



2 Director and Program Considerations

CHAPTER PREVIEW

- ✿ Considerations for Hiring a Director
- ✿ Responsibilities of a Director
- ✿ Qualifications of a Director
- ✿ Financial Considerations
- ✿ Partnering With the Director
- ✿ Training for the Director
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TYPICALLY Unity centers and churches begin with a spiritual program for adults. As the number of adults being served increases, the opportunity and need to provide spiritual education for children and teens also becomes apparent. Offering a program for young people attracts a wider age variety of adults who participate in the church which, in turn, brings more energy and resources to all. A program for children and teens moves through many growth stages that can be challenging to a church. This chapter provides ministers and the board guidance in selecting the key person or persons to organize that program along with guidance in program size groupings of the youth.

Youth and Family Ministry (YFM) serves a variety of people in many ways. The primary focus is the children and teens. In small churches with a volunteer leader or director, this may be their only focus. However, when serving young people, inevitably, directly or indirectly, the parents are also served. This may consist of keeping parents informed about what their children are learning, helping them learn about the church, whom to contact for what, and how to incorporate Unity principles into their parenting skills. Or it may become a program which builds family and community relationships among families and/or an intergenerational program focused on building church community.

Youth directors also serve the volunteers who contribute their gifts, time, energy and love to the children. Their needs include training for their specific responsibilities, encouragement as they work with children and teens, prayer support and fellowship opportunities. Additionally directors network with church staff and the board of directors.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR HIRING A DIRECTOR

Why hire a Youth and Family Ministry Director?

A vital youth program:

- Is critical to a successful ministry.
- Serves some of the needs of families thus strengthening the church community.
- Provides for nurturing of youth and family programs that foster church growth.
- Engages a trained professional in manifesting the vision.

Having a Youth and Family Ministry Director increases:

- Stability in ministering to youth, their families and youth ministry volunteers.
- Spiritual presence in upholding the mission/vision of the church.
- Consistency in structure of Unity educational components.
- Professionalism and effectiveness in the youth program.
- Effectiveness in recruiting and training of volunteers for youth ministry.
- Growth in this sector of the congregation through the support and nurturing of youth and youth volunteers' spiritual lives.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DIRECTOR

The youth director's primary objectives are to plan and guide the spiritual education for children and teens, to support the volunteers' success in mentoring the youth, and to create a safe environment in which the young can grow through spiritual self-discovery. Although the director may occasionally teach or assist with a lesson, s/he must remain available to attend to the unexpected needs of a child, their parents, a teacher or other volunteer, as well as to attend to the administrative details involved in managing a Sunday morning experience.

The responsibilities of a youth director include a great breadth of possibilities. An accompanying table details what are realistic expectations for various size programs. The church's vision for youth and family also guides the decisions about the director's responsibilities. As you define the position for your church, consider these options.

Children and Teens

- Provide consistency, predictability and structure for children.
- Provide safety in a welcoming, colorful environment.
- Provide loving, trained volunteers to support them, answer their questions, guide their inquiry process, and have fun with them.
- Provide materials and resources that guide and support their experience.
- See the Christ in each child.
- Encourage them.
- Pray with them.
- Be the hands and heart of God with them.

Curriculum

- Identify and provide Unity curriculum or curriculum that is in alignment with Unity's teachings.
- Provide materials and resources for lessons.
- Adjust non-Unity curriculum to ensure it parallels Unity Principles.
- Adjust all lesson plans to meet the needs of the age, interests and abilities of the young people in the program.
- Create classroom environments with appropriate enrichment resources.

Volunteers

- Insure ample volunteers are available each week.
- Clearly define volunteer expectations and provide an organized structure for them.
- Oversee applications, references and background checks of volunteers to insure suitability.

(continued on p.14)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUTH DIRECTOR BASED ON PROGRAM SIZE

Program Size	Director Hours Needed	Director Responsibilities
One Room Classroom	10 hours/week for the Sunday program Special Events & Holidays –another 10-20 hours each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal spiritual reflection • Lesson preparation on a weekly basis • Serve as one of the teachers • Coordinate lessons & support other teachers • Schedule & plan events & yearly calendar • Communicate with volunteers & parents • Meet with the minister to keep them informed
5-25 Youth Program	20 hours/week for the Sunday program Special Events & Holidays –another 20 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal spiritual reflection • Lesson preparation on weekly/monthly basis • Possibly serve as one of the teachers • Coordinate lessons & support other teachers • Recruit & train new volunteers • Schedule & plan events & yearly calendar • Communicate with volunteers & parents • Meet with the minister to keep them informed • Purchase and sort supplies or delegate this
25-50 Youth Program	20-30 hours/week for the Sunday program Special Events & Holidays –another 20-30 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal spiritual reflection • Lesson preparation on monthly basis • Coordinate lessons & support other teachers • Act as a substitute when the need arises • Recruit & train new volunteers • Schedule & plan events & yearly calendar • Communicate with volunteers & parents • Meet with the minister to keep them informed • Purchase and sort supplies or delegate this

Program Size	Director Hours Needed	Director Responsibilities
50-75 Youth Program	30-40 hours/week for the Sunday program Special Events & Holidays –another 30-40 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal spiritual reflection & continued education • Lesson preparation on monthly basis due to yearly planning • Coordinate lessons & support other teachers • Recruit & train new volunteers • Act as a substitute when the need arises • Coordinate volunteers & coach them • Facilitate team meetings, trainings, teacher retreats • Offer parent workshops • Schedule & plan events & yearly calendar • Maintain supplies, expense log, budget requirements • Communicate with volunteers & parents • Contribute to newsletter, website, etc. • Meet with the minister & others as needed to keep them informed • Provide reports as requested
75 Youth and over	40 hours/week for the Sunday program Special Events & Holidays –included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal spiritual reflection & continued education • Lesson preparation on monthly basis due to yearly planning • Coordinate lessons & support other teachers • Recruit & train new volunteers • Act as a substitute when the need arises • Coordinate volunteers & coach them • Facilitate team meetings, trainings, teacher retreats • Offer parent workshops • Schedule & plan events & yearly calendar • Maintain supplies, expense log, budget requirements • Communicate with volunteers & parents • Contribute to newsletter, website, etc. • Possibly provide parent support services • Meet with the minister & others as needed to keep them informed • Provide reports as requested • Supervise additional staff in youth ministry

- Provide training so volunteers can gain confidence and skills in working with youth and presenting all aspects of the lesson. (See Chapter 14 “Volunteer Training and Recognition.”)
- Motivate, coach and mentor volunteers as they do the work.
- Express appreciation of all volunteers’ efforts and service, formally and informally.
- Provide additional staffing when attendance is above normal or a highly detailed activity is planned.
- Pray with them and provide an example of a prayerful life based in principle.
- Support them in their individual spiritual growth.

