

What's Next in Youth Ministry: Creating Programming that fits the needs of Students



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(she/her)

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- Hometown: St. Louis, MO
- Wife to PJ
- Mom to Iris, L'il Sebastian, & Finley
- Hobbies: mani-pedis, reality TV, & gardening

My first love is youth ministry, my second love is youth pastors.

- Certified Spiritual Leadership Coach
- Founder of Women in Youth Ministry
 - Facebook Community
 - Facebook Page
 - Blog
 - Podcast
 - Book Club
 - Conference
- Progressive Youth Ministry
 - Facebook group
 - Conference revival!
- Other random places & spaces



PROMPT: Middle and High School students have experienced tremendous upheaval in the school, church, and even home lives. How has that affected their faith and spiritual needs? Learn techniques for assessing what your students need in the next 2-3 years and building a curriculum calendar.

SECTION
ONE:

Middle and High School students have experienced tremendous upheaval in the school, church, and even home lives. How has that affected their faith and spiritual needs?

How has this impacted their faith & spiritual needs?

- They have questions about God, Christianity, & Christians
- Social isolation
 - Out of practice with building relationships in real life
 - Maturity Gap (students are “younger” than they appear)
 - Don’t understand basic social norms
- “Lawnmower parenting”
- Long for spirituality, but also are exhausted by their schedules
- Less ability to commit / busier than ever somehow
- Mental Health is down (and yet, there is more honesty & openness)
- Justice-oriented

SECTION
TWO:

Learn techniques for
assessing what your
students need in the
next 2-3 years





ASK
THEM

Survey Students

Survey Parents

Listening Sessions

Sample survey to students:

- Check your THREE favorite events this year.
- What kinds of events would you like to see in the future?
- When do you want events to be?
- What was your favorite part about Sunday mornings / Small Groups?
- What was one thing you learned this year?
- What was your favorite thing you talked about this year in small group?
- What ideas do you have that would make Sunday mornings better?
- Do you have any other ideas or feedback for us?

What id

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Do you have any other ideas or feedback for us?

Just to keep doing what you are doing 😊

Do you have any other ideas or feedback for us:

NO

Just ~~them~~

~~keep~~ keep doing what

no everything has been great.

KNOW

BE

DO

What do you want students to KNOW?

Who do you want them to BE?

What do you want them to DO?

EXAMPLE:

KNOW

Stories of the Bible

Church as a safe space

BE

Leaders in the church

Ready for college/beyond

DO

Justice work

Share their faith

SECTION
THREE:

Build a ministry calendar





HOT
TAKE:

Most internet youth
pastors spend more
time making their
calendar **attractive**
rather than making it
intentional

Turn what students need into curriculum, events, serving opportunities, & more.

KNOW

Stories of the Bible: Do a year of the Bible

Church as a safe space: Train your leaders

BE

Leaders in the church: Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Ready for college/beyond: Invite church folx to teach practical skills

DO

Justice Work: Create serving opportunities with justice focus

Share their faith: Help them develop their faith stories

Create a long-term Strategy (Scope & Cycle)

WHY:

