

FINAL REPORT

THE ATTITUDES AND NEEDS OF RELIGIOUS YOUTH WORKERS

Perspectives from the Field

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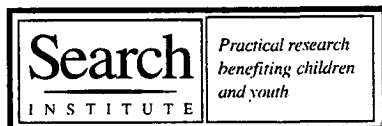
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1.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Search Institute's studies show that youth involvement with religious organizations has a powerful positive effect on adolescent development, promoting various assets young people need and offering protection from behavioral risks. Yet participation in congregations decreases as adolescents age from middle school through high school. Adolescents thus lose the potential positive value of congregational connection just as their exposure to risky situations and difficult decisions increases.

In order to tap this potential more effectively, Search Institute received support from The DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund to conduct a multi-faceted study of the feasibility of providing non-sectarian training and resources on positive youth development to youth workers in a broad range of faith traditions. Specifically, we were seeking insight into three questions:

- 1. Do local, religiously-based youth workers from different faiths share a common set of non-sectarian training needs and criteria for effective youth programs that can productively be expressed within a positive youth development framework?*
- 2. Are local youth workers, both religiously- and community-based, willing to come together and share views and resources in order to strengthen their individual programs?*
- 3. Can a geographically-oriented, non-sectarian training strategy be created that meets identified needs, promotes positive youth development, and is of high quality and readily accessible to staff and volunteers in multiple communities?*

One of the key activities in the feasibility study was administration of the "Survey of Professional and Volunteer Religious Youth Workers" in each of seven geographically and demographically varied sites in Minnesota, Missouri, and North Carolina. The survey contained more than 200 items (see Appendix A). The 527 responses comprise the largest survey to date addressing religious youth program issues with such a broad range of faith traditions represented.

We first report the characteristics of the sample. We then restate the original research questions and present findings that shed light on the questions, both simple frequencies as well as cross-tabulations and other analyses.

PREPARATION FOR RELIGIOUS YOUTH WORK

There are large proportions of both very experienced and novice youth workers in congregations in a community.

- Most are part-time volunteers.
- Most do not have a clear mission statement for their youth

programs.

- Only half or fewer get any kind of training in a given year.
- Most of their youth program and staff development activity occurs solely within their own congregation.
- Only a fifth or fewer collaborate with other faiths or secular resources.

LEADERSHIP

There is a large group of potential local leaders.

- Fifteen to 50 percent are interested in playing leadership roles in community efforts to strengthen religious youth work, including serving as mentors, receiving advanced training, or helping organize and maintain a local community initiative to strengthen religious youth work.
- Full-time volunteers, although small in number, may be a key leadership cadre to target.
- Potential leaders are more likely to view favorably potential assistance in the form of resources, training, and networking activities.
- They are more interested than others in materials and training on key content areas such as service projects, developing youth leadership skills, linking with other youth programs, increasing congregations' commitment to youth, and increasing congregations' community involvement for youth.

TRAINING AND RESOURCE NEEDS

The great majority of religious youth workers were favorable to receiving assistance in the form of resources, training, and networking (about 75 percent).

- They are interested in having additional training and resources
- integrated together in a one-day, inexpensive workshop
- and focused on a variety of non-sectarian goals that youth workers feel are very important but which they have not achieved to this point, including service projects, youth leadership skills, helping youth make positive choices, keeping youth involved in programs, and dealing with youth problems.
- They *do not differ by faith tradition* on what goals are important for youth programs and what training and resources they most need.
- They are the most willing to collaborate with other faiths on key non-sectarian activities they are not currently offering with great frequency, including service programs, youth leadership, and dealing with youth problems.
- They recognize they have been ineffective in reaching at-risk youth.
- They have clear beliefs about activities that would be more effective in reaching at-risk youth, but infrequently or rarely offer these activities.

BARRIERS

They cite varied obstacles to training, especially cross-faith training. However, barriers are more often time, schedules, and resources than theological differences or lack of clergy or congregational support.

Equal proportions of religious youth workers are enthusiastic about and opposed to cross-faith linkages.

- About 20 to 30 percent simply do not want to collaborate outside their faith traditions.
- About 20 to 30 percent are very interested in resources and training on how to link with other faiths and the broader community.
- Potential leaders, those who have had recent training or networking experience with secular youth-serving organizations, and those serving mostly low-income or African American congregations are the most interested in linking with others and increasing the congregation's community involvement on behalf of youth.

Trouble keeping youth involved increases sharply between grades five and 12.

- Those having the most trouble tend to be less interested in materials and training in general than more successful respondents.
- However, they are more interested than successful congregations in materials and training specifically on how to keep youth involved, service projects, youth leadership skills, and increasing the congregation's commitment to youth.

REACTIONS TO AN EFFORT TO BUILD ASSETS FOR YOUTH

A program of resources, training, and networking to build youth assets will respond to the needs of diverse congregations and communities, and have an impact on at-risk youth.

- Providing youth workers with youth development resources, training, and networking opportunities is considered likely to lead to youth programs that will appeal very much to youth who are already active in congregations, responding to a strong youth worker need to keep youth involved.
- This approach is predicted to appeal even more to congregations whose youth are mostly low-income or African American than to congregations whose youth are mostly high-income and/or white.
- Substantial proportions of youth workers from predominantly African-American or low-income congregations—30 to 40 percent—say our approach would help them develop programs that appeal a lot to youth who are only occasional participants or who are unconnected to congregations.

Overall, this survey shows that a resource dissemination, training, and networking effort for religious youth workers, based on promoting youth assets and focusing on non-sectarian content, is likely to have important positive effects. Religious youth workers feel it responds to youth program goal areas in which they are underachieving, to training and resource needs they have identified, and to the kinds of collaborative activities in which they would be willing to participate.

2.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

SURVEY

A key activity in the feasibility study was administration of the "Survey of Professional and Volunteer Religious Youth Workers" in each of seven geographically and demographically varied sites in Minnesota, Missouri, and North Carolina. Among other issues addressed, the survey asked questions about what respondents would need to enhance their youth work, what they were currently doing, what goals were most important in their youth programs, how they felt about working with other faith traditions, and their interest in participating in local networks and training opportunities.

SAMPLING

We had identified more than 2,000 possible respondents through responses to a program Census Form distributed in each site to religious organizations identified through a mailing list publisher. In early March 1995, the survey and return envelopes were mailed to those possible respondents. By the cutoff date of early May, we had received 527 responses, representing a response rate of about 26 percent. The Minnesota sites contributed about 65 percent of the sample, the North Carolina sites about 24 percent, and the Missouri sites about 10 percent.

THE INSTRUMENT

The survey contained more than 200 items, and its length and the time it took to complete it were likely the primary reasons for the response rate being less than desired. Nevertheless, the 527 responses comprise the largest survey to date addressing these youth program issues with such a broad range of faith traditions represented.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

RESPONDENTS

The respondents are largely:

- **white** (92 percent);
- **female** (59 percent);
- a median **30-39 years old** (66 percent of the sample was between 30 and 49);
- **well-educated**, with 72 percent having completed college, seminary, and/or graduate degrees;
- **volunteers** (59 percent) and **part-time** (67 percent) (see Table 1);
- **experienced in youth work** (61 percent had more than five years experience) (see Table 2).

More than one-third of the sample have spent 11 years or more in religious youth work, but nearly one-quarter have spent just three or fewer years. On average, the sample have been involved for just three years with youth work in their current congregations. About one in five respondents has been doing youth work in their current congregation for less than one year.

Although 85 percent work directly with youth as teachers, coaches, or advisors, about half (51 percent) have coordination of the youth program as just one of several responsibilities. About 12 percent of the respondents are the senior clergy of their congregation.

TABLE 1 PERCENT OF YOUTH WORKERS BY JOB STATUS

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Full-time paid staff | 27 |
| Part-time paid staff | 14 |
| Full-time volunteer | 6 |
| Part-time volunteer | 53 |

TABLE 2 PERCENT WITH YEARS EXPERIENCE AS RELIGIOUS YOUTH WORKER

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Less than 1 year | 4 |
| 1 year | 2 |
| 2 years | 8 |
| 3 years | 8 |
| 4 years | 8 |
| 5 years | 8 |
| 6-10 years | 24 |
| 11-15 years | 15 |
| 16 or more years | 22 |

CONGREGATIONS

Nearly all the organizations represented are congregations, with 45 percent of the sample being self-defined Mainline Protestant, 24 percent Evangelical Christian, and 10 percent Catholic (see Table 3).

Congregations represented vary widely in size: Although the median number of members is about 450, there are 20 responding congregations with more than 3,000 members, and about 50 with 125 or fewer members. Although most (63 percent) say their congregations are no more strict or liberal than others in their faith tradition, 24 percent say they are more liberal and 11 percent say they are more strict.

**TABLE 3 PERCENT IN DIFFERENT FAITH TRADITIONS
(SELF-IDENTIFIED)**

| | |
|--|----|
| Mainline Protestant | 45 |
| Evangelical Christian | 24 |
| Catholic | 10 |
| Fundamentalist Christian | 4 |
| Charismatic/Pentecostal | 3 |
| Jewish | 1 |
| Other (includes Mormon, Muslim, unaffiliated) | 12 |

**YOUTH IN
CONGREGATIONS**

The average number of youth in these congregations is relatively small. Although 5 percent of the sample have fewer than five regular attendees at youth programs and 5 percent have more than 100, *the median regular attendance is just 19, with 75 percent of the congregations reporting 30 or fewer youth regularly participating* in youth program activities (see Table 4).

Although the youth of these congregations are predominantly white, congregational members, and middle class, there is substantial diversity. For example, *11 percent to 16 percent of the sample have a majority of youth who are low-income, African American, and/or non-members but participating in youth programs* (see Table 5).

Catholic congregations are more likely to be economically and racially/ethnically diverse, and Mainline Protestant congregations are more likely to have youth participating who are not congregational members.

TABLE 4 NUMBER OF SIXTH- TO 12TH-GRADE YOUTH...

| | MEDIAN | 75 PERCENT HAVE FEWER THAN . . . |
|--|---------------|---|
| In Congregation | 33 | 80 |
| In Religious Education | 20 | 50 |
| In Youth Programs | 23 | 45 |
| Who Are Regular Attendees in Youth Programs | 19 | 30 |

TABLE 5

**PERCENT OF CONGREGATIONS IN WHICH
MORE THAN HALF OF YOUTH ARE . . .**

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Low-income | 16 |
| African American | 11 |
| Non-members | 11 |

**CONGREGATIONAL
SUPPORT FOR YOUTH
WORK**

Respondents are split on the support their congregations offer for youth work. A little less than half (46 percent) say support reflected in their budgets is just fair or poor, and a little more than half (54 percent) say there is only fair or poor congregational support for youth work as a priority. More than 60 percent say support from the congregation is just fair or poor on providing volunteers and paid staff for the youth program. Perhaps most telling: *Fewer than half (43 percent) report that they have a clear mission statement for their youth program.*

**EFFECT OF HAVING A
MISSION STATEMENT**

There were only two notable differences (at least 10 percentage points) in responses between those who have a mission statement for their youth program, and those who either don't have one or don't know. Those who do *not* have a mission statement or don't know are more likely to be very interested in material for increasing the congregation's commitment to youth than those who do have a mission statement (65 percent vs. 54 percent). In addition, those *without* a mission statement are more likely to think an asset-building approach to religious youth work would appeal pretty much or a lot to youth already active in their program (52 percent vs. 37 percent).

**WHAT ARE
CONGREGATIONS
ALREADY DOING?**

Search Institute's previous work with Protestant denominations has shed light on common youth activities in those denominations. One of the important contributions of this feasibility study was to document for the first time which youth activities are already being provided by a large sample that is diverse in faith traditions. Table 6 shows that traditional activities dominate in frequency.

Among the responding congregations, only a handful of generally traditional religious organization activities—such as formal religious instruction, weekly youth group meeting, scripture study groups, and youth choir—occur with great frequency. Even among these activities, however, *the only activity that half or more of the sample are likely to offer weekly is formal religious instruction. The great majority of youth rarely have the opportunity to experience community service projects, leadership development opportunities, discussions of sexuality, or prevention programs.* In fact, discussions of sexuality—which, given the importance of sexuality issues to sixth to 12th graders should be a fairly frequent occurrence—are likely to occur only slightly more often than going to a regional or national youth gathering!

There were only a few notable faith tradition differences. Catholics are less likely to offer discussions of sexuality and youth groups at least

monthly, and considerably less likely to offer mission projects annually (58 percent vs. 74 percent for other faiths). But Catholics are considerably more likely than other faiths to offer peer counseling or ministry (44 percent of Catholics vs. 20 percent of other faiths). Mainline Protestants are less likely than the other faiths to offer weekly youth worship services.

