 - 15. Teach stewardship.**

Help students to comprehend and practice good stewardship, tithing and giving. Help them to understand that raising support is not begging for money; it is allowing people to do what God has already called them to do—GIVE!

16. Great websites and resources

- National Network of Youth Ministries, Short-term Missions Roundtable / <http://www.youthworkers.net/pdf/NetMag-Winter2006-6.pdf>
- Resources for mission trip preparation / http://missionsresources.com/Category/Mission_Trip_Preparation.htm
- DualReach, Short-term Team Follow-up Resources / <http://www.dualreach.org/missions/resources/short-term.shtml>
- The Next Mile / <http://www.thenextmile.org/>

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- ♦ DualReach does not necessarily endorse all of the positions and activities of the organizations listed above.
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