



NATIONAL
YOUTH
MINISTRY
STRATEGY **A SUMMARY**



This strategy was compiled by the Territorial Youth Department in 2015 with help from Alastair Kendrew (Mission Resource Department), Youth QIWP, a strategy working group, and research and feedback from relevant parties.

INTRODUCTION

N Research suggests that churches are losing 65-90% of their young people by the age of 23*.

If we lose our young people there will be no Salvation Army into the future.

Youth Ministry is often talked about as being critical to The Salvation Army, but is not always evident in practice. **We believe youth are critical to Jesus and to The Salvation Army.** This is why we believe a nation-wide strategy for youth ministry is important in moving forward.

Society is changing—are we still hitting the mark?

We know we can do better for our young people. We CAN change these statistics.

**Young Adults in New Zealand Baptist Churches
Research Report, Nigel Cottle, 2009*

THE STRATEGY

This document presents a strategy for the next 3–5 years for Salvation Army youth ministries across New Zealand. A strategy for Fiji and Tonga is to be completed separately.

Its purpose is to identify strategic issues and provide an action plan to address these, which will be implemented primarily by the Territorial Youth Department, Divisions and Nationally Managed Programmes. It is not intended as a practice model or blueprint for working with youth.

The focus is on our ministry for youth (12–24) —with emphasis on 13–18 year olds. There is a crossover with our separate children’s ministry and young adults’ strategies.

FAITH COMMUNITY

This document uses the term ‘faith community’ as a generic term for a Salvation Army group made up of believers and people exploring faith, such as a corps, plant, recovery church, messy church, second congregation or life group. For example, a group of students exploring faith together at a school, led by a Salvation Army youth worker is a ‘faith community’, which we would then encourage to connect to wider intergenerational relationships for the long-term spiritual development of the students.

THE VISION

Our vision is expressed as:

Inspiring and equipping youth to follow God, connect well with others, find personal significance, and make a positive difference in their world:

- > **inspiring and equipping**—through building relationships, role modelling and training
- > **follow God** by making and growing disciples
- > **connect well with others** through healthy positive relationships, emotional maturity, interdependence
- > **find personal significance** in a relationship with God and following His purpose for their life
- > **make a positive difference in their world**—as active citizens, modelling the values of the Kingdom of God.

THE VISION

In achieving this vision, our youth services will incorporate these values without compromise:

We will be:

- > faith based and work best out of a faith community
- > focused on relationship building within community
- > safe, with trained and qualified youth workers (paid or volunteer)
- > focused on the whole person, and partner with specialists (e.g. Addiction Services, Education and Employment, Supportive Accommodation, Counselling and external providers)
- > uphold the Treaty of Waitangi
- > recognise the role of parents and families in the development of the young person
- > listen to young people and encourage youth participation
- > be good stewards.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

In order to see the realisation of this vision we aim to focus on four key areas.

1. MAKE, GROW & RETAIN YOUTH DISCIPLES

Objectives:

We want to grow dynamic youth disciples who are totally committed to following Jesus within The Salvation Army—risk taking, incarnational, fighting injustice and committed to the salvation of the lost.

When youth are actively being discipled and growing in their faith journey this is when we will see transformation take place personally and socially.

What can you do?

1. Build intergenerational faith communities by promoting relationships of other age demographics.
Find one relationship with a different age demographic that you can intentionally invest in.
2. Ensure a healthy faith community by supporting:
 - the criticality of youth ministries
 - how to be a welcoming community
 - intergenerational worship
 - adults developing significant relationships with youth
 - supporting youth as they transition to and from high school.
3. Adopt our youth discipleship strategy when its released.
4. Encourage active soldiership as a means of discipleship
5. Familiarise yourself with the Circle of Courage model.

What are we doing?

1. Investing in promoting events like Amplify to invest, encourage and equip our youth disciples
2. Developing or identifying resources for use on the frontline

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What does youth ministry look like in your local context? Is it well supported?

Is there a vision and direction for youth discipleship in your context?

Are the voices of young people valued?

Are there young people in your centre/ corps that you can connect with and build intentional relationships with?

2. RECRUIT, DEVELOP & RETAIN YOUTH LEADERS

Objectives:

We want to ensure every youth service has trained, competent youth leaders.

A big part of this is ensuring we retain our experienced youth leaders and hold the learnt knowledge.

It is important that we not only value our leaders but that we ensure they have proper training to equip and retain them for the long term.

What can you do?

1. Ensure that there is a youth voice on your leadership team
2. Ensure that every decision consider the critical role that youth fulfil within the church
3. Don't overburden your youth worker with unnecessary administration or non-core responsibilities
4. Enrol your youth worker or volunteers in our youth training pathways (Foundations of Youth Work, Distance Apprenticeship or LAB Apprenticeship)

What are we doing?

1. Continue reviewing our training pathway options to better equip our youth workers/leaders for mission

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Do you know who the local youth leaders are in your context?

Is there something you can do to encourage them?

What support can you give them (such as training, prayer, financial support)?

3. OFFER WELL-RESOURCED & CONSISTENT SERVICES

Objectives:

We want to provide consistent, high quality services that can be funded and replicated around the country.

It is important that we share in our strengths and our weaknesses to learn lessons for improving our ministries to young people. If something is working well we want to encourage it and share that success so it can be replicated. If something is struggling we want to learn the key lessons to better facilitate mission into the future.

What can you do?

1. Ensure that every mission expression in your local context is linked to a faith community
2. Commit to open communication with every expression of mission
3. Implement programmes that are available, e.g. Aspire

What are we doing?

1. Expanded QIWP (Quality Improvement Working Party) to ensure better joint expressions and outcomes of mission
2. Develop training materials and programmes that can be used to assist frontline mission
3. Seeking out funding opportunities

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How is your corps/centre reaching out to the young people of your area?

Is your youth worker being supported by a qualified professional?

What is working well in your local context that could be used elsewhere?

4. WORK TOGETHER

Objectives:

We want to achieve synergies for mission by working in partnership with other organisations. In doing so we better support youth as they transition from children, through their teenage years and on into adulthood.

We are at our strongest when we are working together and coordinating a unified approach to mission.

What can you do?

1. Look at ways where you can support and encourage links with every expression of ministry within your faith community
2. Identify local organisations that may benefit from partnering together to achieve shared outcomes
3. Keep in contact with your divisional and territorial representatives to know about potential opportunities that could be rolled out in your local context.

What are we doing?

1. Expanded QIWP (Quality Improvement Working Party) to ensure better joint expressions and outcomes of mission
2. Investigating the possibility of a fully integrated youth service
3. Building relationships with national bodies to promote opportunities such as Ara Taiohi

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Is there a streamlined and connected approach between different ministry groups at your corps/centre (children to youth, community ministries to wider church)?

Is there coordination/coherence between areas?

Are there local youth organisations in your area that you could partner with?

What opportunities are there to help promote intergenerational relationships?



WE NEED YOU

To better our ministry to young people, we need to work together and be intentional in our efforts. We encourage you to read the full strategy document, try to understand the issues, look to support the focus actions, and uplift youth ministry in prayer.

Practically you can put our 'youth are critical' values into practice by:

- > talking to young people
- > giving youth a voice
- > making 'youth are critical' decisions
- > making 'youth are critical' statements
- > giving youth a go ...



and **INSPIRE**
OTHERS to
do the same!



More info >

Read the full document >

www.firezone.co.nz

Email youth_mission_team@nzf.salvationarmy.org