TABLE 6 **FREQUENCY WITH WHICH CONGREGATIONS OFFER VARIOUS ACTIVITIES**
(PERCENT)

| | WEEKLY OR MORE | 1-2 TIMES PER MONTH | ONCE OR SEVERAL TIMES PER YEAR | NEVER |
|---|----------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Formal religious instruction | 78 | 7 | 11 | 5 |
| Youth group | 53 | 35 | 9 | 3 |
| Scripture study group | 39 | 14 | 19 | 29 |
| Youth choir | 35 | 10 | 15 | 41 |
| Recreation | 22 | 49 | 27 | 13 |
| Youth worship services | 14 | 12 | 57 | 17 |
| Leadership development | 3 | 5 | 45 | 48 |
| Mission projects | 2 | 4 | 69 | 26 |
| Community service projects | 1 | 9 | 76 | 14 |
| Prevention programs | 1 | 1 | 40 | 58 |
| Residential experiences (camps, retreats, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 91 | 7 |
| Discussion of sexuality | 1 | 3 | 70 | 26 |
| Regional/national gatherings | <1 | 1 | 74 | 24 |
| Trips to religious locations | 0 | <1 | 6 | 94 |

** Numbers may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.*

SPECIALIZED YOUTH PROGRAMS OFFERED

We also asked whether congregations offer four kinds of programs that the youth development literature suggests are especially important for all youth, but particularly for youth at high risk (see Table 7).

We reasoned that congregations that offer after-school, mentoring, or peer counseling programs, or that served as a community center might be more committed to youth programming and, therefore, differ in their responses to resource and training interests, collaborative potential, and the other key questions in the survey.

Because so few of the respondents served as community centers (8 percent), we focused on the other three programs. We divided the sample into those respondents who offer none, one, two, or all three of these

programs. About 26 percent of the sample offer at least one of these programs, 11 percent offer two, and 4 percent offer all three.

There are several differences between those who offer *all three* programs and the rest of the sample, but the cell sizes in these analyses were very small (only 19 respondents offer all three programs), introducing relatively large error terms, and so these findings must be considered with caution. The trend was for congregations that offer all three programs to be less interested in materials on keeping youth involved (they appear already to be doing that well), and more interested in materials on helping youth make life choices, helping youth deal with problems, educating parents, nurturing adult relationships, and working with volunteers.

The responses shown in Tables 6 and 7 show that only a distinct minority of these congregations provide critical opportunities for youth to develop many of the assets our research has shown to be essential for their positive development. Perhaps this failure to respond to broader youth needs is one reason why *congregations have increasing difficulty keeping youth involved as youth mature from grade six through grade 12* (see Table 8).

**TABLE 7 PERCENT OFFERING ADDITIONAL
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Mentoring program | 22 |
| After-school program | 20 |
| Peer counseling/peer ministry | 20 |
| Community center | 8 |

**MAINTAINING
INVOLVEMENT**

Our results show that substantially more youth workers are having some trouble keeping youth in grades seven to nine involved as compared to youth in grades five and six, but that only one in 10 say they have a lot of trouble, even at the middle school level.

By 10th grade, however, the problems are no longer subtle: More than half the sample say they have a lot of trouble keeping high school age youth involved. Older youths need more opportunities for leadership, chances to confront issues with deep personal meaning, such as sexuality, and experiences that help them clarify their future educational and career goals. Most congregations may not be providing any of these with enough regularity to compete with older youths' other school, social, and work-related commitments.

**TABLE 8 PERCENT HAVING SOME OR A LOT
OF TROUBLE KEEPING YOUTH INVOLVED**

| | SOME | A LOT |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Youth in grades 5-6 | 52 | 8 |
| Youth in grades 7-9 | 68 | 12 |
| Youth in grades 10-12 | 38 | 55 |

MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

We sought answers to our three key research questions, primarily by examining responses in six areas:

1. The youth program goals respondents think are important;
2. how well they think they are achieving those goals;
3. the training and resources in which they are interested;
4. the degree to which they like the vision of religious youth work we described;
5. on which activities they are interested in collaborating with other faiths; and
6. the degree to which they think our vision of religious youth work practice will enable them to develop programs that will appeal to various youth.

We examined whether responses to these items—and hence, answers to our three primary research questions—vary as a function of other important qualities of the responding youth workers and their congregations. The chapters that follow examine these questions.

3.

SEEKING COMMON GROUND AMONG RELIGIOUS YOUTH WORKERS

Do local, religiously-based youth workers from different faiths share a common set of non-sectarian training needs and criteria for effective youth programs that can productively be expressed within a positive youth development framework?

This question really contains several questions that can be rephrased as follows: Do youth workers in different faith traditions share common goals for their youth programs, and do they have common perceptions about what they need to enhance their youth work? Are key goals and needs capable of being addressed in a non-sectarian way? With few exceptions, our 527 survey respondents said "yes."

Unfortunately, the number of Jewish respondents was so small (4) that it would be misleading to compare their responses with those of the other groups. Therefore, we compared the responses of Catholic, Mainline Protestant, and Evangelical/Pentecostal/ Fundamentalist respondents.

IMPORTANT GOALS

Not surprisingly, two faith goals (apply faith to daily decisions, and nurture lifelong faith commitment) are equally considered the most important goal (see Table 9). However, *goals that reflect non-sectarian hopes dominate the rest of the respondents' priorities.*

The only faith tradition differences on these non-sectarian goals are that Catholics are much *more* likely than others to say nurturing cultural identity is very important, and Mainline Protestants are much *less* likely than others to say supporting and educating parents is very important. The following all are considered very important by 60 to 84 percent of the sample, with no significant cross-faith differences:

- Provide a safe and caring place 84 percent
- Develop youth skills and values 81 percent
- Keep youth involved with congregation 78 percent
- Help youth build caring relationships
with other youth 77 percent
- Encourage self-respect and personal dignity 76 percent
- Provide positive activities 69 percent
- Reach out to serve youth at risk 68 percent

- Help youth build caring relationships with adults 65 percent
- Nurture in youth a commitment to service 64 percent

TABLE 9 PROGRAM GOALS: PERCENT SAYING GOAL IS VERY IMPORTANT

| GOAL | FAITH TRADITION | | | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|----------|----------|
| | ALL | EVANGELICAL* | CATHOLIC | MAINLINE |
| Help youth apply faith to daily decisions | 88 | 91 | 88 | 87 |
| Nurture in youth a lifelong faith commitment | 88 | 96 | 87 | 87 |
| Provide a safe and caring place | 84 | 80 | 75 | 89 |
| Develop youth values and skills | 81 | 85 | 75 | 80 |
| Keep youth involved in congregation | 78 | 73 | 79 | 80 |
| Help youth build caring relationships with other youth | 77 | 74 | 75 | 77 |
| Encourage self-respect and personal dignity | 76 | 74 | 83 | 76 |
| Provide positive activities | 69 | 73 | 60 | 67 |
| Reach out to serve youth at risk | 68 | 72 | 65 | 65 |
| Help youth build caring relationships with adults | 65 | 67 | 75 | 77 |
| Nurture in youth a commitment to service | 64 | 59 | 65 | 66 |
| Prepare youth to share faith with others | 56 | 72 | 44 | 50 |
| Teach scripture/doctrine | 52 | 60 | 58 | 44 |
| Support/educate parents | 45 | 53 | 48 | 38 |
| Nurture cultural identity | 27 | 22 | 42 | 21 |
| Prepare youth for work | 26 | 26 | 22 | 25 |

**Includes Fundamentalist Christian and Pentecostal*

SUCCESS ACHIEVING GOALS

How well do youth workers feel they are doing in achieving these “very important” goals? Presumably, if there is a sense of frustration in reaching desired goals, youth workers would be more interested in new resources and supports to build their capacity than if they feel they are already

reaching most of these goals.

Clearly, *the only "very important" goal that more than half the sample also feels they are achieving very well is providing a safe and caring place for youth* (see Table 10). More than 40 percent of the respondents feel they are doing a very good job in providing positive activities for youth, but no other goal is rated that well.

Less than 30 percent say they are doing a very good job building youth's caring relationships with adults and other youth; this is surprising in view of how well they think they are providing a safe and caring place. Youth workers may feel less successful in helping youth develop skills for constructing caring relationships *outside* the confines of the activities the youth program offers. Only one in five respondents say they are doing a very good job of nurturing a commitment to service or keeping youth involved, and less than 10 percent say they are doing a very good job reaching youth in high-risk situations.

Catholic respondents are less likely to think they do a good job providing positive activities, and developing youth skills and values, but more likely than other respondents to say they do a good job encouraging self-respect and dignity. Mainline Protestants are more likely to rate well their building of caring relationships among youth and adults, and their ability to keep youth involved in their programs. Evangelicals are more likely to say they achieve specific faith-related goals than are Catholics or Mainline Protestants. These perceptual differences by faith tradition, although few in number, suggest that the various faiths have something to offer each other by way of peer support and mentoring for strengthening youth programs.

Another way of looking at the data is to see where the greatest disparities are between the proportion who rate the goal very important and the proportion who rate it achieved very well. If highly important non-sectarian goals are also among the least well-achieved, then religious youth workers' receptivity to new resources and supports ought to be higher. In fact, *there are large gaps between the proportion who believe various non-sectarian youth development goals are important and the proportion who think they are achieving them well* (see Table 11).

There are several messages in these results:

- Religious youth workers feel they are not achieving well most of the important non-sectarian goals for youth programs.
- Even on the goals where they feel most accomplished, one-fifth to one-quarter of the sample don't feel they are having enough success.
- Even though educating parents wasn't among the highest rated goals, nearly 40 percent of the sample feel they are falling short of the accomplishment needed.

These results suggest that there is a crucial role for training and resources that help youth workers lessen the gap between hopes and achievements on these important non-sectarian goals.

**TABLE 10 PROGRAM GOALS: PERCENT SAYING GOAL
IS ACHIEVED VERY WELL**

| GOAL | FAITH TRADITION | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------|----------|----------|
| | ALL | EVANGELICAL * | CATHOLIC | MAINLINE |
| Provide a safe and caring place | 64 | 63 | 54 | 66 |
| Provide positive activities | 43 | 48 | 33 | 43 |
| Encourage self-respect and personal dignity | 35 | 32 | 42 | 34 |
| Help youth build caring relationships with other youth | 30 | 25 | 25 | 32 |
| Help youth apply faith to daily decisions | 25 | 33 | 19 | 19 |
| Help youth build caring relationships with adults | 25 | 17 | 16 | 32 |
| Develop youth values and skills | 24 | 26 | 15 | 24 |
| Teach scripture/doctrine | 22 | 31 | 15 | 16 |
| Nurture in youth a lifelong faith commitment | 22 | 24 | 13 | 19 |
| Nurture in youth a commitment to service | 22 | 17 | 23 | 25 |
| Keep youth involved in congregation | 21 | 19 | 12 | 25 |
| Prepare youth to share faith with others | 12 | 19 | 8 | 8 |
| Nurture cultural identity | 10 | 8 | 12 | 8 |
| Reach out to serve youth at risk | 9 | 7 | 10 | 8 |
| Support/educate parents | 6 | 8 | 6 | 6 |
| Prepare youth for work | 4 | 5 | 6 | 3 |

**Includes Fundamentalist Christian and Pentecostal*

TABLE 11 PERCENTAGE POINT DISSONANCE BETWEEN NON-SECTARIAN GOAL RATINGS OF IMPORTANCE AND ACHIEVEMENT (VERY IMPORTANT—ACHIEVE VERY WELL)

| GOAL | IMPORTANT | ACHIEVE VERY WELL | GAP |
|--|-----------|-------------------|-----|
| Reach out to serve youth at risk | 68 | 9 | 59 |
| Develop youth values and skills | 81 | 24 | 57 |
| Keep youth involved in congregation | 78 | 21 | 57 |
| Help youth build caring relationships with other youth | 77 | 30 | 47 |
| Encourage self-respect and personal dignity | 76 | 35 | 41 |
| Nurture in youth a commitment to service | 64 | 22 | 42 |
| Help youth build caring relationships with adults | 65 | 25 | 40 |
| Support/educate parents | 45 | 6 | 39 |
| Provide positive activities | 69 | 43 | 26 |
| Provide a safe and caring place | 84 | 64 | 20 |

INTEREST IN TRAINING AND MATERIALS

Given these findings, how interested are youth workers in having topics relevant to achieving these goals addressed by new materials or training workshops in their communities? *About half or more of these 527 respondents indicate they are very interested in resources and training for nearly all the topics (see Table 12).*

Striking in our findings is that nearly all topics have the strong interest of at least half the sample. The only meaningful differences by faith tradition are that Catholics are more interested in strategies for keeping youth involved and increasing congregational support for youth work.

