

Red Flags in Young Adult Ministry

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When leading a young adult ministry, there are a lot of hot topics to make sure you are doing. You need to make sure you speak from the Bible, have worship, create areas of connection, and of course make sure you have coffee because virtually every young adult loves coffee.

But we don't often talk about the things we should avoid or what we shouldn't do in young adult ministry. These red flags can mess up your ministry. Here are three red flags to watch out for when you leading a young adult ministry.

Red Flag 1: Become a Young Adult Church

Too often young adult groups start in a local church, but end up operating like their own stand-alone church. If you are a part of a church, make sure you are integrated into the church. Don't do your own thing. Young Adult ministry is a ministry of the larger church. It should operate as a bridge for young people to connect and plug in to the Sunday morning congregation. Sometimes, if you aren't careful, what happens is young adult leaders care more about growing the young adult ministry than getting them connected to the church through Sunday attendance. Don't think having a large young adult ministry or caring to grow your young adult ministry is bad. You should grow and reach young adults who don't know Christ. But, if young adults only come to young adult ministries, that creates a problem. Your ministry exists to bridge the gap for young adults.

Side Note: You might wonder "Well, how do I get my young adults plugged in to Sunday mornings?" One of the most effective ways I have seen this done is by having your young adults join one of the serve teams on Sunday mornings. I have found young adults find it easier to serve the church before sitting in a Sunday service.

Red Flag 2: Don't Copy Your Neighbor

In elementary school whenever I took a test, I tried to peak over my neighbor or friend's shoulder to copy their answers. Don't worry, I have repented for this sin. When I did this, I short-circuited my education because I couldn't answer the questions by myself.

The same thing is true when leading young adult ministry. God didn't call you to copy your neighboring church's ministry. He called you to lead your group of young adults the way He wants. Too many young adult ministries just copy and paste what other groups are doing. Certainly, it's not wrong to get ideas from others. But when you take someone's entire young adult program, you become a ministry plant for that group rather than following God's plan for you.

The beauty of young adult ministry is it doesn't have to look like everyone else's ministry. When you meet, how you meet, and what your group does can be different. Your group can meet once a month, once every two weeks, or even every week. Your group could be small group based or have worship services. There is no cookie cutter

way to lead a young adult ministry. When it comes down to it, if you are reaching your young adults the way God wants you to, that's all that matters.

Red Flag 3: Not Starting with the *Why*

This red flag is especially for those launching a young adult ministry. But even if you've been leading for a while, this is still helpful. When you start a young adult ministry always remember your *why*. When you begin without a *why*, you can easily get lost in doing everything. Activities and events take over. Scheduling services, recruiting volunteers, and doing "stuff" causes us to lose sight of the main thing. Each of us should have a goal or a vision for *why* God has us starting this ministry. Your *why* could be to evangelize lost young adults or to see young adults connect to your church's Sunday services. Maybe you just realized there are a lot of young adults in your church and you want to give them a place to belong. Whatever it is, make sure you stick to your *why*. Without your *why*, you can get caught up in doing things for young adults that God never intended you to be doing.

Avoiding these red flags will help you lead your young adult ministry well. Make sure you avoid becoming a "young adult church" instead of a ministry integrated into the church. Don't copy other ministries or forget why you're leading your young adult ministry.