Parental Support

- Model warmly welcoming new families and visitors to encourage their return.
- Involve families in their children’s spiritual program by offering handouts about the lesson and by encouraging parents to assist some Sundays.
- Offer programs that build family and community relationships among families.
- Be available to parents to answer questions, to listen to their concerns, and to pray for and with them.

Minister, Church Staff and Board

- Advocate with the church leadership about the needs and activities of the youth program.
- Educate and provide resources about the needs of the youth.
- Prepare and submit a budget based upon the guidelines provided.
- Work with the minister, board and risk management team to create policies as needed.
- Maintain communication with all through appropriate channels.
- Prayerfully develop ideas and strategies for the growth of this ministry in relation to the church’s mission/vision.
- Communicate with minister or other appropriate staff member the spiritual or human needs when a family is in crisis.

Congregation

- Create opportunities for children to share and be present with the congregation.
- Be a child advocate to the congregation and community.
- With minister, plan as-needed worship experiences and holiday events that actively involve all ages (intergenerational), or that are child-friendly in length and content.
- Plan intergenerational gatherings and service projects involving all ages.

Community

- Be a child advocate to the community.
- Promote the church's Youth and Family Ministry program appropriately in the neighboring community.
- Consider the neighboring community when planning service projects.
- Serve as a resource to regional and national youth and family programs within the Unity movement.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A DIRECTOR

- Experience in working with children in areas of education, counseling, daycare, etc.
- Experience in working with adults in an organizational or managerial position.
- Aligns well with Unity philosophy and agrees to undergo a Unity training program if needed to provide a solid foundation in Unity teachings.
- Shows strengths in the areas of:
 - Teaching skills
 - Educational planning skills
 - Organizational skills
 - Ability to set priorities and follow through
 - Ability to develop a plan and carry it out
 - Ability to delegate tasks
 - Clear communication
 - Reliability, positive attitude, considerable energy and enthusiasm
 - Motivating others (children and adults) and promoting teamwork

- Working within an organization to accomplish a common goal
- Availability for travel to training events and youth rallies
- Ability to stay centered in spiritual principles in times of stress
- Creativity and innovation

At the end of the chapter are director job descriptions to assist the ministry in creating a job description and in hiring a director. Requirements will vary according to the needs of each church. Having a completed job description prior to interviewing potential candidates enables the church leadership to clarify the expectations, duties and number of hours for the position. If a job description already exists—review it thoroughly. Make any updates necessary to accurately reflect your current needs and future growth.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Education of the congregation and board about the importance of the spiritual education of our children and teens is a joint responsibility of the minister and the advocates for youth in the church. Compensation to the director of any size youth program lends a level of quality and importance to the program. In a very small program, compensation for the leader can be accomplished in ways other than monetary. Chapter 11 “Financial Foundations” provides helpful questions to answer as you plan your program. First consider these guidelines.

- The church leadership needs to be clear that the youth ministry program is a budget line item of the church and should not be expected to be self-supporting.
- Supporting our youth and family ministries contributes to the spiritual well-being and lifting up of consciousness of all people, the entire Unity movement and the world; one person at a time.
- Trust and affirm that the universe is partnering with you in providing what is needed to hire a quality professional to serve the spiritual needs in your ministry.
- Budgetary plans must include financial resources for director and volunteer training as well as curriculum and supplies for the children and teens.

In a large ministry, give consideration to benefits such as insurance, retirement plans, and professional development.

PARTNERING WITH THE DIRECTOR **Minister-Director Relationships**

The minister is responsible for the worship and educational aspects of the church. Whether the director is a volunteer or paid staff, the director reports to the minister or a supervisor the minister designates. Both the minister and director are vital in holding and communicating the vision for the Youth and Family Ministry program.

Discuss together the church mission and vision statements, the YFM mission and vision statements, and its structure of operation. See Chapter 5, “Knowing Your Church Culture” for an extended list of considerations for discussion.

Meet together monthly, or possibly weekly for larger programs, to keep everyone informed, to gain insight into the other areas of the church program, and to share what plans are being made that will affect the youth ministry. Building this relationship positions everyone to make confident decisions that are consistent with the overall policies of the church and ministerial leadership. During these meetings set aside time to pray together for the children, the families, and the ongoing revelation of a shared vision.

Board of Trustees-YFM Director Relationships (Partnering)

The Board of Trustees is responsible for major business decisions that include the youth program. The board primarily knows what is happening in youth ministry through the YFM director and minister reports. In many churches, one board member serves as a liaison to youth ministry. This person can serve to advocate special YFM needs that require board approval.

Board members are encouraged to be equally supportive in welcoming and honoring the youth as you are in welcoming and honoring the adults in your congregation. By honoring the Christ presence in all ages, we are working together to create healthy church congregations. All individuals present are fulfilling the Divine appointment within their soul to attend your church on any given day. Speak to all and let your light shine with theirs.

The Church Congregation-Director Relationships

The church congregation is your spiritual family. Encourage the entire congregation, including singles and seniors, to see the youth as belonging to them all. It takes an entire commUNITY to raise a child. Every talent you need to manage a successful YFM is already available within this congregation! Directors and ministries have the opportunity to bring it out!

TRAINING FOR THE DIRECTOR

Ongoing training will assist the director in becoming successful in various elements of his/her position. This guide will be extremely helpful in their ongoing education.

