**Transitional Tool: Evaluating Youth Ministry**

As you transition to a new church, evaluating a youth ministry can be challenging and complex. The assessment below is a way to quickly evaluate the church’s youth ministry, the direction it is going, and possibly see where there is work to be done moving forward.

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|  | Church Youth Ministry Evaluation |  |
| Youth Ministry Program  |  | **Y**es/**N**o/**S**omewhat |
|  | Youth are engaged and thriving in the youth ministry program. Note: smiling and articulate youth are a good indicator. |  |
|  | Adults working with youth appear to understand and enjoy their role in this ministry. |  |
|  | There is a spiritual development system to bring new students to Christ and to deepen the faith of those who already believe.  |  |
|  | The youth ministry develops new leaders (adults and youth). |  |
|  | The youth ministry has in attendance regularly about 10% - 20% of our church’s Average Worship Attendance (AWA). Note: late spring and summer are low attendance times. |  |
|  | The youth budget (including salaries) is at least 5% of the expense side operating budget of the church. Note: 20% indicates very healthy youth ministries. |  |
|  | Other church members speak highly of the youth ministry. |  |
| Youth Ministry Staff Member |  |  |
|  | Our youth minister is effective at communicating with others in large group settings and one-on-one. |  |
|  | The youth minister acts professionally and takes their role seriously. |  |
|  | The youth minister is diligent about carrying out the tasks of the role. |  |
|  | The youth minister is enthusiastic and has authentic passion for the ministry.  |  |

**In-person Interview with Youth Minister**

Here are some suggestions for the one-on-one conversation between you and the youth minister over coffee or lunch, outside the church setting. Hearing the answers to these may help with discovering the health of the youth ministry program.

* Share with me your calling to youth ministry.
* Everyone has favorite parts of their jobs. What is your favorite part – you look forward to?
* What are your professional goals?
* What do you do to continue to improve in your role in leading the youth ministry?
* Tell me how you expand your knowledge in the field of youth ministry. Do you have connections or relationships with other youth ministers?
* What are the busiest and slowest seasons for attendance?
* What do you like to do outside of work? How do you decompress?
* Share with me the history of the youth ministry. Are there any negative situations that still linger?

**Initial Perceptions**

You may think about tempering your initial perceptions as they may change over time. Whatever you discover initially, continue to observe and evaluate. It is wise to not share these initial perceptions until they are validated or proved wrong 9-12 months later. It takes at least that long to get a firm grip on the new church and the dynamics of the individuals involved. At 18 months your full transition will have culminated. In the meantime, there are steps you can take to address concerns and affirm the good work you are seeing. Be sure to do this in small movements rather than sweeping changes or extreme statements that you may later regret.

And, remember, transition is difficult for everyone. Everyone is mourning (some celebrating) the loss of past relationships and wanting to adjust quickly to new relationships. This is challenging and needs to be done carefully. Ultimately, good communication and healing will help with a smooth transition.