

**YOUTH**

**LEADER  
TRAINING**

**ON THE  
GO**



**PRACTICAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSY VOLUNTEERS**

**Group**



**INCLUDES**



**24 SHAREABLE  
TRAINING VIDEOS  
AND MORE**

**MARK DEVRIES &  
JEFF DUNN-RANKIN &**

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Practical Leadership Development for Busy Leaders

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#### CREDITS

Authors: Mark DeVries and Jeff Dunn-Rankin  
Chief Creative Officer: Joani Schultz  
Editor: Rob Cunningham  
Cover Art and Production: Veronica Preston  
Project Manager: Stephanie Krajec

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# DEDICATION

To the Nola Olas from First Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee, the  
Quintessential Volunteers:

Cathy Altenbern, Mary Lee Bartlett, Leslee Bechtel, Ellie Billington,  
Nell Ann Crowe, Amy Colton, Leah Hawkins, Carey Haynes, Linda Morphis,  
LeAnn Nichols, Cathryn Rolfe, Elizabeth Wagster

To all the partners and helpers, teachers and cooks, the called and committed,  
who are nurturing the next generation for Christ

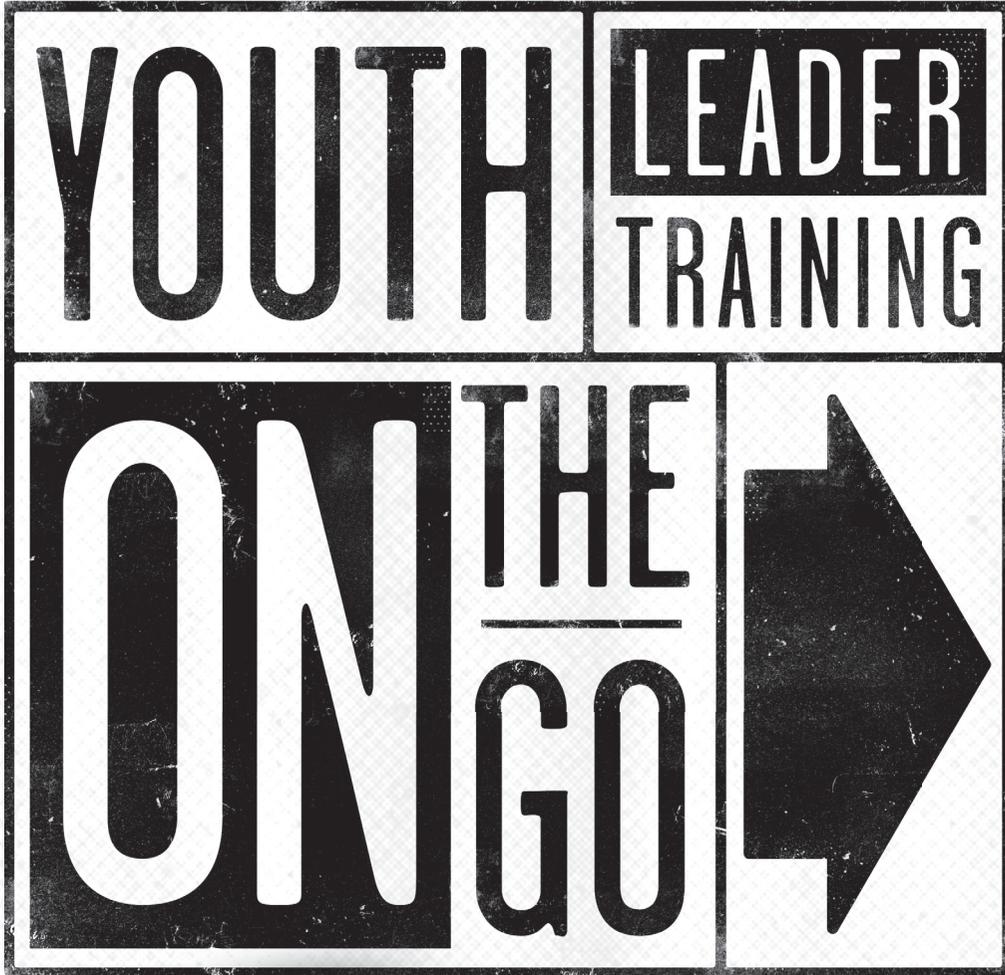


# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to Linda and Rock Morphis for providing a miracle time in the North Carolina mountains for Mark to get this project done.