- Reinforces important values
- Creates rhythms



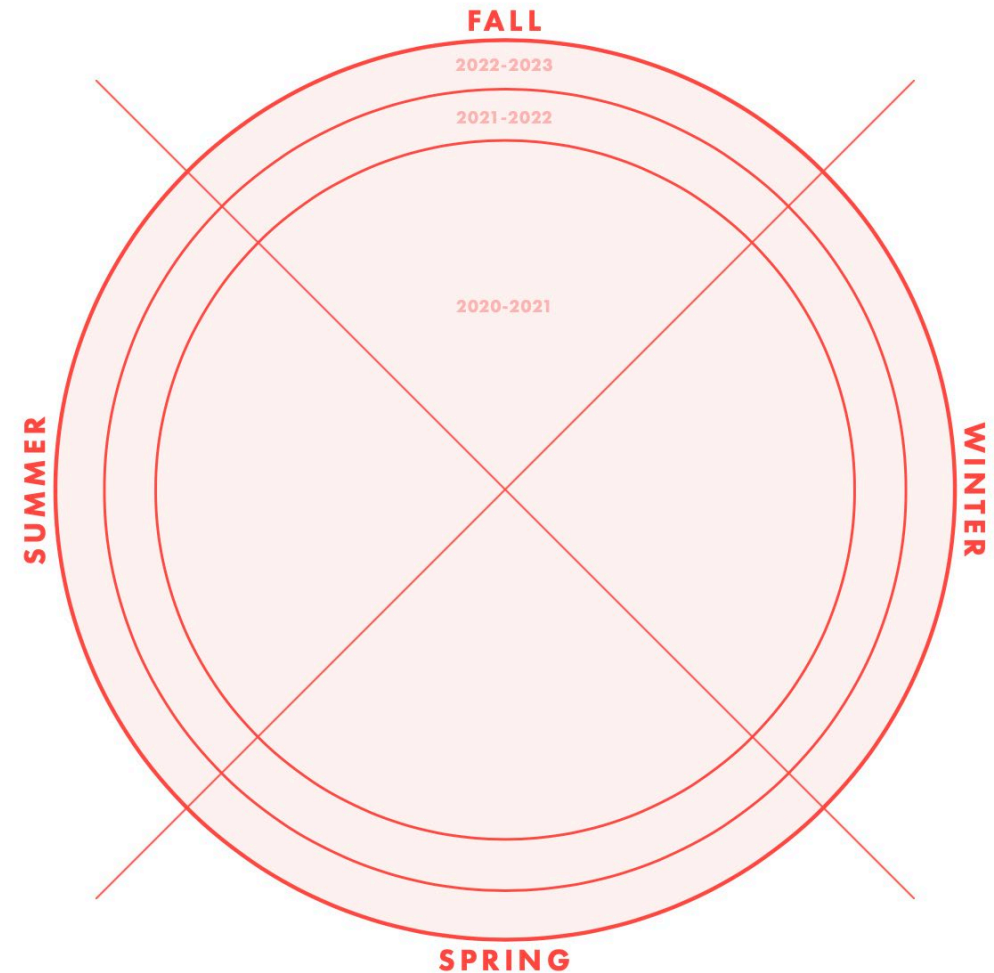
STEPS:

- Decide: What do you want students to learn?
- Create some yearly rhythms & themes you want to accomplish
- Plot it out!

Scope & Cycle Example: Orange Curriculum

- Families
- Holidays
- Character & Book Study
- Sexual Integrity
- Serving
- Breathing Room
- Thinkorange.com/plan

3-Year Teaching Strategy MIDDLE SCHOOL



Scope & Cycle Example: St. Luke's High School

	TOPIC	2020-2021	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE	YEAR FOUR
AUG						
SEP	Identity	Grow - Haves & Have-Nots (4) or TRUE STORY	me to Be / Creation	Where we came from	Spiritual Gifts	St. Luke's
OCT	Social Justice	Grow - More than a Hashtag (4) or Back to the Future (4)	Social Justice	Social Justice	Social Justice	Social Justice
FALL RETREAT						
NOV	Character Study	CREATE: John the Baptist	The Marys	Holy Spirit		
DEC	Advent	CHURCH: Christmas Music (4?)				
JAN	Can I ask that?	Orange - I have Questions (standalone -4) or Grow - Waitlisted (4)	Suffering	Doubt		
FEB	Relationships	GROW: Squad Up (4)	Sex/Dating	Friends	Sex/Dating	Family
WINTER RETREAT	Jesus					
MAR	Lent - Spir. Habits	GROW: STRETCH or ANTHEM	Reading Scripture	Prayer	Worship	
APR	Evangelism	GROW: Look & See	World Religions	Denominations	Serving	
MAY	Book Study					
JUNE						
JULY						
One or two one-off weeks	Hot Topics					