- ***Read immediately:***

- Chapter 6 “Getting Started–The First Sunday!”
- Chapter 7 “Creating the Sunday Morning Experience”
- Chapter 16 “Risk Management”

- ***Read as soon as possible:***

- Chapter 5 “Knowing Your Church Culture”
- Chapter 13 “Volunteer Team Building”
- Chapter 4 “Understanding Our Unity Roots”
- All other chapters

- ***As soon as possible*** Network with your Regional Education Consultants and experienced local Unity directors. (You can locate your regional consultants at www.unity.org/rec)

- Attend regional workshops offered by your Children’s Consultant, Uniteen Consultant, YOU Consultant and NGU consultant.
- Consult Unity Worldwide Ministries’ website for your region and all US regions. (www.unity.org/regions)
- Attend Child/Teen Ministry Week offered in the summer by Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- Take classes in Spiritual Education & Enrichment (SEE) offered through Unity Institute and your local Unity churches.
- Call Unity Worldwide Ministries (816-524-7414) and speak to the Education Department to learn about becoming a Certified Spiritual Educator and/or Licensed Unity Teacher. **See box on next page for more information.**

WHAT IS THE CERTIFIED SPIRITUAL EDUCATORS PROGRAM (CSE)?

The CSE is a spiritual course of study and certification offered by Unity Worldwide Ministries that provides a consistent foundational base of knowledge and skills necessary for effectual and ethical excellence in Unity Youth and Family Ministry.

WHOM IS THE PROGRAM FOR?

Certification as a Spiritual Educator is recommended for individuals who serve Unity youth as volunteer nursery and preschool helpers, children's teachers, teen leaders, and youth ministry staff. It can be taken as a separate program or the beginning tier of a three-tiered curriculum devoted to developing spiritual leaders in Unity Youth and Family Ministry. (The other tiers are Licensed Unity Teacher specializing in Youth and Family Ministry, and Youth and Family Minister.)

WHEN I FINISH WHAT WILL I HAVE LEARNED?

When certified, an individual will have:

- Working knowledge of Unity principles and the twelve powers.
- Familiarity with the Bible structurally, historically and metaphysically.
- Working knowledge of metaphysics including terms, definitions and age-appropriate sequence.
- Foundation in prayer.
- Ability to assess and create an environment for spiritual discovery that is safe, age-appropriate, supportive and encouraging.
- Awareness and application of risk management components.
- Experience in identifying, rating, and writing curriculum for youth ministry classes.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS?

For more information, please contact the Children's Ministry Coordinator at 816-524-7414 or kid@unity.org or go to www.unity.org/yfm

PROGRAM SIZES/GROUPINGS

The Youth and Family Ministry serves children pre-natal through 18, or through the high school experience, depending on the church guidelines and the volunteers who implement the program.

Grouping Possibilities

All children are not the same. Each grows at his/her own rate in many different areas—spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. Likewise, each expresses their own uniqueness differently. Our classrooms and our age groupings need to be designed to support growth in all areas. Likewise, available space impacts decisions about groupings.

Very Small Program/One-Room Classroom

Small churches and programs may only have enough children and/or space to provide a single classroom. If at all possible, find a way to also have a nursery-toddler area. This size program usually requires considerable flexibility by those leading it plus the adaptation of materials to have them meet the needs of the various ages.

Teaching and practicing cooperation is probably the most important tool to use in the small program. As many of the youth will probably be siblings, they will be accustomed to adapting to their siblings personality and learning styles. Encourage the older children to read a part of the story and to assist the younger students with their activities once they have completed their own. Additionally, have separate age-appropriate handouts and other activities for the various ages. An extra adult in addition to the required two teachers can assist with children who may not be ready to participate with the group that day.

Growing Program

As more children are attracted to the program, move toward three groups—one of children not yet in school, one for those in elementary school, and a group for teens that includes those in middle school plus high school. Encourage mentorship of older youth to younger ones in their age group. Hands-on activities and experiences within the lesson are important as all ages will respond willingly and assist each other in accomplishing them.

Full Program

Groupings that most effectively meet the needs of the various ages are:

- The nursery (ages 0-2): Children this age need love and a reassuring presence.
- Preschool (ages 3-5): These children like to try things for themselves. They may be silly, loud, active and social. Here the children are learning that God is everywhere, always and loves us unconditionally.
- Elementary (ages 5/6-10): At this age the children are starting to build relationships with other children and adults. They like to move around and are learning to read and write. They understand stories literally but not in abstract thinking.
- Middle school children, Uniteens, ages 11-13, are trying to make sense out of the world, their bodies, their life and where they fit in. They begin to share and connect with others in the region.

- The high school students, Youth of Unity (YOU), are older teens, ages 14-18. They are learning to co-create their own journeys in life using the Bible and Unity Principles to develop a deeper understanding of their daily life. They support and share with each other and those in the regional and international groups.

Depending upon the number of children you are serving or expect to serve, or your facilities and environment, you may combine or divide these groups differently. Each church is unique and no two programs will look exactly alike.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A GROWING CHURCH AND YFM PROGRAM

Do we offer youth ministry at one service or two?

Attendance of children and teens as well as available classroom space and volunteers will determine how many service times you offer youth education programs.

Infants through YOU can easily be offered at two services. However, the social needs of the Uniteen and YOU ages will require the creation of opportunities for both Uniteen classes and both YOU classes to gather together on a regular basis. Consider having fellowship following the end of first service which will be before the start of second service. To create a sense of community, plan outings for each group. Encourage Uniteen Leaders, YOU sponsors and parents to serve as chaperones and drivers for these events.

How does one transition to offering youth education more than once?

When you decide to offer youth education during both services, here are some suggestions to consider as you double your trained volunteer pool.

- Encourage assistants to move up into a teacher position.
- New recruits who have cleared the volunteer process can shadow more experienced teachers and assistants to learn the classroom procedures.
- Offer additional team trainings targeting new volunteers.
- Create program leaders for various age groups. Encourage your most efficient volunteers to assume this role to assist in creating continuity and to promote communication for the benefit of the children.

Moving to two services is both an exciting time of growth and a time of loss of the family intimacy of the smaller church environment. A child's best "church friend" may choose to attend a different service time, resulting in a sense of loss.

Providing three or more services entails a thoughtful examination with the worship staff over what the early service might look like. What are the demographics of the people expected to attend this service? Knowing the makeup of this congregation will help you design what pieces to offer, such as the nursery and perhaps a couple of multi-age classrooms. Multi-age classes are great to advertise to parents who want their children to attend the same class.

