

Outreach Methods

Youth work and ministry should be focussed on five key areas:

- ▣ **Reach** young people
- ▣ **Connect** with them
- ▣ **Help** them **grow** in their faith
- ▣ **Discover** their God-given gifts
- ▣ **Serve** and **honour** Him with their lifestyle.

REACHING OUT

Workers involved in youth ministry will give you a variety of answers on how you extend outreach beyond the immediate church community. What they will probably all agree upon will be the fact that the world has changed, and is continuing to change. Young people's attitudes to church services usually differ from their parents, but that need be no problem. It simply requires a revised approach.

Recognising this state of affairs, more and more churches are employing full-time youth workers who will often address the question of non-churchgoing youngsters from another angle.

Here are few tried-and-tested ideas for reaching out in a European environment to get the attention of today's youth:



AT SCHOOLS

International school 1

Make a point of getting to know the headmaster of the local international school. Let him know what you do and why, and take time to develop a level of trust. Be clear that you want to work low-key (no announcements over loudspeakers or handouts in the playground) but arrange, say, to put posters about church youth activities on the school notice-board.

International school 2

Hold a Christian discussion group once a week for the pupils at the international school. The best moment is at lunchtimes since the pupils are at school anyhow whereas, at the end of lessons, most will go home straightaway.

International school 3

When the international school organises major trips, e.g. a week in the mountains or five days in Rome, the youth worker can accompany the group as an extra member of staff, as it were. This builds up relationships and offers excellent opportunities for evangelism.



Playground supervision

Familiarise yourself with child protection regulations so that, along with the school authorities, you can develop a vetting procedure for playground supervisors. Again this serves to strengthen the ties between the school and the church.

SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Disco 1

Organise a disco at the church hall and make sure that the children from the international school and the neighbourhood are invited. If the parents can tolerate it, invite them to come along as well.

Disco 2

Alternatively, ask the school if you can use their sports hall to hold a church disco. By doing that, many pupils, who are not normally churchgoers, get to meet young members of the church. And you might find them wanting to broaden their horizons.

LONELY YOUTH

Knowing that there are always numbers of lonely people in the community, many of whom are young, keep a close watch on this along with your chaplaincy colleagues. Then, even a phone call, e-mail or a one-on-one conversation can be a huge help.