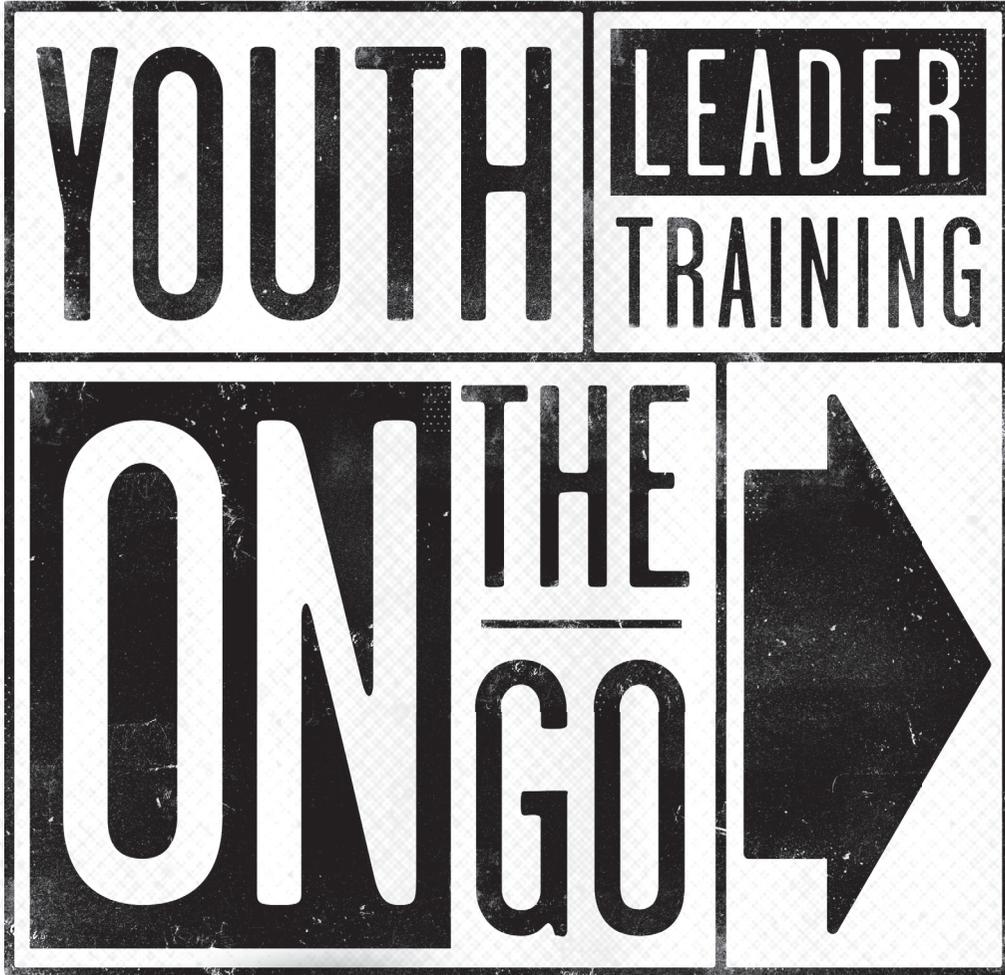
Thanks to the youth pastors of Venice, Florida, who helped Jeff develop these ideas over pizza at Gianni's (you know who you are).