Helping youth make positive choices is the top non-sectarian goal, with 80 percent thinking it very important. This is remarkably close to the highest rated goal overall, nurturing spiritual growth, which 83 percent of these religious youth workers consider very important. *In fact, of the top 10 most important goals, eight are non-sectarian goals rated more important than teaching the congregation's faith tradition. These findings suggest a strong consensus on the importance of non-sectarian goals that could facilitate interfaith collaboration on behalf of positive youth development.*

Two topics of great interest receive mixed support, depending on how

generally or specifically the questions are worded. The great majority of respondents are at least somewhat interested in resources or trainings to help congregations get involved in the community on behalf of youth (87 percent), and how to link their congregation's program with other congregations' programs (85 percent), with substantial minorities being *very* interested (see Table 13). Moreover, when we asked about *specific* issues on which they might collaborate with other faiths, up to 50 percent said they are "very likely" to work across faiths (see Table 20).

TABLE 12 TRAINING AND RESOURCE INTERESTS
(PERCENT VERY INTERESTED)

| | |
|--|----|
| Nurturing spiritual growth | 83 |
| Helping youth make positive life choices | 80 |
| Nurturing healthy relationships between youth and adults | 67 |
| How to get and keep youth involved in program | 64 |
| How to develop meaningful service projects for youth | 64 |
| How to help youth deal with problems | 63 |
| How to develop leadership skills in young people | 62 |
| Strategies for increasing the congregation's commitment to youth | 60 |
| How to support and educate parents | 59 |
| Teaching doctrine/theology/scripture | 56 |
| How to help youth develop social skills | 55 |
| What's normal in adolescent development | 49 |
| How to develop programs that provide support and care for youth (e.g., peer counseling) | 49 |
| Recruiting/training/supporting volunteers | 47 |
| Increasing congregation's community involvement on behalf of youth | 45 |
| How to link congregation's youth program with other congregations' youth programs | 31 |

TABLE 13

**PERCENT SOMEWHAT AND VERY INTERESTED IN RESOURCES/TRAINING
ON COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND LINKAGES**

| | SOMEWHAT | VERY |
|--|----------|------|
| How to link congregation's youth program with other congregations' youth programs | 54 | 31 |
| Increasing congregation's community involvement on behalf of youth | 42 | 45 |

EFFECT OF LOCATION

Two-thirds of the responses came from our Minnesota sites. Search Institute and its vision of healthy youth arguably were more well-known in those sites. In examining responses by site, however, we found no consistent pattern of differences favoring Minnesota (see Table 14). If anything, where there are differences, *North Carolina respondents generally are more likely to be very interested in the various possible materials or trainings*, especially on adolescent development and developing youth leadership skills. *Missouri respondents are more likely to say the approach will appeal to youth who are active in their youth programs*. We also looked at whether sites differ by their willingness to work with different denominations, and there are no notable differences.

**URBAN-RURAL
DIFFERENCES**

Urban-rural differences are most notable by their relative absence. For example, urban and rural respondents do not differ significantly in their degree of interest in any of the possible resources or training opportunities studied. Urban respondents are more likely to think nurturing cultural identity is an important youth goal, and perhaps surprisingly, rural respondents are more likely to say preparing youth for the world of work is more important. Urban respondents also thought they do a better job of promoting self-respect and personal dignity, and nurturing caring youth-adult relationships than do rural respondents. But again, these exceptions demonstrate the rule, that, in general, urban and rural religious youth workers responded similarly to our survey (see Table 15).

**TABLE 14 NOTABLE DIFFERENCES* IN PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN
MATERIALS/TRAINING AND COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES BY SITE**

| | NORTH CAROLINA | MINNESOTA | MISSOURI |
|--|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | | | |
| Service projects | 75a | 63b | 57b |
| Adolescent development | 61a | 46b | 46b |
| Helping youth deal with problems | 72a | 60b | 63b |
| Developing youth social skills | 66a | 52b | 57ab |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 72a | 59b | 59b |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 56a | 45b | 61a |
| Increasing congregation's commitment to youth | 71a | 57b | 65ab |
| Increasing congregation's community involvement on behalf of youth | 52a | 42b | 52a |
| WOULD COOPERATE ON: | | | |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 58a | 49ab | 45b |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE . . . | | | |
| Like research-based vision a lot | 27b | 34ab | 40a |
| Will appeal to active youth pretty much or a lot | 46b | 44b | 59a |

** In this and all subsequent tables, percentages with a different letter are different from each other by at least 10 percentage points, a notable difference*

TABLE 15

**PERCENT OF URBAN AND RURAL YOUTH WORKERS
SAYING GOALS ARE IMPORTANT OR ACHIEVED WELL**

| | URBAN | RURAL |
|--|-------|-------|
| IMPORTANT GOALS: | | |
| Nurture cultural identity | 32 | 19 |
| Prepare youth for work | 24 | 34 |
| ACHIEVE GOALS WELL: | | |
| Encouraging self-respect and personal dignity | 39 | 25 |
| Helping youth build caring relationships with adults | 29 | 16 |

**EFFECT OF GREATER
INTEREST IN RESOURCES
THAN TRAINING**

Although a majority of respondents are interested in receiving integrated materials and training, 20 percent of the sample feel they need resources more than they needed training. We wondered if these respondents differ on the kinds of material they want and the activities on which they are willing to collaborate with others, when compared with those wanting training. *There are almost no notable differences between the two groups.* Those interested more in resources than training are more likely to say they would collaborate with other faiths on art, drama, or music activities, and are less likely to be very interested in materials or training on working with volunteers.

EFFECT OF JOB STATUS

Do respondents' views differ depending on whether they are paid staff or volunteers, and full-time or part-time? In general, *the only notable differences across job status categories are that full-time volunteers are more positive about their current achievements and more interested in possible youth development resources and training and networking opportunities.* Full-time volunteers are more likely than other respondents to...

- say the various youth program goals are very important;
- say they are achieving these goals very well;
- be very interested in materials for working on these goals;
- like the youth development vision we described a lot;
- express high interest in collaborating with others; and
- say the vision we described would help them create programs that appeal a lot to various youth.

There are few other job-status differences with practical implications. Volunteers—whether part-time or full-time—are somewhat *less* likely to say educating parents, and nurturing a commitment to service are very

important goals. In each case, however, like the paid staff, more than 90 percent thought these are at least somewhat important goals. Similarly, volunteers are more likely than paid staff to say they do a very good job of providing a safe and caring place for youth, but nearly 100 percent of all groups think they at achieve that goal at least somewhat well.

Volunteers are more interested in materials for keeping youth involved, and less interested in materials for educating parents, than are paid staff. However, *full-time paid staff are less likely to be very interested in materials on how to link with other youth programs* (just 22 percent vs. 45 percent very interested among full-time volunteers).

Full-time volunteers may represent a group that is somewhat more enthusiastic about the training and resources we plan to develop, and so might be targeted somewhat differently. However, they represent just 6 percent of our sample and are likely to be only a small cadre in other communities as well. Obviously, this is a major limiting factor in most communities. But despite their small numbers, they are a segment of the religious youth worker population that is very enthusiastic about doing more to promote positive youth development goals.

EFFECT OF EXPERIENCE

Experience of the responding youth worker (initially defined as more or less than five years in youth work) was irrelevant as regards importance or achievement of various goals, or interest in training and resources, except on two items. Those with less than five years of experience are more interested in knowing how to keep youth involved (71 percent very interested), but even among the more experienced youth workers, 62 percent are very interested in materials and trainings on this topic. *Experienced youth workers, however, are far more likely than those less experienced to be interested in materials and training on supporting and educating parents* (65 percent vs. 47 percent). Apparently, experience teaches youth workers that youth programs offered in isolation from families will have a limited potential impact.

We had expected to see more differences, and wondered whether a different division by experience might yield different results. Thus, we divided the sample into three groups based on years experience as a religious youth worker: those with less than four years (novices), those with four to 10 years (experienced), and those with 11 or more years (very experienced), and compared these groups (see Table 16). As in the other analysis, *few significant differences are noted by years experience in religious youth work.*

**TABLE 16 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: SIGNIFICANT MEAN DIFFERENCES
ON VARIOUS MEASURES, BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
AS A RELIGIOUS YOUTH WORKER**

| | VERY EXPERIENCED (11+ YEARS) | EXPERIENCED (4-10 YEARS) | NOVICE (4 OR FEWER YEARS) |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| IMPORTANT GOALS: | | | |
| Nurture in youth a commitment to service | 2.69a | 2.60ab | 2.55b |
| Support/educate parents | 2.46a | 2.39ab | 2.30b |
| ACHIEVE GOALS WELL: | | | |
| Providing positive activities | 2.26a | 2.41b | 2.35ab |
| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | | | |
| Keeping youth involved in congregation | 2.54a | 2.61ab | 2.71b |
| Supporting/educating parents | 2.65a | 2.53a | 2.37b |
| WOULD COOPERATE ON: | | | |
| Learning needs of youth in community | 2.52a | 2.31b | 2.39ab |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | | |
| Like research-based vision | 3.09a | 2.93ab | 2.83b |

For all analyses of variance, the .05 level of significance was selected, and if significant F-values were obtained, the Scheffe multiple comparison procedure was run to determine the source of the significance of difference among the means. Larger means indicate more importance of goal, interest in material/training, or willingness to participate in activity.

Means with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

INTERACTION BETWEEN JOB STATUS AND EXPERIENCE

There is some relationship between paid versus volunteer status and years of experience. *Paid youth workers, whether full or part-time, are more likely to have 11 or more years of experience*, while volunteers are more likely to have just four to 10 years of experience. Novice youth workers (those with less than four years of experience) are most likely to be part-time, whether paid or volunteer (see Table 17). The following statistically significant findings indicate that:

- Those with 11 or more years of experience are more likely than those with less than four years experience to think nurturing a commitment to service, and educating parents are important goals.
- These very experienced youth workers are more likely than the novices to like Search Institute's research-based vision for healthy youth.

- Both very experienced and experienced youth workers are more likely than novices to be very interested in materials and training on educating parents.
- Experienced youth workers are more likely than very experienced youth workers to say providing positive activities is a goal they achieve very well.
- Novices are more likely than very experienced youth workers to want materials on how to keep youth involved.
- Very experienced youth workers are more likely than experienced workers to cooperate with other faiths on learning about youth needs, but not more likely than novices to do so.

TABLE 17 PERCENT WITH YEARS EXPERIENCE AS RELIGIOUS YOUTH WORKER, BY JOB STATUS

| | FULL-TIME PAID | PART-TIME PAID | FULL-TIME VOLUNTEER | PART-TIME VOLUNTEER |
|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 0-3 Years | 10 | 31 | 19 | 27 |
| 4-10 Years | 34 | 30 | 55 | 45 |
| 11+ Years | 56 | 39 | 26 | 28 |

**EFFECT OF YOUTH
PROGRAM SIZE**

In our focus groups, we consistently heard about the special concerns of small congregations in developing and maintaining effective youth programs. We divided respondents into three categories, those who have fewer youth than the median in the sample (33 youth), those who have between the median number and the 75th percentile (34-80 youth), and those who have more youth than 75 percent of the sample (more than 81 youth). The following statistically significant findings (see Table 18) indicate that:

- Small- and medium-sized congregations are more likely than the largest to say keeping youth involved is a very important goal.
- Small- and medium-sized congregations are more likely than the largest to say they are very interested in materials/training on service projects.
- Large and medium-sized congregations are more likely than the smallest to say they are interested in materials/training on developing youth leadership skills.
- Small- and medium-sized congregations are more likely than the largest to say a plan for strengthening religious youth work by building positive youth assets would appeal to youth who are unconnected to congregations.

**TABLE 18 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE*: SIGNIFICANT MEAN DIFFERENCES ON
IMPORTANCE OF GOALS AND INTEREST IN MATERIALS/TRAINING, BY
NUMBER OF YOUTH IN CONGREGATION**

| | SMALL (33 OR BELOW) | MEDIUM (34-80) | LARGE (MORE THAN 80) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| IMPORTANT GOALS: | | | |
| Keep youth involved in congregation | 2.80ab | 2.89a | 2.72b |
| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | | | |
| Service projects | 2.62ab | 2.70a | 2.50b |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 2.63a | 2.66a | 2.49b |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | | |
| Vision/plan would appeal to youth unconnected to congregations | 2.20a | 2.03ab | 1.85b |

**Larger means indicate greater importance of goal, interest in materials/training, more appeal of vision. Means with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.*

4.

THE POTENTIAL FOR INTERFAITH COLLABORATION

Are local youth workers, both religious- and community-based, willing to come together and share views and resources in order to strengthen their individual programs?

There are really two questions included here: Will people collaborate across religious-secular and faith tradition boundaries? And what kind of practical features (e.g., cost, timing, length) must interfaith training, networking, or special events have to promote significant youth worker participation?

CROSS-FAITH COLLABORATION

Our data show that cross-faith and religious-secular collaboration has potential but must be approached with care. In general, respondents would find it “very helpful” in creating or improving an interfaith network to have a common vision of goals based on youth and community needs (54 percent). Lesser, although still sizable, proportions would find practical resources (34 percent) and outside facilitators/network “starter kits” (40 percent) very helpful.

We asked respondents specifically how likely they would be to join a local interfaith network for various activities (see Table 19). Help with planning specific youth program activities that bring different faith traditions together is less attractive than broader sharing and influencing of the community.

