

The Role of Youth Advisors in the Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth

What is the Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth?

The Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth will revision and revitalize our Association's ministry to and with youth. It will solicit the input and commitment of the widest possible spectrum of stakeholders in Unitarian Universalist youth ministry. Conversations within congregations, districts, and stakeholder organizations will focus on what they can do to support youth ministry at their level, and what the Association can do to support youth ministry as a whole. In this way, the process will build from the ideas and needs of youth and adults at the grassroots level.

Why are youth advisors important in the Consultation?

Youth advisors have a unique perspective on and role in youth ministry, and are essential to its success because they interact closely with youth on a congregational level. The work of youth advisors *is* ministry with youth. Therefore, youth ministry cannot be strengthened without increasing circles of support for youth advisors. The Consultation is an opportunity to have youth advisors' unique needs and visions for youth ministry listened to and discussed on all levels of the Association. .

Youth Advisors can engage in the process in multiple ways:

✓ Survey

In January and February 2006 a survey will be made available to youth. The goal is to capture the experience of youth with varying levels of involvement – YRUU, local congregations, and youth who have chosen not to engage in youth ministry after junior high. The data gathered from this survey will inform the intergenerational congregational conversations. As a youth advisor, you can encourage youth in your congregation to complete this survey. You could even use it as the programming for youth one Sunday – youth could complete the survey individually, and then have a discussion about it, and about how they want to engage in their congregation's conversation about youth ministry.

✓ Congregations

All congregations will receive a process guide in January 2006 advising them on how to organize a congregational conversation about their youth ministry. We encourage you not only to participate in this conversation, but also to advocate for this conversation and work with the youth and adults in your congregation to organize it. You can also bring information about the Consultation to the youth in your congregation – whether they are part of a youth group or not. Help them become empowered to engage in the process!

✓ Districts

The outcome of the survey and congregational conversations will guide and focus the district conversations, which will happen during the 2006-2007 church year. These gatherings will bring together a diversity of youth and adults to discuss youth ministry at congregational, district, and continental levels with a focus on supporting congregational programs. These gatherings will be facilitated by youth and adult members of the Taskforce on Ministry to and with Youth. Youth advisors are encouraged to participate in these gatherings, and can help youth and adults attend as well.

✓ Stakeholder Organizations

The Youth Advisor Network has been identified as a core stakeholder in this process. The taskforce will help organize regional facilitated gatherings or conference calls with youth advisors to discuss your visions for youth ministry, and how the Association can support those visions. This is a unique opportunity to dialogue with other youth advisors about your unique needs and visions.

Questions or Feedback? – Contact Beth Dana, UUA Youth Ministry Associate at (617) 948-4352 or Jesse Jaeger, UUA Youth Programs Director at (617) 948-4359. For more information go to: www.uua.org/trus/youth.