

Planning Elements for an Event or Program

I like each program to include the following pieces: Prayer, education, fun, and outreach. It's even best when each event, activity, or meeting time includes each of these.

Prayer: This can be communal prayer, time for individual prayer, or practices that they can learn and use at home.

Education: This can be anything and everything that we want to teach.

Fun: This is our fellowship time, and our time to come together as a group. This is structured and the goal is to get to know others and include everyone.

Outreach: This can be service, mission, or social action. It can be a project (ongoing or a one-time thing) or information sharing

Here are some ideas for each topic

Prayer	Education	Fun	Outreach
Opening and closing liturgies	Bible study	Group building games	Ministry in the church: Church maintenance and upkeep Participation in worship: Ushering, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Reader, Lector, Leading worship upon request
Compline or other daily office services	Prayer	Cooking together	Participation on church committees and congregational meetings, serving on your Outreach committee, hospitality committee, teaching, vestry
Prayer stations	Music (history, hymns, contemporary)	Field trips	Helping with special needs: Hospitality to traveling youth groups, Visitation (hospital, nursing homes, new members, concerned calling)
Contemplative	Communication skills	Singing silly songs	Pledging
Prayer Beads	Theological topics (e.g. sacraments)	Board games and cards	Helping in the community: Helping the elderly (washing windows, errands, writing letters). Support of local mission (UNICEF or March of Dimes), Social Action project in the community, Social
Praying in Color	What the Episcopal Church says about...		
Mandalas	Other faiths (e.g. world religions)		
Body Prayer	Our Anglican heritage		
Write your own prayers	Racial/ethnic identity (yours and others)		

	<p>Culture</p> <p>Issues (family, divorce, vocational guidance, social issues, human sexuality, drugs/alcohol)</p> <p>Spirituality</p> <p>Global concerns</p> <p>Human relationships (youth/adult, male/female, parent/child, race/ race, culture/culture)</p> <p>Worship</p> <p>Celebration of major life events (graduation, weddings, awards)</p> <p>Evangelism</p> <p>Recreation</p>		<p>events for those with special needs, Tutoring, Leading recreation or craft programs</p> <p>Helping in the world: Work trips and camps, supporting missionaries through letters, Prison ministry through letters</p> <p>Emergency needs: Food and clothing closet, praying for others, Child care services, Peer crisis counseling, Blood bank</p> <p>Social Analysis (researching the needs)</p> <p>Social Action: Working with or writing letters government, writing a resolution for parish or Diocesan Convention, Attending diocesan convention, provincial synod, or General Convention as a youth delegate, as part of a planned youth presence, or as a speaker</p>
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Methods

There are many ways to do this. Here are some things to think about. You can start with just one and then add more as you feel comfortable, or you can look at your calendar and add a little from each column

Group Make Up: Who is this group going to be?

Program: How do you want to present things? Do you want a set curricula, a one-on-one mentor program, audio-visual presentations, or lectures and discussions?

Projects: These are some things to set as you're beginning or to add as you grow.

Program	Projects
Music	Trips
Art	Learning centers
Drama	Work & Mission Trips
Family night	Ecumenical gathering
Simulation games	Diocesan, Provincial, and National or international gathering
Audiovisuals	Sunday school
Videos and movies	Vacation Bible school
Coffeehouse or drop-in center Community youth center	Camps and conferences (backpack, wilderness camp, family events)
Role plays	Intergenerational events
Forums	Meeting with other youth groups and Cross-cultural groups
Panels/Guest speakers	Retreats

When, Where, and How

Time: You can meet regularly (weekly, monthly, etc.) or you can meet occasionally. If you meet regularly – I've found it best that you keep time and location the same for each meeting (that way if you get guests or have infrequent members, they won't be confused and show up in the wrong spot). Even if you meet regularly, it's still fun to add extra events in.

Group Make Up: Who will be part of this group and how will you divide them?

Location: You really can meet anyplace – just make sure you get permission and are following the Safeguarding standards

Leadership: I have found that having adult permeant leadership to be important if you want continuity through the years. However, adding different leaders to an event or for a fixed amount of time is a great way to encourage others to help. Youth can practice their leadership without the burden of not being fed (a problem when only youth lead their own program), young adults and seminary/college students can be there for a time (without having to rework the program each time one leaves), and adult members can use their gifts to share with others (and be introduced into the joy of youth ministry).

Here are some examples of each topic – mix and match to make a great program or event:

Time	Group Make Up	Location	Leadership
Sunday mornings	Small groups	Public place (restaurant, school, community center)	Youth
Weekends	One Large group		Adults Clergy
Saturdays	By grade or combined	Recreational area (park, lake, amusement park)	Lay members
Friday nights	Intergenerational		Diocesan, provincial, and national leaders
Weekday afternoons	By gender	Outdoors	Missionaries
Early mornings before school	Mentoring – one-on-on	Church (yours or someone else's)	Community figures (doctors, teachers, public servants)
School vacations		Homes	College/seminary faculty
Holidays		Diocesan conference center or camp	College/seminary students
Overnights			Foreign students
Summers			Educators
Weekday evenings			People with special expertise (such as weavers, artists)
Sunday nights			