

Chapter Seven: Youth-led & Adult Monitored

How will you be part of building a mentoring community in your church?

If you are a **parent**, consider: you need to know that a teen needs to have a number of caring adults involved in their life if they are going to continue on with the faith beyond high school. It is important that you both support mentors in their lives and encourage teens to find other adults beside yourself to be an influence in their lives.

If you are a **senior pastor**, it is critical that you are communicating at the main gathering of your congregation regularly the importance of mentoring and the calling that the entire church is responsible for mentoring the next generation in their relationship with Jesus. It is also important that you are ensuring that mentoring is not just a program that the church does, but that it becomes a core aspect of the mission, vision, and DNA of how the Church interacts with and understands itself.

If you are a **church member**, you are part of the spiritual extended family of the next generation. You can no longer be afraid of teenagers. It is the calling of God for you to invest into the lives of young people and, believe it or not, young people truly want to have adults who will believe in them and actively be part of their lives. This is your chance to play a significant role in the life of the Church— be a mentor.

If you are a youth worker, it is critical that you are continually developing or finding tools and resources to be able to train the adults in your congregation to be mentors. You also need to establish a structure that protects teens while ensuring full accountability for the mentors to be meeting with and investing into those they are mentoring. You should also be advocating for the value of mentoring to teens and helping them find someone who would be a good fit as a mentor in their lives.

The point youth worker and a member of the senior church leadership need to work collaboratively on creating a mentoring culture:

- a. Create a communication plan on how to elevate the importance and value of mentoring within the church.
- b. Share with youth, parents, and church members the vision for a mentoring community
- c. Find or develop a training program to equip adults to be mentors