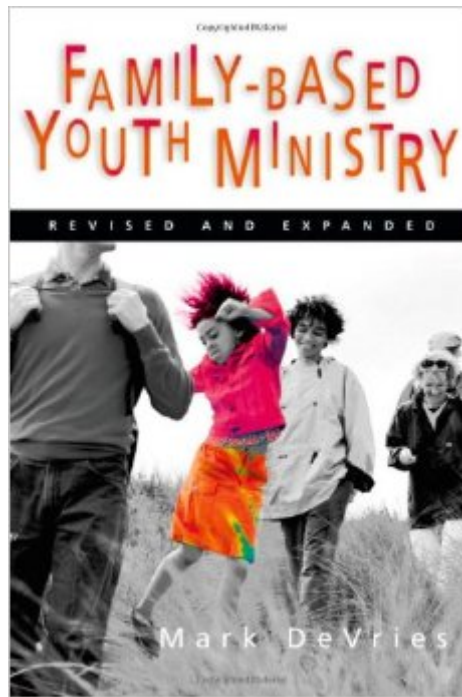


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# Family- Based Youth Ministry



## Synopsis

Have you tried all the new youth programs? Have you planned one too many wacky activities? Are you frustrated about the size of the youth group? Here's an approach to ministry that takes youth work seriously. Family-based youth ministry is about adults discipling teens one-on-one and in groups. It is about involving not just the nuclear family but the whole church family--from singles to older adults. More important, it's about incorporating youth into the life of your church. So stop worrying about the size of your youth group or your budget. Mark DeVries's refreshing approach to youth ministry will show you how your church can reach today's teens and how you can keep them involved in the life of the church. Whether you are a parent, a youth pastor or a church member who cares about teens, you will find in this book an entirely different approach to youth ministry that will build mature Christian believers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have written and edited Christian education curriculum for teens for more than 25 years, I've edited a Christian magazine for youth for 9 years, I've edited a journal for youth workers for 8 years, and edited youth ministry books. I majored in Christian education with an emphasis on youth ministry. So I've seen quite a bit of what's out there on this subject. Far and away, this is my favorite book on youth ministry. In my present role as a church consultant, this is the only book on youth ministry I give to the youth pastors at the churches where I am consulting. But a lot of people in youth ministry won't share my opinion. Why? Because this book advocates a basic approach to youth ministry that

is so different from what we're used to that most youth pastors are not comfortable with it. A pastor recently told me that they interviewed several candidates for a family-based youth ministry position. None of the youth ministry candidates they interviewed had any clue about how to do family-based youth ministry, so they didn't hire any of them. Here's the heart of this book. The purpose of youth ministry is to produce adult disciples. What predicts whether a teen will ten years later be an adult disciple? It's not youth group attendance. It's not attending the teen Sunday school class. So, what is it? Give up? It is the quality of the teen's relationship with one or more mature Christian adults. Kids who just plug into youth group but don't develop close friendships with mature Christian adults are not likely to be in church ten years later. Building a youth ministry around teen-adult relationships--including both parents and others--sounds revolutionary to us. Chances are it would have sounded just normal to the New Testament church. If you care about teens, and if you dare to open yourself to a radically different way of structuring the church's ministry to and with them, you need this book.

I'm coming from a different perspective than most of you who read this book. I'm a 20 year old Gordon College student who is learning about youth ministry from his friends and from classes. I never really felt connected to any of the youth groups I belonged to, and consequently I understand why now. I read this book to make up for an incomplete. I had to read this book and Doug Fields Purpose Driven Youth Ministry as well as doing a lot of field research. It was a lot like finding a diamond in the rough. I've learned a lot about Youth Ministry from this assignment and consequently I can see what DeVries is talking about in this book. I would say that this book is one of the most definitive books on where Youth Ministry should be heading. The approach is "radical", from our perspective, but is in fact traditional. He is essentially advocating that we give children of my generation one of the main things we have lost in this hedonistic and pluralistic society: A deep connection with adults. My parents and I get along better than most people these days, but they weren't the greatest advocates of church involvement. I had a strong relationship growing up, but what I didn't have was a strong connection with other adult Christians. There was no "cloud of witnesses" to encourage me and challenge me to continue forward. Consequently, I have found it difficult at times to continue forward in my faith. DeVries' concept would change that. The focus of the book is to show youth workers that the method they have been using needs updating. A new process for quantifying success in a youth ministry also needs to be used. A youth group shouldn't be judged by how many people are in it, but rather by how many people stay in the church once they "graduate" from youth group. All in all this book is wonderful. I suggest it to everybody who has

to work with youth.

This book is a wonderful companion for all who are involved in youth ministry. It focuses on the importance of relationships in the success of the ministry. It doesn't mislead by asserting that all the answers are on the pages of this book. You will be challenged to move your ministry into a more lasting phase in which the adults of the congregation become integral parts of the foundation of the teens. All youth ministers, youth deacons, and youth volunteers should own a copy of this book.

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