What other factors need to be considered?

Also consider how to handle the children of volunteers when the volunteers serve at one service and attend another. One way is to create a fun, relaxing enrichment or game-oriented group/class that is just for volunteer's children. This includes the children of all the volunteers serving church-wide that morning. Unless you have a lot of children you will only need to provide it during one service (perhaps the middle service) with the understanding that only children staying at the church for more than one service can attend the enrichment time and that those children are expected to attend one hour of ministry class.

Perhaps a third service is later in the afternoon or you offer Saturday services or Wednesday evenings. Again, consider the demographics of the adults attending, the numbers of people expected, and plan accordingly. During the week, take into consideration that children have been in school all day and need time to be in community and to relax. Wednesday evenings are a great time to offer teen groups.

For any size of ministry, remember that what you offer depends on the vision, time and talent available to successfully support each program.

Do not settle for little dreams. God meant you for more.
Listen, be still, can you hear?
—James Dillet Freeman

PART-TIME DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION SAMPLE

Name of Unity Church

Position Title: Director of Youth and Family Ministry
Reports to: Minister(s)
Status: Part-time
Date:

General Description: The Director of Youth and Family Ministry is responsible for the spiritual education of youth, ages birth through high school, in the church community. In keeping with Unity principles, the director implements the elements of an inspiring youth program including relevant curriculum, age-appropriate classroom environments, community-building activities, and a team of well-trained adult volunteers who are themselves Unity students.

Activities and Responsibilities: The Director of Youth and Family Ministry will have a passion for working with youth and will demonstrate experience and qualifications in this area. He/she will fully embrace the Unity teachings and have an ever-unfolding vision of youth ministry and its possibilities in the 21st century. The Director of Youth and Family Ministry will recognize the infinite potential that each child possesses.

1. Develop youth programs for children from birth through high school.
2. Recruit, train, appreciate and nurture youth ministry volunteers and staff.
3. Select age-appropriate curricula and program materials used in all programs.
4. Communicate and collaborate with the minister and staff in the service of youth.
5. Engage the services of regional and national youth ministry consultants as needed.
6. Attend scheduled staff meetings and meet regularly with your supervising minister.
7. Attend seminars and workshops for professional development.
8. Provide articles for church communications.
9. Provide a quarterly report to the minister(s) and board.
10. Create an annual financial vision and be accountable for youth ministry expenditures.
11. Maintain a system of administrative records and equipment inventory.
12. Perform other duties as requested.

Position Specifications:

1. Half-time position: 20 hours/week
2. Time requirements: Sunday mornings before and after service(s) required. Scheduled meetings, office hours, and planning time.
3. Training: On-the-job and through organized training offered regionally and nationally. May include site visit to other Unity church(es).
4. Employee Benefits:
 - i. Salary is \$_____ per hour.
 - ii. Hours are 20 per week, flexible.
 - iii. Vacation is _____per year (eligible after 6 months), _____ after two years in service.
 - iv. Paid holidays falling on scheduled work days
 - v. Personal time (in lieu of health days): 4 days

Position Qualifications:

- Must be at least 25 years of age.
- Must have been an active Unity congregant for a period of at least one year.
- Grounded in Unity teachings with a demonstrated commitment to personal spiritual growth established through at least one year attendance at church services and Unity adult education.
- Training and one year of experience in youth ministry or youth education (or an equivalent).
- Team-oriented leadership style compatible with children and adults.
- Talent for organized thinking and action.
- Clear, inspirational writing and interpersonal skills.
- Computer proficiency.
- Commitment to and alignment with church purpose, intention and core values.
- Experience supervising adults as employees or volunteers is a plus.

Preferred Qualifications:

- B.A. or B.S. in Education or Child and Family Development (or the equivalent)
- Certified Spiritual Educator or Licensed Unity Teacher

FULL-TIME DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION SAMPLE

Name of Unity Church

Position Title: Director of Youth and Family Ministry
Reports to: Minister(s)
Status: Full-time
Date:

General Description: The Director of Youth and Family Ministry is responsible for the spiritual education of youth, ages birth through high school, in the church community. The director implements the elements of an inspiring youth program that includes relevant curriculum, age-appropriate classroom environments, community-building events, and a team of well-trained adult volunteers who are themselves Unity students. The director provides a fun, safe, orderly, loving and nurturing environment of discovery, in alignment with Unity Principles, for all (youth, parents and volunteers) involved in the programs. The director works with the supervising minister regarding programs, budget, space, and planning for the department.

Activities and Responsibilities: The Director of Youth and Family Ministry will have a passion for working with youth and families and will demonstrate experience and qualifications in this area. He/she will fully embrace the Unity teachings and have an ever unfolding vision of youth ministry and its possibilities in the 21st century. The Director of Youth and Family Ministry will recognize the infinite potential that each child possesses and will create an environment that will bring forth that spiritual potential to its fullest.

1. Design, coordinate, support, evaluate and hold the vision for a comprehensive spiritual program for all ages of youth and their families.
2. Create a child-centered and enriching environment where children are welcome and spiritual exploration is encouraged.
3. Recruit, screen, train, schedule, mentor, appreciate, nurture, and support youth ministry volunteers and staff. Develop orientation, training and ongoing education to support the volunteers' growth. Maintain a roster/database for all volunteers and registered youth.

4. Research, assess, select and/or develop and implement age-appropriate curricula, program resources and supplies used in all Youth and Family Ministry programs.
5. Communicate and collaborate with the minister and staff on procedural, space and scheduling needs and issues in the service of youth ministry through scheduled staff meetings and meetings with the minister.
6. Plan and conduct YFM programs and special activities including seasonal programs, community outreach projects, parent education and family ministry offerings. Maintain an annual calendar for all events.
7. Promote all youth and family programs through articles for the church newsletter and the YFM section of the church website, promotional literature, and other correspondence.
8. Obtain the services of and contribute to regional and national youth ministry resources and consultants.
9. Consult with parents of children in the program when needed.
10. Attend seminars and workshops for professional and business development.
11. Provide a quarterly report to the minister(s) and board with attendance, program information and plans. Attend board meetings as requested.
12. Create annual financial vision and be accountable for monitoring and overseeing all Youth and Family Ministry expenditures within a board-approved budget.
13. Maintain a system of administrative records and equipment inventory.
14. Perform other duties as requested.