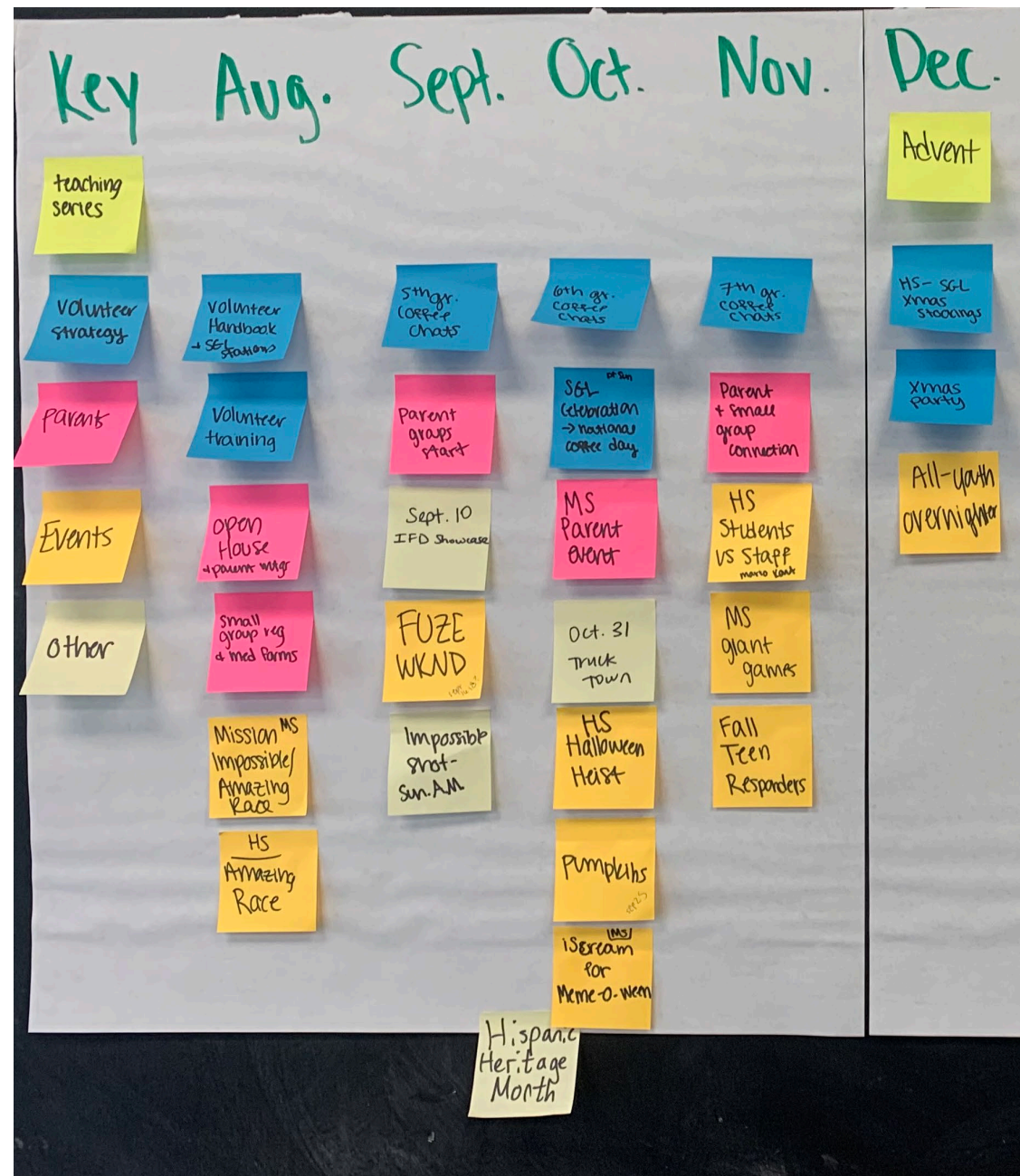
Your
calendar is
more than
curriculum.
It's...

- The events you do
- How you communicate to parents
- How you celebrate volunteers
- Liturgical seasons
- **AND SO MUCH MORE**



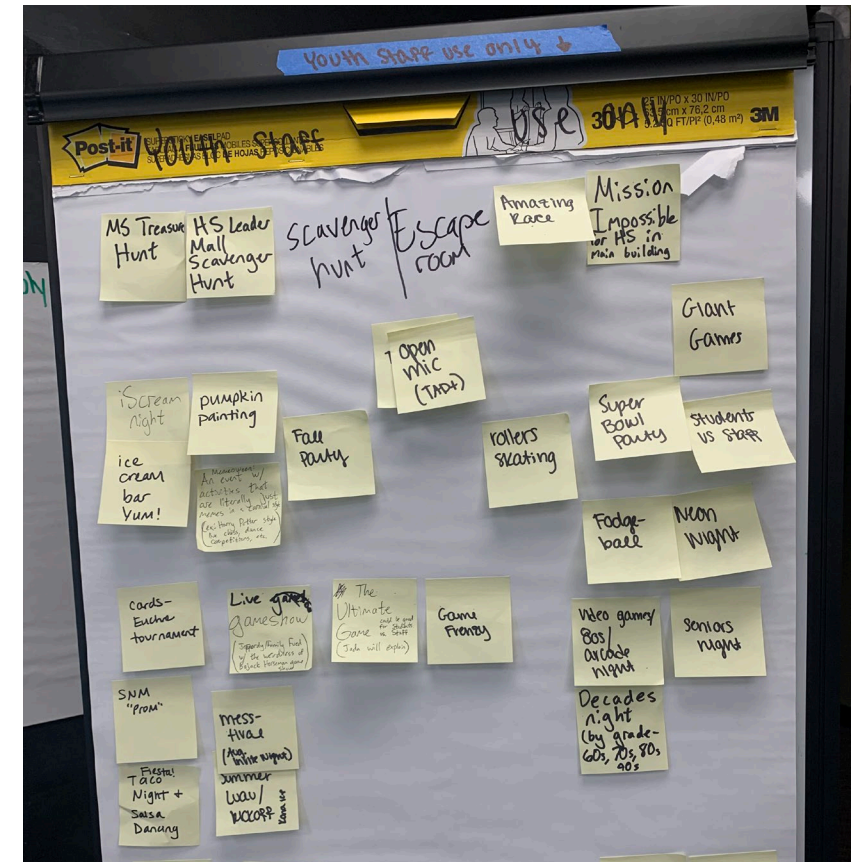
Plan Your Year ("The Grow Method")