Thanks to the volunteers and staff at Christ United Methodist for ideas, edits, and the courage to experiment.



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# HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

If you've ever experienced the frustration of scheduling a crucial meeting for your volunteer team and had only a fraction of the group actually attend, you have a pretty good idea why we wrote ***Youth Leader Training on the Go***.

If you've ever picked your head up from the daily grind and realized you hadn't done a single thing in the past year to train your volunteers, you'll understand quickly why you need this resource.

If you've been putting volunteer development on the back burner until this next retreat is over, or until the new pastor arrives, or until you lose 20 pounds, or until the Cubs win the pennant, join the club.

And get ready for some good news...

We know you need one more thing to do like you need a few more junior high guys to plan your next lock-in. But in the long run, making a habit of using this resource will not only save you time, it will even multiply it.

Here's why:

- Any ministry is built on the strength of its volunteers.
- With the crazy schedules we all have, getting our volunteers to show up for regular meetings (or even sporadic meetings) is becoming increasingly rare.
- Any team that never meets together and never "practices" is bound to struggle when game time comes.
- When your team isn't playing well, it will always take more of your time.

Now, you could do what most youth pastors do: Just give up on training. Complain a little about your team's lack of commitment. And pray that everything works out.

But because you've made it this far, we're assuming you want to do things differently.

## YOUR NEW TITLE

You may be a full-time, paid youth pastor. Or you may be the part-time youth pastor with another job (or two) on the side. Or you may be the lead volunteer on your team, the one everyone looks to for direction on what to do next.

Regardless of your title, we want to give you one more: “Trainer.” (Congratulations!)

**Youth Leader Training on the Go** will give you, as a trainer, a giant step forward in building a deep-impact volunteer team. No, it won’t solve all your volunteer challenges...

- You’ll still have leaders who act more immature than the kids do
- You’ll still have leaders who commit and then flake out at the last minute
- And, of course, you’ll still have the challenge of recruiting all those volunteers

But the **Youth Leader Training on the Go** process *will* provide a steady drumbeat for your team members so that they are not just informed about the details of your ministry but also are growing in their understanding of how healthy youth ministry actually works. You’ll expose them to a broad range of topics, with a process that will allow you to...

- Stay regularly connected with each of your volunteers individually
- Communicate important information about your ministry and hear from each team member about the important news in their lives
- Train your volunteer team regularly with a key youth ministry concept or skill
- Build a common language for talking about the “dance steps” for your unique ministry

...all without a meeting!

Sure, you will still want to gather the troops a few times a year, but maybe call it a party at someone’s house, or create a setting where some of your students can serve them a simple dinner. Your turnout will be much higher, and you’ll still be able to spend a few minutes thanking them, casting the vision, and maybe even showing them one of these videos.

In between the parties, though, **Youth Leader Training on the Go** will give you a turnkey process that you can still customize, shortening the time required for you to pull the trigger on getting your volunteers into a regular training habit.

You could, of course, do this all yourself—find the videos, create the questions, draft the emails. There’s no rocket science here. If you’d like to create such a thing from scratch, we’d be honored. (Imitation is still the highest form of flattery, right?)

But until you’ve put the finishing touches on your own tools, we’re confident **Youth Leader Training on the Go** will give you what you need to get this habit established for your team.

## HOW IT WORKS

As you lead this training process for your team, you'll be delighted with how simple and user-friendly the process is, both for you and your volunteers.

**For each session, you will send an email and attach a brief training video. After the video, you'll pose a few questions, and you'll ask your volunteers for their response.**

The DVD that comes with this book includes the training videos in both a high-resolution format and a lower-resolution shareable format. We recognize that the video quality is diminished for the shareable files, but it's a necessary step to ensure that you can share the videos and then your volunteers can view them on mobile devices.