Position Specifications:

1. Full-time position: 37-40 hours/week
2. Time requirements: Sunday mornings before and after service(s) required. (One Sunday off every quarter.) Arranges the remainder of hours as desired with availability scheduled at church during business hours at least three weekdays per week, including scheduled staff and minister meetings.
3. Training: On-the-job and through organized training offered regionally and nationally. May include site visit to other Unity church(es).

4. Employee Benefits:
 - i. Salary is commensurate with education and experience and as agreed upon with the minister(s) and as approved by the board.
 - ii. Health insurance as approved by the board.
 - iii. Vacation is aligned with other church employees.
 - iv. Paid-for scheduled church staff holidays (approximately 9/year)
 - v. Personal time (in lieu of health days): 4 days

Position Qualifications:

- Must be at least 25 years of age.
- Demonstrates a commitment to Unity teachings, prayer and personal spiritual growth established through at least one year's attendance at church services and the completion of at least 40 hours of SEE Unity adult education or similar coursework.
- Enthusiastic love for children and youth ministry. Possesses training and at least one year of experience in youth ministry or youth education.
- Team-oriented leadership style compatible with children and adults.
- Clear writing and interpersonal skills compatible with children and adults.
- Talent for organized thinking and action.
- Computer proficiency.
- Commitment to and alignment with church purpose, intention and core values.
- Experience supervising adults as employees or volunteers is a plus.

Preferred Qualifications:

- B.A. or B.S. in Education or Child and Family Development (or the equivalent)
- Certified Spiritual Educator or Licensed Unity Teacher in Youth and Family Ministry



3 Planning the Program— What Is Mine to Do?

CHAPTER PREVIEW

- ☞ Director Responsibilities
 - ☞ Planning Guidelines
 - ☞ Event/Activity Planning
 - ☞ Planning Specific Events
 - ☞ Other Possible Responsibilities
 - ☞ Training for the Director
 - ☞ Special Event Planning Timeline—
Christmas Celebration
-

CONGRATULATIONS on answering the call to serve our Unity youth and families! As the Youth and Family Ministry (YFM) Director, the physical tasks associated with your position will vary according to the size of your church and number of young people. Regardless of church size, the spiritual intention of your position remains the same:

- To be an advocate for youth and families in the life of your church.
- To be a living example of the God-centered/principle-centered life you desire for the youth. Maintain a personal practice of prayer and meditation.
- To educate, facilitate and support children's right to ministry that is designed to encourage and empower their spiritual unfolding.
- To affirm that each child, teen, parent, and volunteer is whole and complete, and in his or her perfect place for recognizing and developing their Christ potential.
- To co-create a safe, supportive and loving environment for individual growth to take place.

DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

As Director for Youth and Family Ministry, planning effective use of your time and abilities is essential to the creation of a quality spiritual education program for all those under your direction. The responsibilities of a director, listed in Chapter 2, clearly suggest

the areas a director needs to consider in organizing and implementing the program. Understanding exactly what is required for each of the responsibilities varies from one church to another. To understand all that is involved in each of these responsibilities, read thoroughly these recommended chapters. This will help you to plan how to use your time and energy effectively in serving as the director.

Major Responsibilities for a Director

Where Explained

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| • Overseeing the Sunday morning program for children and teens | Chapters 6, 7, 8 |
| • Organizing and distributing curriculum and supplies for lessons | Chapters 3, 8, 12 |
| • Writing lessons for various ages* | Chapter 8 |
| • Recruiting and interviewing volunteers | Chapter 13 |
| • Planning and conducting training for volunteers | Chapter 14 |
| • Scheduling and supporting volunteers* | Chapters 13, 14 |
| • Creating and using communication systems with volunteers* | Chapter 10 |
| • Visioning for Youth and Family Ministry | Chapters 3, 17 |
| • Supervising/overseeing special or extra youth programs such as Uniteens and YOU* | Chapters 3, 9, 11, 16 |
| • Handling financial responsibilities relating to the YFM program | Chapter 11 |
| • Writing news articles and program reports* | Chapter 10 |
| • Maintaining relationships and communication with other staff members, the minister and parents | Chapters 2, 10, 11 |
| • Planning, promoting and conducting special events for youth, intergenerational groups and parents* | Chapters 2, 3 |
| • Assisting in planning holiday and intergenerational worship* | Chapters 2, 3 |

Director Job Descriptions

If you do not already have a written job description, assist in creating one. Learn what the minister's expectations of your position are. Write a draft from your discussion and present it to the minister for editing, clarification and acceptance.

* These items would not be a part of the responsibilities of a director hired for 10-15 hours per week. See Chapter 2, Table: "Responsibilities of Youth Director Based on Program Size."

PLANNING GUIDELINES

The larger the youth ministry and the larger the event, the more planning time should be allowed. Once you understand the repeating events of the church and youth ministry, it becomes easy to plan out the calendar a full year in advance.

- Organize the various types of work you have to do. Ex. Short-time tasks—email, phone calls, sorting/filing; Mid-time tasks—planning and making supply purchases, writing reports and newsletter submissions; Long-time tasks—writing lessons, planning an event.
- Prioritize your work—know what must be done by when. Block out time to accomplish the preparation well before the final minute.
- Encourage your fellow staff members to respect when you need to have messages taken or calls held.
- Know your most creative time of each day and use it for doing those responsibilities that require the most creativity. Allowing blocks of time to focus uninterrupted on a project is a gift you give to yourself.
- Delegate what can be delegated—possibly recruit a volunteer to organize supplies and prepare them for Sunday morning.
- Watch amount of time spent in relationships and evaluate importance of each one. Building relationships is essential as director, and can be a time eater. Use wisdom in determining an appropriate amount of time for each of these.
- Develop systems—for communication, for organizing and filing, for calendars, etc.
- Take time daily to be still, pray and listen.
- Taking care of the needs of others begins with taking care of your needs.