This does not mean that respondents are opposed to the idea of faiths coming together. The question asked about “interfaith youth group activities.” “Youth group” has a specific meaning in most faiths: A weekly gathering that mixes fun activities with scriptural or spiritual lessons and is often the primary vehicle for working with youth. If respondents focused on the words “youth group” rather than on the more generic word “activities,” they would understandably have responded less enthusiastically. Their other responses indicate that nearly half would join in interfaith efforts for other purposes.

Respondents are most likely to cooperate with other faith traditions in planning and sponsoring activities such as youth needs assessments and community service and leadership projects (see Table 20). Mini-Olympics, sports leagues, and arts events are somewhat less attractive as vehicles for interfaith cooperation, although sizable minorities (31 to 42 percent) are very interested even in these activities.

Although these responses give us a clear sense of what the purposes and activities of a network should be to attract maximum cross-faith participation, other responses warn that accomplishing cross-faith collaboration will be a great challenge. Only 34 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that it is a priority for them to be a member of such local interfaith networks. On the positive side, 39 percent are not sure if it is a priority. They were not sold on the idea, but seemed open to it. This indicates that there is some room for awareness building and education to raise the priority of networking in their eyes. If persons such as these respondents see local networking being very effective, they would seem to be receptive to making membership in these networks a priority.

TABLE 19 PERCENT VERY LIKELY TO JOIN LOCAL INTERFAITH NETWORK

| | |
|---|----|
| To plan interfaith youth group activities | 27 |
| To support each other and exchange programming ideas | 44 |
| To make the community better for all youth by articulating common values and providing positive opportunities | 46 |
| To highlight the positive role of the religious community on behalf of youth | 47 |

TABLE 20 PERCENT VERY LIKELY TO WORK OR ALREADY WORKING WITH OTHER FAITH TRADITIONS ON . . .

| | |
|---|----|
| Community service projects | 54 |
| Programs to support youth in dealing with problems they face | 53 |
| Activities for learning about the needs of youth in the community | 53 |
| Leadership opportunities for youth | 46 |
| Sports or other leagues or tournaments | 42 |
| Art/theater/music programs | 37 |
| Mini-Olympics/other special events | 31 |

RECENT COLLABORATION One challenge is that, during the past year, just 50 percent or fewer of the respondents networked, participated in training, or planned special events with people outside their own congregation (see Table 21). *Just 25 percent collaborated with youth workers from other denominations, and just 15 percent worked together with secular youth workers.*

Perhaps this limited experience is why less than half the sample—just 44 percent—are aware of youth program activities occurring in other

congregations, local schools, and service agencies.

Across faiths, the only notable differences in training, networking, and special event experiences are that a higher percentage of Catholic respondents participate in all types of networking activities at all levels of involvement (i.e., own congregation, other faiths), and are especially more likely than Mainline Protestants and Evangelicals to have worked with secular organizations in the last year.

Are experienced youth workers receptive to training and networking, or are they more jaded and unenthusiastic than less experienced youth workers? *In nearly all cases, experienced youth workers are more likely to have participated in the last year in each activity at each level of involvement, indicating a commitment to and interest in training and networking.* About 15 percent of our sample (70 respondents) say they would like to be mentors giving advice and support to less experienced colleagues, and 27 percent say they would like to receive such mentoring.

TABLE 21 **PERCENT PARTICIPATING DURING LAST YEAR IN . . .**

| | TRAINING | NETWORKING | SPECIAL EVENTS |
|----------------------------|----------|------------|----------------|
| With own congregation | 78 | 51 | 85 |
| Within denomination | 48 | 46 | 50 |
| With other faiths | 20 | 22 | 22 |
| With secular youth workers | 15 | 16 | 14 |

EFFECT OF JOB STATUS Full-time youth workers, and paid staff—whether full-time or part-time—are more likely to have these recent collaborative experiences, especially with other congregations in their own denomination and with other faiths. For example, 36 percent of full-time and 38 percent of paid youth workers trained together with youth workers from other faiths during the last year, versus just 15 percent of part-time and 11 percent of volunteer youth workers. Since most religious youth workers are part-timers and volunteers, this underscores how pronounced the isolation from colleagues is for the majority of religious youth workers (see Tables 22 and 23).

*Note: In this and all subsequent tables, pairs of numbers in **bold type** are different by at least 10 percentage points, a notable difference.*

TABLE 22 PERCENT PARTICIPATING DURING THE PAST YEAR IN COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES, BY FULL OR PART-TIME STATUS

| | PARTICIPATED IN . . . | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | TRAINING | | NETWORKING | | EVENTS | |
| | Full-Time | Part-Time | Full-Time | Part-Time | Full-Time | Part-Time |
| With own congregation | 58 | 47 | 77 | 78 | 87 | 83 |
| Within denomination | 59 | 49 | 63 | 40 | 65 | 43 |
| With other faiths | 36 | 15 | 37 | 11 | 33 | 16 |
| With secular youth workers | 22 | 12 | 22 | 11 | 18 | 12 |

TABLE 23 PERCENT PARTICIPATING DURING PAST YEAR IN COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES, BY PAID OR VOLUNTEER STATUS

| | PARTICIPATED IN . . . | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | TRAINING | | NETWORKING | | EVENTS | |
| | Paid | Volunteer | Paid | Volunteer | Paid | Volunteer |
| With own congregation | 54 | 49 | 79 | 77 | 83 | 85 |
| Within denomination | 60 | 36 | 67 | 33 | 65 | 40 |
| With other faiths | 38 | 11 | 37 | 8 | 34 | 13 |
| With secular youth workers | 20 | 12 | 19 | 11 | 15 | 14 |

EFFECT OF INTEREST IN COLLABORATION

Is there a difference in responses between those who are more and less willing to work with others? We divided the sample into three groups:

1. Those who are very interested in six or all seven of the different collaborative activities listed in Table 20 (e.g., collaborating on service projects, mini-Olympics);
2. Those who are very interested in three to five of the activities; and
3. Those interested in no more than two of the activities (including the 5 percent of the sample uninterested in any of these activities).

It is very promising that 73 percent of the sample can be categorized as

having high interest in collaboration; 20 percent have medium interest, and just 7 percent have low interest. There are numerous differences among these groups (see Tables 24 and 25). Most notably:

- Those highly interested in collaboration place higher priority on various program goals than those with medium or low interest.
- The high interest group is more interested in various resources and trainings than the medium and low interest groups.
- The high interest group is more likely to think our resource dissemination, training, and networking approach to strengthening religious youth work will appeal to youth who are active as well as those who are only occasional participants (see Table 26).

TABLE 24 PERCENT SAYING GOALS ARE VERY IMPORTANT AND/OR ACHIEVED WELL, BY DEGREE OF INTEREST IN COLLABORATION

| | HIGH | MEDIUM | LOW |
|--|------|--------|-----|
| IMPORTANT GOALS: | | | |
| Develop youth values and skills | 83a | 76ab | 73b |
| Provide positive activities | 74a | 53b | 59b |
| Nurture cultural identity | 30a | 22a | 11b |
| Nurture in youth a commitment to service | 67a | 48b | 57b |
| Prepare youth for work | 32a | 10b | 14b |
| Encourage self-respect and personal dignity | 81a | 65b | 65b |
| Help youth build caring relationships with adults | 89a | 53b | 58b |
| Help youth build caring relationships with other youth | 81a | 68b | 67b |
| Reach out to serve youth at risk | 73a | 54b | 61b |
| ACHIEVE GOALS WELL: | | | |
| Developing youth value and skills | 24ab | 29a | 17b |
| Nurturing in youth a commitment to service | 22a | 24a | 11b |
| Encouraging self-respect and personal dignity | 35a | 40a | 22b |

Percentages with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

**TABLE 25 PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS AND TRAINING,
BY DEGREE OF INTEREST IN COLLABORATION**

| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | HIGH | MEDIUM | LOW |
|--|-------------|---------------|------------|
| Keeping youth involved congregation | 70a | 60b | 32c |
| Nurturing in youth a commitment to service | 70a | 52b | 43b |
| Linking congregation's youth programs with other programs | 35a | 17b | 14b |
| Helping youth make positive choices | 84a | 76a | 54b |
| Adolescent development | 53a | 39b | 30b |
| Helping youth deal with problems | 69a | 51b | 41c |
| Supporting/educating parents | 63a | 51b | 46b |
| Nurturing healthy and helpful relationships between youth and adults | 71a | 58b | 49b |
| Developing youth social skills | 59a | 43b | 49b |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 66a | 53b | 38c |
| Recruiting/training/supporting volunteers | 49a | 42a | 32b |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 53a | 39b | 30b |
| Increasing congregation's commitment to youth | 64a | 51b | 43b |
| Increasing congregation's community involvement | 53a | 32b | 17c |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | | |
| Like the research-based vision | 35a | 22b | 20b |
| Like idea of connecting faiths | 38a | 18b | 6c |
| Like proposed resources/training | 58a | 38b | 17c |

Percentages with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

TABLE 26 **PERCENT SAYING RESOURCE, TRAINING, AND NETWORKING APPROACH WOULD APPEAL PRETTY MUCH OR A LOT TO VARIOUS YOUTH, BY DEGREE OF INTEREST IN COLLABORATION**

| | HIGH | MEDIUM | LOW |
|-------------------------|------|--------|-----|
| Active youth | 51a | 39b | 15c |
| Occasional participants | 21a | 9b | 9b |
| Unconnected youth | 24a | 17ab | 9b |

Note: Percentages with different letters are different from each other by at least 10 percent

EFFECT OF RECENT PARTICIPATION WITH OTHER YOUTH WORKERS

We expected to find a difference in our key areas among those who have participated in training, networking, or special events with other youth workers outside their faith, those who have participated with others from their denomination, those who have participated with only those from their congregation, and those who had no training or networking in the last year. On the questions about important goals for youth programs, there are no consistent differences according to recent participation in training, networking, or special events.

We re-ran the data from a different perspective. Rather than looking separately at each level of possible involvement (congregation, denomination, with other faiths) we looked only at whether respondents had participated at *any* of these levels or not during the last year. As with the initial analysis, *there are only a few notable differences*. However, those who had participated in training, networking, or special events in the past year are...

- somewhat more likely to think they achieve some of the important youth program goals very well, especially those who have participated in training (see Table 27); and
- somewhat more likely to be very interested in possible materials and trainings, especially on the topic of supporting and educating parents (see Table 28).

**TABLE 27 PERCENT ACHIEVING GOAL VERY WELL, BY PARTICIPATION IN
DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES DURING THE PAST YEAR**

| GOALS | PARTICIPATED IN ... | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|----|------------|----|--------|----|
| | TRAINING | | NETWORKING | | EVENTS | |
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Provide positive activities | 46 | 35 | 45 | 31 | 43 | 39 |
| Nurture in youth a commitment to service | 25 | 14 | 23 | 16 | 21 | 20 |
| Encourage self-respect and personal dignity | 40 | 25 | 37 | 24 | 35 | 32 |
| Help youth build caring relationships with other youth | 33 | 22 | 31 | 24 | 30 | 21 |

TABLE 28 PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS AND TRAINING, BY PARTICIPATION IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES DURING THE PAST YEAR

| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON ... | PARTICIPATED IN ... | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|----|------------|----|--------|----|
| | TRAINING | | NETWORKING | | EVENTS | |
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Keeping youth involved in congregation | 64 | 67 | 73 | 63 | 67 | 53 |
| Supporting/educating parents | 64 | 49 | 61 | 48 | 60 | 48 |
| Nurturing healthy and helpful relationships between youth and adults | 71 | 59 | 68 | 63 | 67 | 65 |
| Developing youth social skills | 56 | 52 | 55 | 56 | 56 | 44 |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 66 | 53 | 63 | 57 | 63 | 53 |
| Increasing congregation's community involvement on behalf of youth | 44 | 48 | 43 | 56 | 44 | 47 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 51 | 44 | 49 | 46 | 50 | 35 |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | | | | | |
| Like proposed resources/training a lot | 55 | 43 | 53 | 37 | 51 | 46 |

EFFECT OF RECENT PARTICIPATION WITH SECULAR YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

Whether or not a respondent participated in training, networking, or special events in the last year with secular youth-serving organizations related to a number of responses. *Generally, those who were involved recently with secular organizations:*

- evaluate their achievement of some youth program goals more favorably (see Table 29);
- are more interested in youth development materials and trainings that might be available, especially on youth leadership training and learning about youth needs (see Table 30); and
- are more interested in collaborating with other faiths, especially on nurturing healthy and helpful youth-adult relationships, developing youth social skills, and developing youth leadership skills, than are those without recent collaborative experience with secular youth-serving organizations (see Table 31).

Of course, these results could mean that working with secular youth workers gave religious youth workers new insights into how they might work with youth, or, in contrast, that religious youth workers who seek out such experiences with secular youth workers are already more attuned to these goals and more in need of this type of outreach.