We've already drafted the email and the questions for you in Word documents (found on the DVD), but you can revise the email, remove or replace questions, or upload a video of a dancing squirrel. Or just add your personal greeting and closing and hit send. In that case, either copy the content from the Word doc and paste into your email, or attach the PDF for that particular session (also found on the DVD). Or if your team benefits from receiving these kinds of training sheets in physical format, simply make photocopies of a specific session in this book or print out copies of the PDF from the DVD.

Just for fun, the first question after each video is usually one that can only be answered by someone who has actually *watched* the video. Your volunteers' response (or lack thereof) can give you a sense of who is working the process and who may need a little more support.

**In every session (you decide how often you send out a training), we'll leave room in the "Coming Up" section for you to share any information about your ministry with your team.** With a few of the sessions, there will be a few blanks for you to fill in, options to choose from, or an attachment to include, based on your unique ministry.

Because most of us instinctively ignore group emails, we do recommend that you add a personal touch to each email, whenever possible. For example, instead of starting your email with "Dear Very Special Volunteer Persons," make it more personal, saying something like, "Hey Randy, it was great to see you and your family at our Super Bowl party last week!"

If you have too many volunteers (congratulations!) to personalize all of them for each session, you can personalize just a few emails for each training, perhaps with a special focus on individuals who have been slow to respond to the questions.

**If your team is better at checking texts than emails, here are two good options:** Send the training by email and remind them by text, or text the lesson and upload the high-resolution video to a private online storage system like Dropbox and include the link to the video. (Please don't upload these copyrighted videos to public places like YouTube.)

## TAKE THE FIRST STEP NOW

At this point, here's what many youth workers do with a new book: (1) Get really excited about the possibilities, (2) close the book after reading about three pages and then put it on the back corner of the desk, and (3) feel guilty about never actually working the plan.

To break that pattern, we suggest that you take a first step right now. Turn to the page that contains your Training Tracker and begin filling it in. (There's also a Word version in your Appendix folder.)

Decide how often you want to send these training videos and when you want to start. Fill in the dates and decide which videos you are going to send. We recommend sending "You Said Yes" first because it welcomes volunteers to the process. After that, send them in any order you'd like.

Plan out an entire six months or longer. Then make notes in your planner or online calendar today to remind you to send out each training video. Don't wait until the whole team is assembled, or the start of the new year, or until your office is perfectly clean and organized. Start now.

Your volunteers have incredible gifts, great ideas, and a genuine love for God and teenagers. At every church we visit, volunteers tell us they want to be equipped for their ministry. What most of them *don't* have is a lot of extra time. Most have (correctly) placed their role in the youth ministry further down their priority list, behind their faith, their families, and their work.

But they *are* willing to serve and learn...

...if you can make it easy for them.

**It's time to start.**

WHAT HAVE I GOTTEN MYSELF INTO?

## PAUSE & THINK

Why did you to say yes to being involved in youth ministry?

## WATCH THIS



Please take a look at this brief video corresponding to this week's session.

THIS WEEK'S SESSION:  
**You Said Yes**

## TEAM CONNECTION

I need your help with a project for our ministry.

The great news is that it's going to take you less than 10 minutes each month, and those 10 minutes have the potential to make a huge impact on the work we're doing.

Here's the deal:

Once a month or so, I'll send you an email like this one with a link to a brief video with a quick training on some aspect of youth ministry.

Here's what I'm asking you to do each time: Watch the video, consider a few quick questions I'll send, and then email your answers back to me—along with anything else you'd like me to know (about your world or our ministry). I'll also include any updates about upcoming events or news related to our youth ministry, just to make sure you're in the loop.

It's that simple. If you're still confused, give me a call or send me an email—I want to be sure all your questions get answered!

Here's why we're trying this:

- We're doing great work with teenagers, and I want our team to continue to be in sync and be well-prepared to handle the challenges and opportunities that are sure to come.
- I need a consistent, effective mechanism for providing information to you, getting updates from you, and ensuring that we all think with the same language as we move forward.