Weekly Planning

- Prepare lesson plans for teachers to pick up at least two weeks ahead so they can prepare properly and prayerfully. This is especially needed when teachers teach every other week. In larger programs, prepare lesson plans at least a quarter in advance.
- Prepare activities and collect resources needed for Sunday.
- Review calendar of events and determine next areas of planning for various functions: recruitment, training, youth events, intergenerational/family events, etc.
- Meet with minister and those who assist you.

Calendar Planning Tips

A “Year-at-a Glance” wall calendar (Keep available to YFM volunteers.)

- Use a permanent thin-line marker—can refer to it in the years to come. (Rubbing alcohol or Soft Scrub® type cleanser on a cotton swab removes permanent markers.)
- Indicate church ministry mandated dates, i.e. holiday and other celebrations, congregational meeting date, etc.
- Use different color markers to indicate youth ministry dates, big church dates, and major adult activities.
- Include dates of school or community events to avoid.
- Include dates you want to hold tentatively using a washable marker.
- Also mark what curriculum the elementary, Uniteen and YOU students are using especially if you rotate curriculum every three or four years.
- Train your key volunteers to review the calendar before proposing dates for outings and program events.
- Consider creating a tentative calendar for the year. (See Sample Yearly YFM Calendar suggesting key church activities.)

A Personal Monthly Calendar (planner, PDA, etc.)

- Travels with you to keep track of the same schedule.
- Use to record the smaller appointments you will have with your minister, staff members and volunteers.
- Include blocks of time to prepare lessons, research and create holiday and other programs, etc.
- Include time to write proposals, newsletter submissions and reports as necessary.
- Keep a current copy of your volunteers’ contact information in it for times when you receive a message from someone who will not be able to be present Sunday morning.

SAMPLE YEARLY CALENDAR

January

- White stone ceremony
- Holiday decorations down
- Family ministry event
- Uniteen monthly event
- Volunteer training—Goal-setting activities
- Parenting workshop
- Season of Peace/Non-violence begins

February

- Valentine's Day
- YOU Winter Rally
- Curriculum meeting
- Easter event planning meeting
- Lent begins
- Uniteen monthly event

March

- Invite Chaplains into classrooms—review prayer
- Easter event planning meeting
- Service work party—playground & landscape team
- Uniteen monthly event
- Palm Sunday

April

- Daylight Savings Time
- Good Friday Service—need child care
- Easter Sunday
- YOU Fundraiser Luncheon
- YOU Service Rally
- Uniteen monthly event
- Family ministry event—Special Game Night

May

- Uniteen monthly event
- Spring picnic—Family ministry event
- Mother's Day & Ladies Tea—offer child care

- 4th/5th grade outing

- YOU fund raiser—yard sale
- Last day of school for kids
- Memorial Day weekend

June

- Graduates Celebration
- Father's Day Picnic—YFM facilitate games
- YOU Summer Rally
- Service Project—Uniteens & YOUer's
- Uniteen monthly event

July

- July 4th
- Youth week activity—Vacation Church School
- YOU Sunday Service
- YOU International Conference
- Uniteen monthly event
- Family ministry event—boat trip
- Adventure in Faith planning meetings

August

- Youth fly-up celebration & pool party
- School begins
- Volunteer training & commitment ceremony
- Uniteen monthly event

September

- Labor Day
- Teachers/Volunteers Retreat and Training
- Men's/Women's Retreat
- Family ministry event—Special Movie Night
- Uniteen monthly event

October

- YOU Fall Rally
- Adventure in Faith Program begins

- Regional Teacher Training or Retreat
- Uniteen Leader training
- Uniteen monthly event
- Family ministry event—Halloween Party

- Parenting Workshop
- Daylight Savings Time

November

- Pet/Animal Blessing
- Annual Church Membership meeting
- Thanksgiving
- Thanksgiving Eve Service—child care required
- Uniteen monthly event
- Family ministry event—Christmas Crafts day
- Decorate for Christmas
- Advent begins
- Christmas Program/Pageant Rehearsals begin

December

- YFM Children's Christmas Celebration & Party
- Christmas Program/Pageant
- Holiday Party—Adult Ministry
- Hanukkah
- Kwanzaa
- Uniteen monthly event
- Teen Christmas party
- Candle Lighting Service—child care required
- Burning Bowl Service—child care required

EVENT/ACTIVITY PLANNING

When planning any event, numerous areas need to be considered. Develop your plans in writing and create a system for keeping track of the details. Identify which of these areas need to be considered for various types of events. Check Chapter 19 “Forms” to see what forms are available that can be easily adapted for your event planning.

- **Purpose:** What is the purpose? Who is the target audience? How will they benefit? How does this event align with the church mission/vision? With the Unity philosophy? The church culture?
- **Approval:** What are channels for approval? Timeline for this? Forms to use?
- **Room/facility needs:** Are needed areas reserved on church calendar? What space is needed? One large room? Breakout area? First aid area? Refreshment area?
- **Event setup:** What room setup is needed? (tables/chairs) Who will do that? When?
- **Planning:** What are various details that need to be handled? Timeline for these? What planning meetings need to be held and when? With whom? Will registration be needed? If so, who will handle them?
- **Finances:** What is budgeted? What is expected attendance? Will there be a charge? Who will handle money? What checks are needed the day of the event?
- **Timing:** What is the timing of the event/day? What schedule is needed?
- **Program needs:** Will there be a speaker? Musician? What multimedia and equipment needs?
- **Volunteers:** What volunteers are needed? What responsibilities are they needed for? What record-keeping is needed about this?
- **Other Staffing:** What are office staff needs? How much director time is required? What responsibilities can be delegated?
- **Promotion:** How will this event be promoted? Where?—bulletin for 3 weeks, newsletter, email, website, take-home fliers for children? When? Who will do this?
- **Transportation:** What are the needs? Are permission slips required? Insurance? Medical release forms? Is driver documentation on file?
- **Supplies, food:** What supplies, equipment, food, etc. are needed? Who will plan and purchase these?
- **Cleanup:** How and who will handle this? How will spills be handled?

- Evaluation: How will event be evaluated? Will there be a staff/volunteer post-event wrap-up meeting? Who will be responsible for these?
- Event completion: How will appreciation be expressed to volunteers? What needs to be returned? What recommendations need to be recorded about the event?

