4 TIPS TO GET MORE TEENAGERS TO YOUR EVENTS

Planning a youth ministry event is a mixture of excitement, anticipation, and more than a few nerves. We can spend countless hours curating the perfect event, but having a great idea is just the beginning. We also need people to show up. If you've ever spent time planning events for youth ministry, then you've probably asked yourself this question—**How can I get more teenagers to show up?**

We've been there before, and we're here to help. When it comes to events, there are a lot of different ideas on how to...

- Communicate and share information.
- Create engaging youth ministry events.
- Connect with new and existing families.

If you're struggling to get your group to show up to your events, you may not know where to begin. That's one of the reasons we host GrowCon every year. It's an online conference where we offer practical strategies, ideas, and resources for youth ministry leaders just like you—and **it's completely free!**

We want to help support ministry leaders as they reach their goals and discover ways to make their ministry even more awesome. So, this year, at GrowCon24, we invited Barbara Carneiro to share some best practices for developing, marketing, and communicating events for your youth group. Barbara is an expert in church communication, the founder of Word Revolution, and the creator of the Church Communicator Conference.

Check out her session from GrowCon24 below, or if you just can't wait to hear her thoughts on events, keep reading for a quick summary. Be sure to snag the notes for this session along with a practical exercise we made to help you develop your ministry's vision!

If you're looking for ways to get more teenagers (and their families) at your events, here are four things you can do.

1. TIE EVENTS TO YOUR VISION

Your vision is the essence of what your ministry does. It helps to create a foundation for your events, discipleship, teaching, and the other parts of your annual strategy. You can **think of your vision as the "why" behind your events and your ministry.** When you tie your events to your vision, you can create ministry experiences that work together towards a common goal. And if you need help defining the vision for your ministry, we've put together a great exercise that can help!

2. COMMUNICATE IN STAGES

After developing a great event idea, the next thing you'll need to do is communicate the details. There's often a pressure to get every single last detail ready—from the date and time to the location and cost—before we share about an upcoming event. Instead, consider sharing about your event in multiple steps. You might start with a simple save-the-date graphic and share the specific details as you get closer to your event date. Instead of sharing the same set of information for weeks at a time, you can slowly build up information to keep your teenagers and families engaged and connected to the vision behind the event.

3. GIVE ONE SIMPLE STEP

As youth ministry leaders, we can get so excited about our events that signing up can be... complicated. Not everyone is ready to get involved at the same level at the exact same time. Instead, you can curate a process

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that meets people where they are. So, rather than ask everyone to commit to an event at the same level, you might **look for the "smaller yes"** that can bring your group together over time. This might be a simple sign-up experience or a single physical or digital hub where they can go for more information. You're just looking for one simple action they can take when they're ready for more information.

4. MAP OUT THE EXPERIENCE

Mapping the experience is about giving your group **the information and details they need as they need them.** It's about thinking through each step of your event process, from sending a save-the-date to your post-event cleanup. To map out the experience, you'll need to think through questions like ...

- What's the one simple step you want your group to take?
- How can they get more information?
- Where can they find registration information?
- When do I want to start promoting my event?

The goal of mapping out the experience is to put yourself in the shoes of the teenagers in your group. It means sharing the information that is *most relevant right now.* You might need to think ahead a little bit, but it will be so worth it in the end.

These are just a few ideas for how to get more teenagers to your events, but they're all related to one thing—your vision for ministry. We've got a great exercise to help you think through a few questions as you clarify and put words to what God is doing in your ministry. So whether you want to work on your own or with your team, check out these free resources for your ministry!

And if you're looking for some more youth ministry events, we've got you covered! With Grow Students Curriculum, you'll get...

- Four quarterly events and discipleship activities
- Summer camp and mission experience event guides
- Event-planning checklists and tutorials
- Communication guides
- Videos, editable graphics, and flyers
- Shopping lists
- And more!

Events are such an important part of youth ministry, and we'd love to help you with your event strategy. Feel free to steal ours here! Whether you use these four steps from Barbara Carneiro or start up a free trial of Grow Students Curriculum, we hope it helps you as you lead your events!



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