Consider this process as a way for our team to show up for virtual practice once a month.

Oh yeah. Just to keep things fun, the first question I'll be asking is usually one that you'll only be able to answer after you've watched the video.

Thanks for joining me in this little experiment! Let's get started.

## CHEW ON THIS

“And [Abraham] set out, not knowing where he was going” (Hebrews 11:8, NRSV).

“I hear you are entering the ministry,’ the woman said down the long table, meaning no real harm. ‘Was it your own idea or were you poorly advised?’ And the answer...was that it was not an idea at all, neither my own or anyone else’s. It was a lump in the throat. It was an itching in the feet. It was a stirring in the blood at the sound of rain. It was a sickening in the heart at the sight of misery. It was a clamoring of ghosts. It was a name which, when I wrote it out in a dream, I knew was a name worth dying for even if I was not brave enough to do the dying myself and could not even name the name for sure.”

—Frederick Beuchner, *The Alphabet of Grace*

## COMING UP

Feel free to let me know about anything going on in your world. I’m so grateful that you have joined our team!

## INTERACT

After watching the video, please respond to these short questions and then send me an email with your answers. Thanks!

- What gets you most excited about serving as a part of our youth ministry team, and why? What gets you most nervous about it, and why?
- During your work with students, have you faced a time when you, like Abraham, didn’t quite know where you were going? If so, briefly tell me about the situation and what you learned from it.
- What do you need most from *me* as you begin this adventure on our team?

## TRY THIS

Make a list of 10 answers to this question: “**Why did you say yes to being a youth leader?**” (Include good reasons *and* questionable ones!)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

WHAT HAVE I GOTTEN  
MYSELF INTO?

## PAUSE & THINK

What's the worst reason you can imagine someone might have for agreeing to work in ministry with teenagers?

## WATCH THIS



Please take a look at this brief video corresponding to this week's session.

THIS WEEK'S SESSION:

# Wrong Reasons to Do Youth Ministry

## TEAM CONNECTION

Today, you get a little training in reverse.

One way to think about the foundation for why we do what we do as youth leaders is to think about the reasons we decided to get involved in this ministry. But today's video looks at that question from an unexpected angle.

I want you to consider a few of the *wrong reasons* for serving in youth ministry. We all can benefit from a reminder of the dangers of doing the right thing for the wrong reasons. If I remember correctly, it seems like a number of people in the Bible had that very problem.

Let's get started.

### CHEW ON THIS

“Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness” (James 3:1, NRSV).

“When you are angry, you will make the best speech you will ever regret.”

— William Ury, author and speaker

### COMING UP

As a member of this team, I'd love to hear about anything going on in your world. Our team is stronger because you're part of it!

### INTERACT

After watching the video, please respond to these short questions and then send me an email with your answers. Thanks!

- Which of the lousy reasons for doing youth ministry stood out to you the most in today's video? Why?
- We are all capable of doing good things with mixed motives. What is one reason you might have for doing youth ministry that is *not* a great reason for serving?

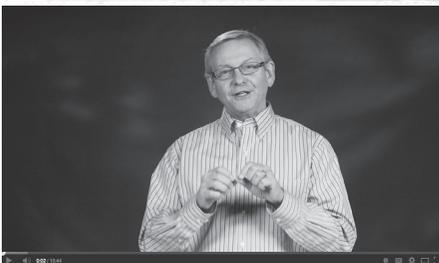
### TRY THIS

Identify whether any of the characters described in this video reminds you of any tendencies you might see in yourself.

## PAUSE & THINK

When you were younger, what specific adult showed you more grace than you deserved and helped you gain a desire to pursue, follow, and love Jesus?

## WATCH THIS



Please take a look at this brief video corresponding to this week's session.