PLANNING SPECIFIC EVENTS

Special activities are a way of building community through the event as well as through the event planning and creation process. Every event is an educational opportunity for the Unity teachings to be expressed and lived by putting them into practice in relationships with others. Networking with other directors can be a helpful way to learn about successful events and what to avoid. Create a joyous celebration and bring to life the Truth that you know.

Easter

- Begin planning early in January.
- Discuss with minister whether the bunny and traditional secular activities will take place or a more Biblical approach be taken to celebrate this holiday.
- Consider the youth ministry focusing on the Biblical approach and the family ministry providing an egg hunt and related social activities.
- Refer to the *Holiday Spirit Resources* book (#6825) available from Unity Worldwide Ministries as a starting point for plays and other holiday ideas.

Graduation/Promotion Sunday—acknowledges movement of youth to the next level of spiritual maturity and grade in school.

- In the spring, plan for graduating class visits for large program shifts (i.e. nursery to preschool, preschool to elementary, elementary to Uniteens and Uniteens to YOU), so that everyone has an opportunity to preview the program they will be moving to with the safety of their classmates and known teachers.
- Allow six to eight weeks to prepare a graduation ceremony for the youth. Some churches plan the ceremony when school lets out and have a special program and staff for the summer, giving regular volunteers the summer off. Other churches plan the ceremony when school starts back up, so as not to have to recruit and have new volunteers begin in the summer, amid vacation schedule planning.
- Discuss the possibility of a church-wide celebration as a part of the worship service or a separate youth ministry celebration and gathering.
- Certificates or a physical token may be appropriate, but not necessary.

- When moving children and teens into a new classroom for the first time, provide a lesson plan that includes creating group heart/trust agreements, as well as group-bonding exercises. (See Chapter 8 “Curriculum Lessons.”)

YOU Sunday (and Other Special Youth Performances)

- Allow a minimum of two months to walk the teens through the process of creating a worship service.
- Be clear on the order and timing of the service including meditation and lesson.
- When your teens have the opportunity to facilitate the Sunday worship service, do everything in your power to make this a huge success. Bless your minister for allowing the teens to share their spiritual awareness.
- Work with the teens in planning the service.
 - Use guided meditation and silence for Spirit to speak to them regarding the theme for the service and their individual role.
 - Have each person share his or her guidance and find similarities and topics that create a spark within them.
 - As the theme is revealed, one or two teens will step forward to do the lesson, and another to lead a meditation.
 - Have the teens write their ideas for your review; discuss language and content with them to help clarify ideas; include examples the adult congregation will relate to; and include Unity principle.
- Coach the speakers personally or have them mentored by a speaking specialist.
- Invite other teens to handle other portions of the service as steps to build their skills.
- Have teens select a favorite joysong to sing. Use youth musicians or enroll assistance from your music team to work with the YOUers to have complimentary and appropriate music for their theme.
- To encourage each teen to speak with confidence, hold a dress rehearsal. The teens have a way of performing beautifully on the day of their service, although they “appear” unfocused in the preparation.
- Trust the Spirit in them to be present and affirm it every time the minister asks how it’s going.
- Conducting a service after participating in a rally or International YOU Conference provides teens with a great opportunity to share what they experienced.

Christmas

- Begin to plan four to six months in advance when having a holiday pageant or program.
- Be on the watch for an existing play that can be easily translated to portray Unity philosophy. Network with other directors for successful programs they have used. It takes time and many volunteers to create an hour of pageantry. (See Chapter 18 “Resources.”)
- Enroll all appropriate volunteer teams within the church to assist you. Be sure to encourage and invite the adults to participate.
- Invite the prayer team and chaplains to pray for the participants.
- Ask a few choir members to lead a sing-a-long for the opening of the event and/or to work with preparing the children’s musical portion.
- For a sample detailed planning timeline of a Christmas celebration, see the end of this chapter.

Family Worship Services

- When the opportunity presents itself, offer to assist in coordinating a family worship service. These child-friendly services are fun for the whole family.
- The service may follow the regular format but plan it with consideration to the attention span and joyful spirit of our youth.
- Include music enjoyed by all. Sing uplifting songs and songs with motions, possibly taught by the children.
- Suggest that the sermon or lesson portion of the service be short, interactive and expressed in a language all ages can understand.
- Create ways for congregation participation.
- Assure that the atmosphere is welcoming to the children.

Special Summer Program or Vacation Church School

Depending on the culture of your church and community, a special summer program or Vacation Church School program may be an exciting event to hold. The event could be several hours during the day or an evening one that includes the entire family.

- What is the purpose of offering a Vacation Church School? The spiritual focus?
- What timing works best? Daytime? Evening? Weekly—midweek? Weekend?

- What frequency works best? Does the congregation live locally where a weeklong event is feasible? Or some distance from the church that makes it impossible to attend on a daily basis? Would one night several weeks in a row be better?
- Are ample volunteers available during the time it is offered?
- How can community building be most effective?
- Can our teens be enrolled to facilitate portions of the program?
- What is the success rate of other similar-sized Unity churches in providing this type of offering?

Service Projects

- Provide a lesson for children and teens to learn about the connection between what they and Unity believe and doing service.
- Provide opportunities to demonstrate Unity principles—doing God’s work; seeing our interconnectedness; understanding as we give, we receive.
- Consider involving several ages in a project for building relationships. Build the leadership skills of the Uniteens and YOU by having them coach the elementary students in a service project.
- Consider service to your church and to congregants with special needs. Or to the surrounding community.
- Encourage the consciousness of service among all ages. Service can be as simple as practicing random acts of kindness.

SERVICE POSSIBILITIES

- Adopt a nursing home or give them a party.
- Help plant flowers at church or elsewhere.
- Serve Sunday refreshments.
- Assist with church service.
- Wash windshields and leave an uplifting affirmation for the congregants.
- Create cards to send to shut-ins.
- Collect food, gifts, blankets, stuffed toys, etc. for community.
- Clean seniors’ yards.
- Volunteer at soup kitchen, Special Olympics, etc.
- Consider international projects like Heifer International.
- Offer assistance to Unity programs outside of your area.

Summer Camp or Retreat Programs

Depending on the culture of your church and community, a camp-type program might be a desirable alternate. For this use the questions above and also consider:

- Where can we host a camp-type event?
- What are the costs?