Given that our other data show it is full-time religious youth workers who most often interact with secular youth workers, these effects probably originate simply in the available time some religious youth workers have. The majority of religious youth workers are part-timers who probably consider interaction with secular youth workers to be a low priority considering the limited time they already have to work within their own congregations and denominations.

**TABLE 29 PERCENT ACHIEVING GOAL VERY WELL, BY PARTICIPATION
WITH SECULAR YOUTH WORKERS DURING PAST YEAR**

| ACHIEVE GOALS VERY WELL: | PARTICIPATED WITH SECULAR YOUTH WORKERS IN . . . | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| | TRAINING | | NETWORKING | | EVENTS | |
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Being a safe and caring place | 68 | 63 | 73 | 62 | 68 | 63 |
| Encouraging self-respect and personal dignity | 50 | 32 | 42 | 34 | 44 | 33 |
| Helping youth build caring relationships with adults | 27 | 25 | 34 | 23 | 25 | 25 |
| Serving youth at risk | 13 | 8 | 18 | 7 | 19 | 7 |

TABLE 30 PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS AND TRAINING, BY PARTICIPATION WITH SECULAR YOUTH WORKERS DURING PAST YEAR

| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | PARTICIPATED WITH SECULAR YOUTH WORKERS IN . . . | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| | TRAINING | | NETWORKING | | EVENTS | |
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Service projects | 76 | 62 | 75 | 63 | 78 | 62 |
| Linking with other programs | 40 | 28 | 44 | 28 | 41 | 28 |
| Nurturing healthy and helpful relationships between youth and adults | 80 | 64 | 76 | 65 | 76 | 65 |
| Developing youth social skills | 71 | 51 | 63 | 54 | 67 | 53 |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 79 | 59 | 74 | 60 | 73 | 60 |
| Recruiting/training/supporting volunteers | 56 | 45 | 63 | 44 | 51 | 46 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 58 | 47 | 57 | 47 | 53 | 48 |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | | | | | |
| Like research-based vision a lot | 44 | 30 | 47 | 30 | 39 | 31 |
| Like idea of connecting faiths a lot | 39 | 30 | 44 | 30 | 35 | 31 |
| Like proposed resources/training a lot | 68 | 47 | 69 | 47 | 64 | 48 |

TABLE 31 PERCENT WILLING TO COOPERATE ON ACTIVITIES, BY PARTICIPATION WITH SECULAR YOUTH WORKERS DURING THE PAST YEAR

| WOULD COOPERATE ON: | PARTICIPATED WITH SECULAR YOUTH WORKERS IN ... | | | | | |
|---|--|----|------------|----|--------|----|
| | TRAINING | | NETWORKING | | EVENTS | |
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Service projects | 63 | 46 | 68 | 46 | 56 | 48 |
| Special events | 34 | 28 | 41 | 28 | 40 | 27 |
| Art, theater, music | 43 | 34 | 49 | 33 | 49 | 33 |
| Sports or other leagues or tournaments | 42 | 35 | 43 | 35 | 48 | 34 |
| Youth leadership training | 58 | 40 | 60 | 40 | 54 | 41 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 59 | 49 | 64 | 48 | 58 | 49 |
| Learning needs of youth in community | 62 | 48 | 66 | 47 | 61 | 48 |

EFFECT OF DESIRE TO BE IN AN INTERFAITH NETWORK

Whether or not a respondent considers it a priority to participate in an interfaith network is a strong factor differentiating her or his responses from those for whom a network is not a priority. We combined those who strongly agree or agree that being in such a network is a priority, with those who say it either isn't or who are neutral on the question. Those for whom being in an interfaith network is a priority are...

- more likely to feel they achieve well the goals of nurturing a commitment to service and encouraging self-respect and personal dignity(see Table 32);
- more likely to be very interested in materials and training on linking with other youth programs, nurturing healthy and helpful youth-adult relationships, developing youth social skills, developing youth leadership skills, volunteers, and increasing their congregation's commitment to youth (see Table 33); and
- more likely to be willing to collaborate with other faiths on all the potential activities, especially service projects, youth leadership training, programs that support and care for youth, and learning about youth needs (see Table 34).

Moreover, those for whom being in an interfaith network is a priority are more likely to think that an asset-building approach to religious youth work will encourage the development of programs that appeal to all but unconnected youth (see Table 35).

**TABLE 32 PERCENT SAYING ACHIEVING GOALS VERY WELL, BY PRIORITY
OF BEING IN AN INTERFAITH NETWORK**

| | INTERFAITH NETWORK ... | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|
| | IS A PRIORITY | IS NOT A PRIORITY |
| ACHIEVE GOALS VERY WELL: | | |
| Nurturing in youth a commitment to service | 30 | 17 |
| Encourage self-respect and personal dignity | 43 | 30 |

**TABLE 33 PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS AND TRAINING, BY PRIORITY
OF BEING IN AN INTERFAITH NETWORK**

| | INTERFAITH NETWORK ... | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|
| | IS A PRIORITY | IS NOT A PRIORITY |
| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | | |
| Keeping youth involved in congregation | 72 | 61 |
| Service projects | 74 | 60 |
| Linking with other programs | 50 | 20 |
| Adolescent development | 57 | 45 |
| Helping youth deal with problems | 70 | 59 |
| Supporting/educating parents | 66 | 55 |
| Nurturing healthy and helpful relationships between youth and adults | 76 | 62 |
| Developing youth social skills | 65 | 50 |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 75 | 55 |
| Recruiting, training, supporting volunteers | 59 | 40 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 57 | 44 |
| Increasing congregation's commitment to youth | 68 | 56 |
| Increasing congregation's involvement with youth in the community | 57 | 39 |
| APPROACH IS APPEALING BECAUSE: | | |
| Like research-based vision a lot | 44 | 26 |
| Like idea of connecting faiths a lot | 51 | 22 |
| Like proposed resources/training a lot | 77 | 37 |

TABLE 34 PERCENT WILLING TO COOPERATE ON ACTIVITIES, BY PRIORITY OF BEING IN AN INTERFAITH NETWORK

| WOULD COOPERATE ON: | INTERFAITH NETWORK . . . | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------|
| | IS A PRIORITY | IS NOT A PRIORITY |
| Service projects | 69 | 39 |
| Special events | 44 | 22 |
| Art, theater, music | 58 | 24 |
| Sports or other leagues or tournaments | 56 | 25 |
| Youth leadership training | 62 | 33 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 67 | 42 |
| Learning youth needs | 70 | 40 |

TABLE 35 PERCENT SAYING OUR APPROACH WOULD APPEAL TO VARIOUS YOUTH, BY PRIORITY OF BEING IN AN INTERFAITH NETWORK

| WOULD APPEAL TO: | INTERFAITH NETWORK . . . | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| | IS NOT A PRIORITY | IS NOT A PRIORITY |
| Active youth | 64 | 35 |
| Occasional participants | 28 | 13 |
| Unconnected youth | 9 | 3 |

BARRIERS TO INTERFAITH COLLABORATION

Clearly, only about half the youth workers are experiencing any training or networking outside their own congregations, and substantially fewer are working with their counterparts in other faiths or in the secular youth work community. *What are the barriers to youth workers from different faiths working together?*

THEOLOGICAL BARRIERS

Responses are contradictory. Out of eight possible barriers, one in five respondents list theological differences as very much a barrier, while twice that proportion list time (see Table 36). Evangelicals are more likely to list theological barriers and two to seven times more likely to list clergy or

congregational opposition than are other faiths, and are less likely to list time as a barrier. Catholics are less likely than other faiths to consider lack of shared understanding of the purpose of religious youth work a barrier.

However, when asked specifically about different faith traditions with which they would be willing to collaborate, *the majority of respondents say they are unwilling to work with anyone but Catholics, Evangelicals, and Mainline Protestants* (see Table 37).

Clearly, a sizable minority would not work with anyone outside their faith tradition. Resources, training, and networking that focus on the non-sectarian topical issues and attractive activities already discussed will have the greatest chance of success with the broadest representation of faith traditions. *Regardless of how non-sectarian and sensitive the approach, however, perhaps 20-30 percent of religious youth workers in communities finds the cross-faith aspect difficult or impossible to embrace*, at least initially, in part because they have had such limited experience collaborating with those outside their faith tradition.

**TABLE 36 PERCENT SAYING ISSUE IS VERY MUCH A BARRIER
TO INTERFAITH COLLABORATION**

| | ALL | EVANGELICAL | CATHOLIC | MAINLINE |
|---|-----|-------------|----------|----------|
| Lack of time | 44 | 38 | 46 | 49 |
| Scheduling conflicts | 31 | 27 | 37 | 32 |
| Lack of resources | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 |
| Lack of local models | 24 | 21 | 34 | 23 |
| Theological/ doctrinal differences | 22 | 40 | 22 | 13 |
| Different understandings of purpose of religious youth work | 21 | 25 | 8 | 20 |
| Senior clergy opposes | 6 | 14 | 2 | 1 |
| Congregation opposes | 5 | 11 | 6 | 1 |

TABLE 37 PERCENT WILLING TO WORK WITH . . .

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| Mainline Protestant | 72 |
| Catholic | 65 |
| Evangelical Christian | 62 |
| Jewish | 45 |
| Charismatic/Pentecostal | 39 |
| Fundamentalist Christian | 37 |
| Muslim | 21 |
| Mormon | 16 |

TIME AND COST

Regarding practical issues such as time and cost, the most attractive training event would be a workshop with these features:

- up to **one day** in length (56 percent quite or very likely to attend)
- held in **January/February** (32 percent would attend, many others might) **or July/August** (23 percent would attend, many others might)
- with a **cost of \$50 or less** per individual (65 percent of congregations would pay that much, as would 83 percent of individuals).

Although we did not ask specifically about attendance at an interfaith training event, respondents' answers throughout the survey suggest that somewhat smaller percentages would attend if the interfaith aspects of the training were more prominent in publicity than the youth development aspects of the training. However, the responses also suggest that if the youth development aspects were highly featured in publicity, then youth workers from many faiths would attend, and the majority would find this diversity a positive aspect of the training.

5.

REACTIONS TO PROPOSED STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS YOUTH WORK

Can a geographically oriented, non-sectarian training strategy be created that meets identified needs, promotes positive youth development, and is of high quality and readily accessible to staff and volunteers in multiple communities?

RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSED VISION

We provided respondents with a brief description of a vision for training and supporting youth workers in religious settings (see Appendix A, survey page 6). The vision involves building the developmental assets Search Institute has identified as crucial for positive youth development, developing interfaith networks for planning joint activities, peer mentoring and support, and providing integrated resources and training opportunities.

Respondents are very enthusiastic about the resources and training, and somewhat less enthusiastic about the assets vision and networking components (see Table 38).

The positive response to the developmental assets vision is probably much lower than it would have been with better question wording. The description of this component also included reference to an “Igniter Event” that would launch training events in the community. We held focus groups simultaneously with the mailing of this survey, and those groups showed there was considerable confusion about what an “Igniter Event” was and not a great deal of support for it once the concept was clarified. At the same time, our focus group results and the other responses on the survey demonstrate that the specific assets Search Institute has found youth need—assets reflected in the training, resources, and youth program goals about which we asked—are indeed supported by the great majority of our respondents.

Clearly, however, the provision of integrated resources and training is the preferred feature of the approach we outlined. *More than half of respondents wanted materials and training linked, whereas only about 10 percent want stand-alone resources* such as books, curricula, or videos for youth or parents.

We have already mentioned what respondents think training should cover. Most respondents say they have access to quality resources, but more would clearly be welcomed. *Sizable minorities of 22 percent to 34 percent feel they do not have access to quality materials* in areas such as current

youth issues, and increasing knowledge and skills for working with youth (see Table 39).

TABLE 38 PERCENT SAYING COMPONENT APPEALS TO THEM A LOT

| | |
|---|----|
| Developmental assets vision | 32 |
| Connecting many faiths | 32 |
| Resources and training to build youth work skills | 51 |

TABLE 39 PERCENT CALLING FOR MORE QUALITY MATERIAL REGARDING...

| | |
|--|----|
| Activity ideas for youth programs | 22 |
| Current youth issues | 27 |
| Understanding adolescent development | 31 |
| Increasing knowledge and skills for working with youth | 34 |

DESIRE FOR MORE TRAINING

Equally clear is that religious youth workers fall into several groups distinguished by training needs. Seventy-two percent want more training (see Table 40). Nearly half of these respondents wanting training want more advanced training than is currently available to them.

Full-time and paid youth workers are somewhat more likely to want advanced training. About half of those who want more training say no training is available to them locally or that they have no time to take training that is offered. These latter respondents are much more likely to be volunteers and part-time youth workers (see Table 41).

Our results show that, despite considerable concerns about time constraints, *there is a potentially sizable leadership cadre available to be mobilized in these communities* (see Table 42). Many religious youth workers are interested in serving as mentors (15 percent), advanced trainers (31 percent), or organizers of major community initiatives to strengthen religious youth work (49 percent).