THIS WEEK'S SESSION:

# The Relentless Power of the Caring Adult

## TEAM CONNECTION

Today's session is a reminder that real transformation seldom happens for young people simply because we have a great program or event. We can use those "meetings" to create an environment for transformation, but sustainable change almost always comes when a relentless, available, caring adult is nearby.

Here's another reminder: We don't do programs as an end in themselves. We do programs and meetings because they are opportunities to (a) get kids in the room, (b) help them feel more comfortable, and (c) break down any barriers to real community.

It's unfortunate and tragic if we as leaders are so busy trying to create the perfect video or get through our "lesson" that we miss the opportunity to know what's really going on in our students' lives.

We are shepherds—not cruise directors, not stage managers, not professors—just shepherds. And one thing we know about good shepherds is that they *know* their flock.

## CHEW ON THIS

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be” (1 Peter 5:2, NIV).

“Success is going from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm!”

— Winston Churchill, British statesman and prime minister

## COMING UP

What’s happening in your world these days? Let me know! I’m so grateful to have you on the team.

## INTERACT

After watching the video, please respond to these short questions and then send me an email with your answers. Thanks!

- At our last youth group meeting, how many students did you speak with individually?
- What are two updates from teenagers in our group that you’ve learned about in the last couple of weeks?

## TRY THIS

If you don’t yet know all the names of students in our group, set a goal of knowing 25 percent more in the next month. If you *do* know all their names, make it your goal to know something new about at least half of them over the next month.

Today's youth ministry volunteers are clamoring for training, yet many of them won't show up for tons of meetings. So how can youth workers equip their teams? **Youth Leader Training on the Go** is an easy, proven way to train leaders and multiply your ministry's effectiveness. This resource from Mark DeVries, Jeff Dunn-Rankin, and the Ministry Architects team—the best-of-the-best in the world of church consultants—will guide you through a dynamic training strategy with these compelling features:

- » 24 lessons in digital format, with thought-provoking questions, an encouraging message for leaders, a relevant Scripture, questions to ponder, and an action idea
- » Brief, shareable training videos that you can send directly to your volunteers—also accessible at [simplyyouthministrytools.com](http://simplyyouthministrytools.com) and [goodtogotraining.com](http://goodtogotraining.com)
- » DVD with all the tools and files, including PDFs and editable Word documents
- » One book covers everything, so no participant books are required

### **YOUTH LEADER TRAINING ON THE GO WILL HELP YOUR VOLUNTEERS TO:**

- » Connect with Jesus and help teenagers center their lives on him
- » Understand youth culture for effective conversation and interaction
- » Discover how to explore and learn about youth culture
- » Work with parents to help students grow in faith
- » Find balance between ministry and personal life

Effective ministry training isn't a one-time event. It's an ongoing investment in leaders who deeply care about teenagers, their families, and their church. Help your teenagers grow deeper in their faith by investing in your volunteers.



**MARK DEVRIES** is the founder of Ministry Architects ([www.ministryarchitects.com](http://www.ministryarchitects.com)) and co-founder of Ministry Incubators. He's the author or co-author of several books, including *Family-Based Youth Ministry*, *Sustainable Youth Ministry*, *The Most Important Year in a Man's/Woman's Life*, and *Building Your Volunteer Team*. A youth pastor for 34 years, Mark now serves as a consultant, an executive coach, and dream manager for anyone seeking to turn a hair-brained idea into sustainable ministry. Mark and his wife, Susan, live in Nashville, Tennessee.



**JEFF DUNN-RANKIN** has been director of youth at Christ United Methodist Church in Venice, Florida, since 1998. He has consulted with youth and children's ministries across the country and is vice president of consulting for Ministry Architects, an organization committed to helping churches build sustainable, deep-impact ministries. He is the co-author of *Before You Hire a Youth Pastor* and *The Indispensable Youth Pastor*. He currently lives in Florida with his wife, Mary Lou, and two children, Matthew and Katie.



**simply youth ministry**  
helping youth workers with what matters most

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