- Will participants be willing to drive that distance?
- What food service and lodging facilities are needed?
- How many youth and families will attend?
- What special needs will attendees have?
- Who in the congregation is an RN or first-aid- or CPR-qualified, and would be willing to attend and serve?
- What about a lifeguard for swimming and boating?
- What activities to offer?
- What spiritual aspect/theme will we focus on, teach and strengthen in us?

OTHER EVENT IDEAS

Kids' night out
 Halloween party
 Family carnival
 Christmas decorating party
 Christmas candle-wrapping party
 (affirmations)
 Christmas crafts workshop
 Department open house
 Games/activities for church picnic
 Game and/or movie night
 Un-birthday parties
 Presenting plays

Family/Intergenerational Ministry

In Unity we recognize that family includes all who participate in Unity. Our congregation is an intergenerational one. Small centers and churches value the sense of community and family that they have as a byproduct of being small. As churches grow, maintaining that sense of community is both a concern and a deep desire. Thus Family/Intergenerational Ministry can serve as a bridge to maintaining the sense of community within the church family. This ministry is one that can serve every stage of life through interactive, creative experiences. These events enhance and enrich the mind, body and soul, and allow for the fullest expression of the Christ self.

Responsibility for family/intergenerational programs varies from church to church. The size of program and the number of hours of employment for the youth director are important considerations in deciding who becomes responsible for Family/Intergenerational Ministry. The focus of the events is toward building friendships and relationships among all ages in fun and caring ways. Nearly all the suggestions above for events and activities can easily become intergenerational events.

OTHER POSSIBLE RESPONSIBILITIES

Child Care

The YFM Director may be asked to coordinate child care for workshops, midweek classes and worship services. If possible, enroll a team leader to be the Nursery/ Child Care Coordinator to oversee this scheduling of volunteers. In a large ministry, this can be a paid position. Review Chapter 15 “Nursery & Child Care” and Risk Management in Chapter 16.

Parenting Workshops and Family Support Services

You may be asked to offer parenting workshops. What a wonderful opportunity to serve parents as they guide their children and teens, especially spiritually! You may have people resources in your congregation that are trained to present these. Consider offering them on a bi-annual or quarterly basis. Also, see Chapter 18 “Resources” of this guide for parenting program possibilities.

Get to know the members of your congregation that are trained professionals in the areas of counseling, child advocacy, social work and teaching. They can assist you in providing up-to-date information and services to families in need within the congregation. The church office or chaplain team should have some contact information as a starting point. Work with other staff to create a resource notebook and a handout sheet with local phone numbers and web site addresses to have available at a moment’s notice.

TRAINING FOR THE DIRECTOR

Training assists every director in becoming successful in various elements of his/her position. Recommended training for directors is described in Chapter 2 “Director and Program Considerations.” Discuss the suggestions with your minister or supervisor and develop a plan for your growth in serving as the church’s Youth and Family Ministry Director.

SPECIAL EVENT PLANNING TIMELINE— CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Event: Youth & Family Ministry Christmas Celebration

Date: First Saturday in December

Time: 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Now and for all meetings and rehearsals, start with prayer. Affirm that God provides all the resources necessary and co-creates with us a joyous experience for all involved. Email Silent Unity at: www.unityonline.org and click on “Submit a Prayer Request.”

Summer

- Research ideas for upcoming children’s play.

End of August

- Make decision on one or two ideas for future planning meeting.
- Begin promotion by providing basic information for the newsletter.

September

- Create database spreadsheet of key elements to enroll volunteers. Include tasks, responsible person, deadline date, task-complete indicator, notes, date thank-you was sent.
- Determine key volunteers needed: director, song leader, accompanist, costumes, props, promotion, etc.
- Create a flyer or email to enroll interested volunteers. Include a space for parents to share how they would like to volunteer on this project.
- Facilitate a planning meeting including all interested parties to create a plan of action.
- Start with prayer and affirm that God provides all the resources necessary and co-creates with us a joyous experience for all involved. Email Silent Unity at: www.unity.org/prayer
- Empower key persons to enroll additional volunteers to assist with their areas of responsibility. Delegate as much as possible and be a constant source of support and encouragement to your volunteers and children. Provide adult volunteer information to project leaders.
- Present minister or supervisor with budget considerations.

- Create “audition form” for youth actors requesting personal and parental contact information, height, clothing sizes.
- Select actor or crew support to participate in planning rehearsal schedule.
- Schedule evening and Saturday rehearsals including dress rehearsal.

October

- Facilitate a planning meeting to review progress, confirm rehearsal schedule, consider new details, and confirm specialized persons needed such as sound technicians.
- Hold youth auditions, begin rehearsals. Director of the play will be in charge of this.
- Use same or similar process for singing talent or children’s choir.
- Plan the party portion of the event, including refreshments and holiday gifts for the youth and volunteers.
- Order children’s gifts from Oriental Trading Company, Inc. (See Chapter 18 “Resources.”)
- Add to spreadsheet additional volunteers for refreshments, set-up and clean up. Recruit two individuals to photograph and video the event.

An appropriate gift to all the youth ministry students is a keepsake Christmas tree ornament that depicts the theme of the play.

November

- Attend rehearsals and encourage and affirm all the children and volunteers frequently and regularly.
- Create an event program acknowledging each child and adult involved.
- Actively promote event through repeated, consistent, clear communication using the weekly bulletin, newsletter, flyers, email messages, etc.
- Meet with party coordinator regarding details, refreshments, etc. Invite Santa if that is acceptable in your church culture.
- Complete program and print at least two days prior to the event.

December

- At dress rehearsal, start with prayer. Affirm that God provides all the resources necessary and co-creates with us a joyous experience for all involved.

- Tie up all loose ends, purchase gifts for play director and assistants.
- Continue to enroll last-minute volunteers.
- Encourage children to let their light shine and know that they are loved.
- It's Show Time! Start with prayer and affirm that God provides all the resources necessary and co-creates with us a joyous experience for all involved.
- Have fun! Whatever happens is perfect!
- Send thank-you cards to all volunteers.
- Review the process with your team and take notes on improvement ideas for next year's event. Share ideas and successful programs with other directors.
- Schedule next year's program on the church calendar.