- Write the months of the year at the top
- Place the strategies on the side in a color-coded fashion
 - Discipleship
 - Teaching
 - Weekly Program
 - Events
 - Volunteers
 - Parents
 - ETC
- Host a strategy planning meeting
- <https://growcurriculum.org/meeting/>



Add to your calendar

- How do we connect with parents?
- How do we celebrate volunteers?
- What are the all-church events we must be at/advertise?
- What are the all-church events we need to schedule around due to spacing?
- What are the liturgical seasons or other seasons/holidays we want to celebrate? (i.e. Black History Month, National Coffee Day, Mental Health Awareness Month, etc.)
- What community events might we want to partner with?



“The Grow Method” Example

Key	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY
Sermon Series			Stewardship		Advent			Lent				
Teaching Series - MS		(Impossible Shot Begins)										
Teaching Series - HS												
Social / Liturgical Focuses		Hispanic Heritage Month			Advent		Black History Month	Lent, Women's History Month		AAPL / Disabilities Awareness Months	Pride	
Volunteer Strategy	Volunteer Handbook Stock SGL Station Volunteer Training	5th Grade Coffee Chats	6th Grade Coffee Chats SGL Celebration - National Coffee DY	7th Grade Coffee Chats	SGL Christmas Party	8th Grade coffee chats stock SGL stations	12th grade coffee chats Valentine's gifts for SGLS	10th Grade Coffee Chats	11th Grade Coffee Chats	Year-end celebration 5th grade SGL Recruitment Year-end SGL Convos Volunteer Surveys		
Parent Strategy	Open House & Parent Meetings Small Group Reg & Med Forms	Parent Groups start	MS Parent Event	Parent & Small Group Connection		<u>Pastor-Parent Conferences</u>	Lenten Groups Letters to 4th/8th Graders Parent & Small Group Connection	MS Parent Event - Bowling with Kids Ministry?	8th Grade parent meeting about HS	5th Grade Preview Nighth Promotion Sunday		
MS Event	Mission Impossible / Amazing Race		iScream for Meme-o-Ween	Giant Games		80s Neon Arcade / Fodgeball	PJs & Pancakes (PNO)		Spring Retreat	Mess-tival		
HS Event	Amazing Race		Halloween Heist	Students VS Staff		80s Neon Arcade / Fodgeball	Ski Retreat		Seniors' Night	Eagle Creek		
All-Youth Events/Fundraisers		FUZE Weekend	Pumpkins (Sept 25)	Teen Responders	Overnighter			Stock Sales Youth Sunday Teen Responders Bowling Event with Kids Min.	Confirmation	Graduation		

Additional Ideas

- Create yearly themes based on goals you want to accomplish in your ministry
 - i.e. if you find out that your group is too clique-ish, what strategies would accomplish this?
 - i.e. if you want to grow your ministry, what strategies accomplish this?
 - My example: “Back to Basics” is our internal mantra
- Work with your school calendars
- Daysoftheyear.com
- Reinforce: Curriculum isn't the only strategy

In Summary:

- Survey your students & parents on what they need
- Brainstorm the KNOW-BE-DO
- Determine what is important to your ministry
- Create a long-term curriculum strategy (Scope & Cycle)
- Create a year-long calendar (“Grow Method”) that includes curriculum, events, & other strategies for parents & volunteers



Q & A