These are very promising findings that suggest that a resource dissemination, training, and networking initiative made available in local communities will respond to a variety of training needs and give this considerable portion of experienced youth workers the leadership opportunities they desire.

TABLE 40 PERCENT WITH DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARD TRAINING

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Don't need any more | 2 |
| Already participate in a lot | 7 |
| Want resources more than training | 18 |
| Want training... | |
| • but no time | 23 |
| • but none available locally | 18 |
| • need advanced | 31 |

**TABLE 41 PERCENT WITH DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARD TRAINING,
BY JOB STATUS**

| | PAID | VOLUNTEER |
|---|------|-----------|
| Don't need any more | 2 | 2 |
| Already do a lot | 13 | 4 |
| Want resources more than training | 19 | 18 |
| Want training, but no time | 19 | 26 |
| Want training, but none available locally | 9 | 24 |
| Want advanced training | 39 | 26 |

TABLE 42 PERCENT WANTING OPPORTUNITY TO . . .

| | |
|--|----|
| Serve as mentor to less experienced youth worker(s) | 15 |
| Receive advanced training in youth development and programming | 31 |
| Serve as a local leader in organizing and maintaining an initiative to strengthen religious youth work | 49 |

**EFFECT OF INTEREST
IN MENTORING**

Those interested in being mentored (27 percent of the sample) and those interested in being mentors (15 percent) have similar views on many important youth program goals and on their interest in the resources and trainings we propose. However, potential mentors are more likely than potential mentees to believe they are doing very well in teaching the

doctrine of their denomination (30 percent vs. 20 percent) and in nurturing a lifelong faith commitment (30 percent vs. 13 percent). Differences on non-sectarian items also exist (see Table 43), with *mentors generally more likely to feel they achieve important goals very well*. Potential mentees, however, are:

- more interested than mentors in materials and training on service projects and helping youth make life choices; and
- more likely to like the proposed resources and training a lot, whereas potential mentors are more likely to like the research-based vision a lot.

TABLE 43 PERCENT ACHIEVING GOAL VERY WELL OR VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS/TRAINING AND COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES, BY DESIRE TO BE MENTOR OR MENTEE

| | POTENTIAL MENTORS | POTENTIAL MENTEES |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| ACHIEVE GOALS VERY WELL: | | |
| Developing youth values and skills | 27 | 14 |
| Providing positive activities | 54 | 39 |
| Supporting/educating parents | 16 | 3 |
| Helping youth build caring relationships with adults | 30 | 18 |
| Helping youth build caring relationships with other youth | 37 | 27 |
| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | | |
| Service projects | 63 | 73 |
| Helping youth make life choices | 71 | 85 |
| Supporting/educating parents | 69 | 54 |
| WOULD COOPERATE ON: | | |
| Developing support programs for youth | 50 | 63 |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | |
| Like research-based vision a lot | 44 | 32 |
| Like proposed resources/training a lot | 61 | 72 |

EFFECT OF WILLINGNESS TO BE LEADERS

We asked respondents if they would be willing to take a leadership role in “organizing and maintaining” the kind of community-based training, networking, and resource efforts we described, and 49 percent said they probably or definitely would. Compared to the rest of the sample (“followers”), *these potential leaders are:*

- More likely than followers to think most of the youth program goals were important, especially educating parents and nurturing a commitment to service (see Table 44).
- In no case more likely to think they were achieving these goals very well.
- More interested than followers in materials and training on service projects, youth leadership skills, increasing congregation's commitment to youth, increasing congregation's community involvement, developing youth social skills, volunteers, support programs, and linking with other youth programs (see Table 45).
- More likely to be willing to collaborate on various youth development activities (see Table 46).

Moreover, potential leaders are more likely to think our approach will help programs appeal pretty much or a lot to youth at all levels of connection, although twice the proportion—60 percent—think it would help programs appeal to active youth than to occasional participants or unconnected youth (see Table 47).

TABLE 44 PERCENT SAYING GOALS ARE VERY IMPORTANT, BY INTEREST IN BEING A LEADER OF COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES

| IMPORTANT GOALS | POTENTIAL LEADERS | POTENTIAL FOLLOWERS |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Develop youth values and skills | 87 | 75 |
| Support/educate parents | 52 | 36 |
| Nurture in youth a commitment to service | 71 | 56 |
| Prepare youth for the world of work | 32 | 21 |
| Encourage self-respect and personal dignity | 82 | 70 |
| Help youth build caring relationships with other youth | 82 | 72 |
| Keep youth involved in congregation | 85 | 72 |
| Serve youth at risk | 74 | 63 |

**TABLE 45 PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS AND TRAINING, BY INTEREST
IN BEING A LEADER OF COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES**

| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | POTENTIAL LEADERS | POTENTIAL FOLLOWERS |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Keeping youth involved in congregation | 70 | 59 |
| Service projects | 73 | 57 |
| Linking with other programs | 39 | 21 |
| Adolescent development | 54 | 43 |
| Helping youth deal with problems | 69 | 55 |
| Supporting/educating parents | 67 | 52 |
| Nurturing healthy and helpful relationships between youth and adults | 73 | 59 |
| Developing youth social skills | 63 | 46 |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 71 | 53 |
| Recruiting, training, supporting volunteers | 57 | 37 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 59 | 38 |
| Increasing congregation's commitment to youth | 69 | 50 |
| Increasing congregation's involvement with youth in the community | 58 | 33 |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | |
| Like research-based vision a lot | 45 | 19 |
| Like idea of connecting with other faiths a lot | 45 | 19 |
| Like proposed resources/training a lot | 65 | 37 |

**TABLE 46 PERCENT WILLING TO COOPERATE ON ACTIVITIES, BY INTEREST IN
BEING A LEADER OF COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES**

| WOULD COOPERATE ON: | POTENTIAL LEADERS | POTENTIAL FOLLOWERS |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Service projects | 63 | 35 |
| Special events | 35 | 23 |
| Art, theater, music | 43 | 28 |
| Sports or other leagues or tournaments | 42 | 30 |
| Youth leadership training | 56 | 31 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 62 | 39 |
| Learning needs of youth in the community | 66 | 34 |

**TABLE 47 PERCENT SAYING OUR APPROACH WOULD APPEAL PRETTY MUCH OR A
LOT TO VARIOUS YOUTH, BY LEADERSHIP INTEREST**

| | POTENTIAL LEADERS | POTENTIAL FOLLOWERS |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Active youth | 60 | 34 |
| Occasional participants | 28 | 11 |
| Unconnected youth | 29 | 16 |

We further examined the effect of leadership potential by combining years experience and job status into high, medium, or low leadership potential, as follows:

| Leadership Potential: | High | Medium | Low |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Percent of Sample: | 32 | 28 | 40 |
| Description: | 11 or more years experience in religious youth work, and either full-time paid staff or full-time volunteer | 5-10 years experience and either full-time (staff or volunteer), or part-time paid staff | less than 5 years of experience and/or only a part-time volunteer. |

Using this three-level leadership potential variable, we conducted several analyses of variance. *There are relatively few significant differences among these groups and there are no significant differences between those with high and medium leadership potential* (see Table 48).

- Most of the source of significant differences occurs between the medium and low leadership potential groups.
- High and medium leadership potential groups are more likely to feel educating parents is an important goal, say that they achieve this goal well, and be interested in materials and training on educating parents, developing youth leadership skills, and getting and keeping volunteers.

Comparing respondents on their willingness to lead the organizing and maintaining of our approach in their community proved to be a more potent discriminating variable than the alternative leadership potential variable created by combining years of experience and job status.

TABLE 48 SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN MEANS ON ACHIEVING GOALS WELL, THINKING GOALS IMPORTANT, INTEREST IN MATERIALS/TRAINING, BY LEVEL OF LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL

| | LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL | | |
|---|----------------------|--------|-------|
| | HIGH | MEDIUM | LOW |
| IMPORTANT GOALS: | | | |
| Support/educate parents | 2.53a | 2.54a | 2.17b |
| Help youth build caring relationships with adults | 2.64ab | 2.74a | 2.53b |
| ACHIEVE GOALS WELL: | | | |
| Educate parents | 1.70ab | 1.72a | 1.50b |
| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | | | |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 2.64a | 2.65a | 2.43b |
| Recruiting, training, supporting volunteers | 2.40a | 2.50a | 2.10b |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 2.45ab | 2.55a | 2.25b |
| Supporting/educating parents | 2.69a | 2.68a | 2.23b |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | | |
| Like research-based vision a lot | 3.18a | 3.01ab | 2.81b |
| Like proposed resources/training a lot | 3.39ab | 3.53a | 3.10b |

Means with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

APPEAL OF THE VISION

Our vision of providing resources, training, and networking opportunities based on building positive youth assets appeals to a significant proportion—about 33 percent—of respondents a lot and to the great majority at least some. Nearly 95 percent say it would at least be somewhat helpful to their youth programs. *Experienced youth workers are more likely to think our approach would work* in their communities pretty much or a lot. However, 40 percent of respondents (Catholics somewhat more than other faiths) say it would add pretty much or a lot to an already heavy workload.

We combined respondents who liked components of the vision some or a lot and compared them with respondents who like our vision only a little or none. A sizable majority of respondents like these three components:

- 72 percent like the research-based vision of positive developmental assets;
- 72 percent like the goal of connecting faiths on behalf of youth development; and
- 84 percent like the possibility of receiving new resources and training for promoting positive youth development.

Respondents who like this vision for energizing religious youth work are...

- no more likely to say they are doing well on reaching various non-sectarian youth program goals;
- more likely to be very interested in materials and training on keeping youth involved, linking with other youth programs, increasing congregation's commitment to youth, increasing congregation's community involvement, adolescent development, support programs, service projects, and nurturing caring youth-adult relationships (see Table 49); and
- more likely to be very interested in collaborating with other faiths on service projects, support programs, learning about youth needs, and youth leadership training (see Table 50).

In addition, more than half of those who like our approach think it will help programs appeal a lot to youth already active in congregations, and about one-quarter think it will help programs appeal a lot to youth who are only occasional participants or who are unconnected to congregations (see Table 51).

**TABLE 49 PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS/TRAINING,
BY DEGREE OF LIKING FOR COMPONENTS OF VISION**

| MATERIALS TRAINING ON: | REACTION TO KEY COMPONENTS | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| | RESEARCH BASE | | CONNECTING FAITHS | | RESOURCES/ TRAINING | |
| | Like | Don't | Like | Don't | Like | Don't |
| Keeping youth involved in congregation | 67 | 56 | 69 | 52 | 68 | 42 |
| Service projects | 67 | 58 | 69 | 54 | 68 | 48 |
| Linking with other programs | 34 | 20 | 37 | 15 | 34 | 13 |
| Helping youth make life choices | 82 | 73 | 83 | 71 | 84 | 59 |
| Adolescent development | 53 | 38 | 50 | 44 | 52 | 31 |
| Nurturing caring relationships between youth and adults | 68 | 61 | 69 | 58 | 71 | 42 |
| Developing youth social skills | 57 | 47 | 57 | 48 | 58 | 33 |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 64 | 56 | 65 | 54 | 67 | 35 |
| Helping youth deal with problems | 67 | 52 | 65 | 57 | 66 | 46 |
| Supporting/educating parents | 61 | 57 | 60 | 58 | 62 | 43 |
| Recruiting, training, supporting volunteers | 48 | 45 | 50 | 41 | 50 | 31 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 54 | 35 | 51 | 44 | 54 | 22 |
| Increasing congregation's commitment to youth | 64 | 50 | 66 | 47 | 65 | 33 |
| Increasing congregation's community involvement on behalf of youth | 51 | 30 | 49 | 37 | 49 | 24 |

TABLE 50 PERCENT WILLING TO COOPERATE ON ACTIVITIES, BY DEGREE OF LIKING FOR COMPONENTS OF VISION*

| WOULD COOPERATE ON: | REACTION TO KEY COMPONENTS | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| | RESEARCH BASE | | CONNECTING FAITHS | | RESOURCES/ TRAINING | |
| | Like | Don't | Like | Don't | Like | Don't |
| Service projects | 58 | 28 | 60 | 23 | 55 | 22 |
| Special events | 35 | 17 | 35 | 17 | 34 | 10 |
| Art, theater, music | 41 | 24 | 44 | 17 | 41 | 11 |
| Sports or other leagues or tournaments | 40 | 28 | 40 | 27 | 39 | 23 |
| Youth leadership training | 50 | 28 | 52 | 24 | 49 | 16 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 59 | 30 | 59 | 30 | 56 | 22 |
| Learning needs of youth in the community | 58 | 31 | 59 | 30 | 56 | 17 |

**All pairs of percentages differ from each other by at least 10 percentage points.*

TABLE 51 PERCENT SAYING OUR APPROACH WOULD APPEAL TO VARIOUS YOUTH, BY DEGREE OF LIKING VISION

| WOULD APPEAL TO: | REACTION TO KEY COMPONENTS | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| | RESEARCH BASE | | CONNECTING FAITHS | | RESOURCES/ TRAINING | |
| | Like | Don't | Like | Don't | Like | Don't |
| Active youth | 54 | 28 | 57 | 21 | 52 | 16 |
| Occasional participants | 21 | 13 | 23 | 9 | 21 | 8 |
| Unconnected youth | 24 | 16 | 26 | 12 | 24 | 7 |

THE CHALLENGE OF REACHING VARIOUS YOUTH

We asked respondents what kinds of activities they think are most effective in increasing the involvement of hard-to-reach youth (see Table 52). Recreation programs, retreats, discussing current issues youth face, and drop-in centers are named by about two-thirds or more as effective

strategies, and discussing spiritual issues is rated last, judged effective by just 44 percent.

