

Developing Student Leaders

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Summary

This video discusses the importance of developing student leaders in youth ministry. The key reasons highlighted were: 1) Student leaders influence their peers and model discipleship, 2) It allows students to explore their gifts and feel ownership in the ministry, and 3) It aligns with Gen Z's tendency to be producers and take responsibility. Practical ways to create student leaders were suggested, such as involving them in small tasks during services, having them co-lead activities, and providing opportunities for one-on-one mentoring. The connection between student leadership and discipleship was explored, emphasizing that discipleship should be the foundation for developing servant leaders. Potential pitfalls discussed included creating an unhealthy spiritual hierarchy, overburdening students with tasks at the expense of ministering to them, and confusing service with earning God's approval.

Main Points

#1 - Why Student Leadership Matters

Developing student leaders is important because it facilitates discipleship through a replication process. As students influence and lead others, they model what it means to be a follower of Jesus. It also allows students to explore their gifts and feel ownership in the ministry during their formative teenage years. Additionally, Gen Z students have a tendency to be producers and take responsibility, which can be leveraged through leadership opportunities.

#2 - How to Create Student Leaders

Practical ways to create student leaders include involving them in small tasks during services (e.g., welcoming, announcements, leading games or worship),

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co-leading activities with adult leaders, and providing one-on-one mentoring opportunities. It's important to start small and build upon their involvement gradually. Different leadership styles and personalities should be recognized, not just the extroverted or loud students.

#3 - Connection Between Student Leadership and Discipleship

Student leadership and discipleship are interconnected. As students are disciplined and understand their mission, they will naturally want to lead and serve others. Good discipleship is the foundation for good leadership and bearing fruit. However, leadership should not become a spiritual hierarchy or a means to earn God's approval, but rather an outflow of being close to God and serving others.

#4 - Potential Pitfalls in Student Leadership

Potential pitfalls in developing student leaders include creating an unhealthy spiritual hierarchy or a sense of pride among those chosen as leaders. There is also a risk of overburdening students with tasks and neglecting to minister to them. Additionally, care should be taken to ensure that service does not become a means for students to earn God's approval, but rather an outflow of their relationship with God.

Next Steps

- Start writing down a few practical ideas (3-4) to engage students in leadership roles, such as leading games, making announcements, or co-leading small groups.
- Implement these ideas gradually over the next week, month, or year to create opportunities for student leadership.
- Ensure a balance between providing leadership opportunities and ministering to students through one-on-one meetings and small groups.
- Communicate clearly that leadership is about service and not a spiritual hierarchy or a means to earn God's approval.