Most notable about these responses is that all of the non-sectarian activities are considered effective by at least half the sample, but, as the data we presented earlier show, *the majority of congregations infrequently or rarely provide any of these activities that they already recognize as effective for involving hard-to-reach youth.*

An important challenge is that *twice as many respondents feel that our approach as outlined will help programs appeal to youth already involved (47 percent) as feel it will help programs appeal to occasional participants or unconnected youth* (see Table 53).

These responses may be artificially low. We did not make it clear how our approach would incorporate many of the very activities, such as service projects, that youth workers feel could attract unconnected youth.

Nevertheless, how much a proposed community-based effort to energize religious youth work would appeal to different youth could be an important factor influencing whether religious youth workers participate in any initiative. *Among various subgroups of religious youth workers—potential leaders, full-time volunteers, those highly valuing an interfaith network, those working with mostly low-income or African American youth—there is much more confidence that our approach will have broad appeal than among the sample as a whole.*

Those who think our approach will appeal a lot to *active* youth are more interested in the materials, training, and collaborative activities than all other respondents.

Those who think our overall approach will appeal a lot to *occasional* participants are more interested than all others in materials and training on service projects, linking with other youth programs, adolescent development, increasing congregation's commitment to youth, increasing congregation's community involvement, helping youth deal with problems, and developing support programs.

Those who think our approach will appeal a lot to *unconnected* youth are more interested than others in materials and training on keeping youth involved, linking with other programs, increasing congregation's commitment to youth, and increasing congregation's community involvement.

An interesting pattern emerged that has important implications. There is a group of respondents—those who feel our approach will have no appeal even to youth already active in congregations—who are the least interested in the materials and training that could be offered. Even those who feel our approach will have no appeal to unconnected or occasionally-involved youth are more interested in the various materials, trainings, and collaborative activities than those who feel the approach will have no appeal even with active youth.

**TABLE 52 PERCENT SAYING ACTIVITY IS EFFECTIVE FOR INVOLVING
HARD-TO-REACH YOUTH**

| | |
|--|----|
| Recreation | 94 |
| Retreats/camping/trips | 91 |
| Discussing current issues youth face | 73 |
| Providing drop-in centers | 65 |
| Offering music, theater, or other arts | 58 |
| Offering community service projects | 57 |
| Providing tutoring/academic enrichment | 57 |
| Discussing spiritual issues | 44 |

**TABLE 53 PERCENT SAYING APPROACH WILL APPEAL PRETTY MUCH
OR A LOT TO DIFFERENT YOUTH**

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Active youth | 47 |
| Occasional participants | 19 |
| Unconnected youth | 22 |

**EFFECT OF SUCCESS IN
KEEPING YOUTH
INVOLVED**

The percentage of respondents who say they have a lot of trouble keeping youth involved jumps dramatically, from 8 percent in grades five and six, to 12 percent in grades seven to nine, and 55 percent in grades 10 to 12. As grades increase, the number of items on which there are sizable differences between *successful* (at a given grade level, no trouble keeping youth involved) and *unsuccessful* (at a given grade level, a lot of trouble keeping them involved) congregations increase. Although not displayed below, interest in goals, materials, and activities related to increasing youth's spiritual growth and commitment to their faith also is more common as grade levels increase.

Those who have a lot of trouble keeping youth involved, compared to those who say they have no trouble, are...

- less likely to say they achieve the various youth program goals very well (see Table 54); and
- generally less likely to say they are very interested in materials or experiences that would help them more fully achieve those goals (see Table 55).

In only a handful of cases—listed below—did a greater proportion of those having trouble keeping youth involved express high interest in the resources and opportunities we have planned (see Table 55). *Those*

already doing more seem to be the most interested in additional materials or training activities.

Those who are having a lot of trouble keeping youth involved are more interested than successful congregations in...

- keeping youth involved (grades 7-12);
- increasing the congregation's commitment to youth (grades 7-12);
- linking with other programs (grades 10-12);
- the topics described in our vision statement (service, leadership, decision making) (grades 10-12);
- volunteers (grades 5-6); and
- collaborating with others on various youth development activities (see Table 56).

TABLE 54 PERCENT ACHIEVING GOAL VERY WELL, BY TROUBLE KEEPING YOUTH INVOLVED (A LOT VS. NONE), BY GRADE LEVEL

| | 5TH-6TH | | 7TH-9TH | | 10TH-12TH | |
|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| ACHIEVE GOALS VERY WELL : | NONE | A LOT | NONE | A LOT | NONE | A LOT |
| Being a safe and caring place | 67 | 60 | 74 | 54 | 80 | 59 |
| Developing youth values and skills | 27 | 22 | 28 | 19 | 54 | 18 |
| Providing positive activities | 49 | 35 | 56 | 24 | 66 | 35 |
| Nurturing cultural identity | 11 | 3 | 11 | 3 | 23 | 7 |
| Supporting/educating parents | 8 | 5 | 11 | 4 | 17 | 6 |
| Nurturing in youth a commitment to service | 22 | 11 | 29 | 19 | 40 | 21 |
| Encouraging self-respect and personal dignity | 39 | 35 | 39 | 26 | 57 | 28 |
| Helping youth build caring relationships with adults | 31 | 30 | 31 | 14 | 29 | 20 |
| Helping youth build caring relationships with other youth | 33 | 30 | 37 | 17 | 51 | 25 |
| Keeping youth involved in congregation | 23 | 14 | 36 | 8 | 49 | 14 |
| Serving youth at risk | 10 | 3 | 16 | 6 | 26 | 8 |

TABLE 55 PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS AND TRAINING, BY TROUBLE KEEPING YOUTH INVOLVED (A LOT VS. NONE), BY GRADE LEVEL

| | 5TH-6TH | | 7TH-9TH | | 10TH-12TH | |
|--|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON: | NONE | A LOT | NONE | A LOT | NONE | A LOT |
| Keeping youth involved | 64 | 68 | 51 | 68 | 49 | 72 |
| Service projects | 67 | 51 | 64 | 58 | 63 | 65 |
| Linking with other programs | 33 | 11 | 26 | 28 | 17 | 35 |
| Helping youth deal with problems | 64 | 43 | 59 | 51 | 66 | 64 |
| Recruiting, training, supporting volunteers | 43 | 62 | 44 | 51 | 49 | 44 |
| Increasing congregation's commitment to youth | 59 | 54 | 52 | 68 | 49 | 62 |
| Increasing congregation's community involvement on behalf of youth | 42 | 38 | 39 | 51 | 46 | 47 |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | | | | | |
| Like resources/training a lot | 52 | 53 | 41 | 50 | 35 | 56 |

TABLE 56 PERCENT WILLING TO COOPERATE ON ACTIVITIES, BY TROUBLE KEEPING YOUTH INVOLVED (NONE VS A LOT), BY GRADE LEVEL

| | 5TH-6TH | | 7TH-9TH | | 10TH-12TH | |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| WOULD COOPERATE ON: | NONE | A LOT | NONE | A LOT | NONE | A LOT |
| Special events | 34 | 22 | 25 | 20 | 31 | 34 |
| Sports events | 46 | 16 | 42 | 27 | 51 | 38 |
| Support programs | 58 | 43 | 50 | 40 | 57 | 55 |
| Learning youth needs | 56 | 43 | 50 | 42 | 51 | 55 |

EFFECT OF DIVERSITY OF YOUTH IN PROGRAM

Serving youth at risk is considered a very important goal by nearly 70 percent of religious youth workers. It also has the largest gap between importance and achievement of any of the non-sectarian goals identified. One of our key concerns was whether the resources and trainings we have proposed would be useful to those with significant proportions of youth in their programs who may be at high risk. We examined youth workers responses based on whether or not half or more of their youth are from low-income situations, are African American, or are not members of the congregation. (Ninety percent of congregations with half or more youth of

color report that these youth are African American. The one percent of the sample with half or more non-African American, non-white is too small to be analyzed separately.) With regard to diversity of youth served:

- there are few differences between youth workers whose youths varied by income status or congregational membership status, and many differences by race; and
- whether half or more of the respondent's youth are African American seems to be related to as many differences in response as respondents' leadership interests or whether the respondent has worked with secular organizations (see Tables 57-60).

We conclude that, if anything, the vision of providing resources, training, and networking to interfaith groups of youth workers in order to promote positive youth development seems to appeal even more to respondents who work with a majority of youth who are low-income, African American, or non-members. Thus, this approach seems robust enough to appeal to a broad diversity of communities.

Across all three categories of diversity—income, race, and membership—those respondents with half or more youth who are low-income, African American, or non-members are:

- more likely to say serving at-risk youth is a very important goal (see Table 57); and
- more likely to be very interested in materials and training on developing youth leadership skills (see Table 58).

Those respondents with half or more youth being African American are:

- more likely to consider nurturing cultural identity, helping youth prepare for work, and serving at-risk youth to be very important goals (see Table 57); and
- more likely to be very interested in materials and training on increasing congregation's community involvement for youth, linking with other programs, developing support programs, and increasing congregation's commitment to youth (see Table 58).

Another indication of the potential usefulness of our proposed community-based initiative to a diverse range of communities is that a substantial proportion of respondents with half or more of their youth being low-income or African American are more likely than respondents with a majority of higher income or white youth in their programs to think our approach would help programs appeal a good deal to various youth, including unconnected youth (see Table 61).

Respondents from small congregations, full-time volunteers, those for whom being in an interfaith network is a priority, potential leaders, and those serving a majority of youth who are low-income or African American are more likely to think our approach will help them develop programs that appeal to occasional participants or unconnected youth. Substantial proportions—from 30-40 percent—of these respondents predict this success.

The predicted appeal to less involved youth is impressive, and yet we should not overlook the even stronger likelihood of success with youth who are already involved. One of the respondents' most important goals (78 percent thought it very important) and one of the areas in which they were most interested in having resources and training (64 percent very interested) is how to get and keep youth involved in their programs.

TABLE 57 PERCENT SAYING GOALS ARE VERY IMPORTANT, BY DIVERSITY OF YOUTH IN THE YOUTH PROGRAM

| IMPORTANT GOALS: | CONGREGATIONS WHERE THE MAJORITY OF YOUTH ARE . . . | | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|
| | LOW INCOME | NOT LOW INCOME | AFRICAN AMERICAN | OTHER | NOT MEMBERS | MEMBERS |
| Be safe and caring place | 90 | 83 | 80 | 85 | 95 | 83 |
| Develop youth values and skills | 86 | 80 | 91 | 80 | 91 | 80 |
| Provide positive activities | 70 | 69 | 80 | 68 | 73 | 69 |
| Nurture cultural identity | 39 | 24 | 59 | 23 | 32 | 26 |
| Prepare youth for work | 30 | 26 | 55 | 23 | 32 | 26 |
| Encourage self-respect and personal dignity | 83 | 75 | 86 | 75 | 82 | 76 |
| Keep youth involved in congregation | 76 | 79 | 84 | 78 | 68 | 80 |
| Serve youth at risk | 80 | 66 | 80 | 67 | 80 | 67 |

**TABLE 58 PERCENT ACHIEVING GOALS VERY WELL, BY DIVERSITY OF YOUTH
IN THE YOUTH PROGRAM**

| ACHIEVE GOALS VERY WELL: | CONGREGATIONS WHERE THE MAJORITY OF YOUTH ARE . . . | | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------------|----------------|
| | LOW INCOME | NOT LOW INCOME | AFRICAN AMERICAN | OTHER | NOT MEMBERS | MEMBERS |
| Being a safe and caring place | 68 | 63 | 66 | 64 | 75 | 62 |
| Providing positive activities | 40 | 43 | 41 | 43 | 59 | 41 |
| Encouraging self-respect and personal dignity | 45 | 32 | 55 | 32 | 43 | 34 |
| Nurturing cultural identity | 17 | 8 | 27 | 7 | 16 | 9 |
| Helping youth build caring relationships with adults | 30 | 23 | 34 | 24 | 21 | 25 |
| Serving youth at risk | 17 | 8 | 18 | 8 | 20 | 7 |

**TABLE 59 PERCENT VERY INTERESTED IN MATERIALS AND TRAINING,
BY DIVERSITY OF YOUTH IN YOUTH PROGRAM**

| MATERIALS/TRAINING ON . . . | CONGREGATIONS WHERE THE MAJORITY OF YOUTH ARE . . . | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|---------|
| | LOW INCOME | NOT LOW INCOME | AFRICAN AMERICAN | OTHER | NOT MEMBERS | MEMBERS |
| Service projects | 73 | 63 | 75 | 63 | 60 | 65 |
| Linking with other programs | 41 | 29 | 45 | 29 | 26 | 31 |
| Adolescent development | 53 | 48 | 56 | 48 | 58 | 48 |
| Supporting/educating parents | 63 | 57 | 69 | 57 | 62 | 59 |
| Developing youth social skills | 61 | 54 | 67 | 53 | 67 | 53 |
| Developing youth leadership skills | 78 | 59 | 78 | 60 | 80 | 60 |
| Recruiting, training, supporting volunteers | 48 | 47 | 51 | 46 | 36 | 48 |
| Developing programs that support and care for young people | 54 | 47 | 64 | 47 | 44 | 49 |
| Increasing congregation's commitment to youth | 62 | 60 | 76 | 59 | 59 | 61 |
| Increasing congregation's involvement with youth in the community | 53 | 44 | 65 | 43 | 44 | 46 |
| APPROACH APPEALING BECAUSE: | | | | | | |
| Like research-based vision a lot | 40 | 30 | 47 | 30 | 36 | 31 |
| Like idea of connecting with other faiths a lot | 41 | 30 | 45 | 30 | 33 | 32 |
| Like resources/training a lot | 64 | 48 | 74 | 48 | 49 | 51 |

**TABLE 60 PERCENT WILLING TO COOPERATE ON ACTIVITIES,
BY DIVERSITY OF YOUTH IN THE YOUTH PROGRAM**

| WOULD COOPERATE ON ... | CONGREGATIONS WHERE THE MAJORITY OF YOUTH ARE ... | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|---------|
| | LOW INCOME | NOT LOW INCOME | AFRICAN AMERICAN | OTHER | NOT MEMBERS | MEMBERS |
| Service projects | 52 | 49 | 65 | 48 | 44 | 50 |
| Special events | 35 | 28 | 48 | 27 | 27 | 30 |
| Art, theater, music | 38 | 35 | 53 | 34 | 28 | 36 |
| Sports events | 41 | 35 | 48 | 35 | 39 | 36 |
| Youth leadership training | 47 | 43 | 61 | 42 | 33 | 44 |
| Developing programs that support and care for youth | 56 | 50 | 68 | 49 | 47 | 51 |
| Learning youth needs | 56 | 47 | 72 | 48 | 49 | 50 |

**TABLE 61 PERCENT SAYING THIS APPROACH WOULD APPEAL PRETTY MUCH
OR A LOT TO VARIOUS YOUTH, BY DIVERSITY OF YOUTH IN PROGRAM**

| | CONGREGATIONS WHERE THE MAJORITY OF YOUTH ARE ... | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|---------|
| | LOW INCOME | NOT LOW INCOME | AFRICAN AMERICAN | OTHER | NOT MEMBERS | MEMBERS |
| Active youth | 54 | 45 | 63 | 44 | 43 | 47 |
| Occasional participants | 31 | 16 | 36 | 16 | 20 | 19 |
| Unconnected youth | 36 | 19 | 41 | 20 | 27 | 21 |

6.

CONCLUSION

We found that few religious youth workers have recently had training in working with adolescents. The majority of the top goals for religious youth programs—regardless of a respondent's faith tradition—are non-sectarian youth development goals more than doctrinal or theological ones. The majority of religious youth workers see positive youth development and faith development goals not as conflicting but as mutually supportive. The great majority would welcome training and resources that focus on key positive youth development issues such as service projects, youth leadership skills, helping youth make positive choices, keeping youth involved in programs, and dealing with problems youth experience.

Overall, this large survey of religious youth workers shows eagerness among the great majority of religious youth workers to learn how to do more effective jobs with younger and older adolescents. Even experienced youth workers want more training and opportunities for professional growth in the practice of religious youth work. There is considerable interest in how youth workers from different faith traditions can work together to benefit all the community's youth.

The cautions religious youth workers have are that cross-faith efforts must steer clear of supporting particular faith tenets and must focus on non-sectarian issues of positive youth development. Resources, training, and networking opportunities that focus on key youth and community development activities such as service projects, developing youth leadership skills, decision making, and fostering a congregation- and community-wide commitment to building these and other key youth assets are likely to be welcomed by the majority of religious youth workers in most communities. The results suggest this approach is robust and could have considerable impact in both small and larger congregations, in communities that are diverse in income and race, and with youth who are both active in and unconnected with congregations.

There probably will always be a substantial minority of religious youth workers who will not wish to participate in such efforts, however, and who will want their training, resources, and networking supports to come from within their own faith traditions. The challenges to working even with the majority of religious youth workers who are positively disposed to the kind of resource dissemination, training, and networking effort we described are not inconsiderable.

Time and schedule conflicts are serious, since the majority of religious youth workers are volunteers and/or part-time. A substantial minority—about 40 percent—of even those who very much like the approach we described for energizing religious youth work thought it would add to an already heavy workload. It also will be a challenge to make sure that materials, training, and networking assistance that is provided to

communities will be affordable to the many congregations whose resources are scarce.

Moreover, very few religious youth workers collaborate with anyone outside their own denomination, and so building those bridges toward collaboration starts from a limited foundation and must proceed slowly and with great care. It has been said, tongue-in-cheek, that it takes 20 years to become an "overnight success." It is advisable to keep that perspective in mind when striving to strengthen the practice of religious youth work.

ABOUT SEARCH INSTITUTE

Search Institute is a non-sectarian, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the well-being and positive development of children and youth by conducting scientific studies and translating the findings into practical programs, resources, and services for educators, youth-serving professionals, parents, community leaders, and policy makers. Since its founding in 1958, the organization has been a leading source of quality research on religious youth work. For a free information packet on Search Institute, call 1-800-888-7828.

ABOUT THE PROJECT TEAM

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ALSO AVAILABLE FOR CONGREGATIONS

Two additional resources have been developed by Search Institute that specifically address the role of congregations in positive youth development:

Youth Development in Congregations: An Exploration of the Potential and Barriers, by Eugene C. Roehlkepartain and Peter C. Scales, Ph.D. This report examines the dimensions of positive youth development from an asset-building perspective, surveys the state of religious youth work, and proposes strategies for integrating asset building into congregational youth programming.

Tapping the Potential: Discovering Congregations' Role in Building Assets in Youth, by Glenn A. Seefeldt and Eugene C. Roehlkepartain. This booklet introduces the idea of asset building in congregations and gives concrete steps for getting started.

For more information, call Search Institute at 1-800-888-7828.

APPENDIX A

Survey of Professional and Volunteer Religious Youth Workers

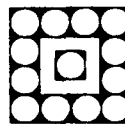
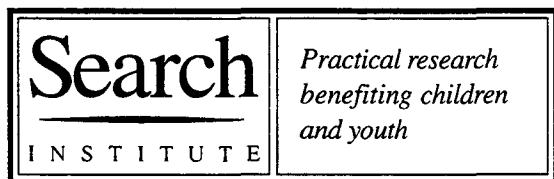
We are conducting a national study to identify the needs, priorities, and interests of religious youth workers, both professionals and volunteers. You are part of a sample of youth workers from many congregations across the country. **YOUR RESPONSE IS VERY IMPORTANT.** By completing this survey, you will help us shape a major, national initiative to provide educational opportunities and resources for religious youth programs. Information from this survey will be part of a national report on religious youth work to be released this summer.

INSTRUCTIONS

This survey will take only about 30 minutes to complete. Here's what we'd like you to do:

1. You may write with any color of pen or pencil to complete the survey.
2. Please answer each question by filling in the circle next to the answer that best represents your opinion. In all cases, you are asked to fill in only one circle per question.
3. We want to know what you really think. If you wish to comment on any item, feel free to write on the survey or include your comments on a separate sheet of paper.
4. Do not write your name or other identifying information on the survey. The results will be completely anonymous.
5. When you have finished completing the survey, put it in the enclosed pre-addressed, stamped envelope and mail it to Search Institute, 700 S. Third St., Suite 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415.
6. If you have any questions, please call Jennifer Griffin-Wiesner, toll-free, at 1-800-888-7828, or in Minneapolis/St. Paul at (612) 376-8955.

THIS IS NOT A MARKETING SURVEY
This survey is being conducted by non-profit research organizations. You are not asked to put your name anywhere on the survey, and we cannot trace your responses back to you. You will never be asked to make any purchases based on your participation in this study.



The Center for Early Adolescence

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Some Definitions

Some of the terms used in this survey may not be clear to you. Here are the ways we have defined these terms for this survey:

- Community:** Your geographic location: town, city, suburb, etc.
- Congregation:** Your church, synagogue, temple, mosque, or other community of faith. If you do youth work in a para-congregation organization (e.g. Young Life, B'nai B'rith), assume that "congregation" refers to your organization.
- Faith tradition:** A denomination or group of denominations with a shared theology, tradition, or history (e.g. Catholic, Mainline Protestant, Jewish, Evangelical Christian, Muslim, etc.).
- Interfaith:** Groups from many faith traditions, including Christian, Jewish, Muslim, etc.
- Youth:** Young people in grades 6-12 (middle school and high school).
- Youth worker:** Any adult (professional or volunteer) who works with youth in your congregation in a youth program, recreation, or formal religious instruction (e.g. Sunday school, bar/bat mitzvah, confirmation).

About Your Congregation

- In what type of organization do you work with youth, either as a professional or a volunteer? (Mark the one where you spend the most time working with youth.)
 - ☐ Congregation (e.g., synagogue, church)
 - ☐ Para-congregation group (Young Life, B'nai B'rith)
 - ☐ Non-religious organization
- With what faith tradition is your congregation affiliated?
 - ☐ Catholic
 - ☐ Charismatic/Pentecostal
 - ☐ Evangelical Christian
 - ☐ Fundamentalist Christian
 - ☐ Jewish
 - ☐ Mainline Protestant
 - ☐ Mormon
 - ☐ Muslim
 - ☐ Other: _____
- How many members (all ages) does your congregation have?

Write the number on this line: _____
- How would you describe your congregation's theological orientation in comparison to other congregations in your denomination or faith tradition?
 - ☐ Does not apply.
 - ☐ We allow for more differences of opinion in interpreting religious teachings than do most.
 - ☐ We are similar to the typical congregation.
 - ☐ We tend to be stricter than most.

About Your Youth Work Role

- How many years have you been involved in youth work in your present congregation?

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than 1 year | <input type="radio"/> 5 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 year | <input type="radio"/> 6-10 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 years | <input type="radio"/> 11-15 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 years | <input type="radio"/> 16 or more years |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 years | |

- How many years total have you been involved in religious youth work, including your present position?

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than 1 year | <input type="radio"/> 5 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 year | <input type="radio"/> 6-10 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 years | <input type="radio"/> 11-15 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 years | <input type="radio"/> 16 or more years |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 years | |

- How is your current position described?
 - ☐ Full-time, paid staff
 - ☐ Part-time, paid staff
 - ☐ Full-time, volunteer
 - ☐ Part-time, volunteer

Are you:

- | | Yes | No |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 8. Licensed or certified for youth work? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Ordained? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

What Do You Need to Enhance Your Youth Work?

If new materials (books, videos, etc.) and educational opportunities (workshops, conferences, etc.) were available in your community, how interested would you be in having each of the following topics addressed?

- | | Not at all or
a little
interested | Somewhat
interested | Very
interested |
|--|---|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 10. How to get and keep youth involved in your program | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. How to develop meaningful service projects for youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. How to link your congregation's youth program with other congregations' youth programs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. How to help youth make positive life choices | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 14. What's normal in adolescent development (physical, spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

- | | Not at all or
a little
interested | Somewhat
interested | Very
interested |
|--|---|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 15. How to help youth deal with problems such as depression, drug use, sexual activity, teen pregnancy, etc. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 16. How to support and educate parents | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 17. How to nurture healthy and helpful relationships between youth and adults | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 18. How to help youth develop social skills such as planning and decision-making | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 19. How to better teach your faith tradition's doctrine, theology, and understanding of scripture | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 20. How to develop leadership skills in young people | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 21. How to nurture young people's spiritual growth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 22. Ideas for recruiting, training, and supporting volunteers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 23. How to develop programs that provide support and care for youth (e.g., mentoring, peer counseling) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 24. Strategies for increasing your congregation's commitment to youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 25. How your congregation could get involved in your community on behalf of youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 26. Assume that the information that interested you from the above list was available in your community. Which of the following would be <u>most</u> useful to you? (Choose only one.) | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Books/workbooks for youth workers | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Curricula/programs to use with youth | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Videos for youth and/or parents | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Videos for adults who work with youth | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Workshops/conferences for youth workers in your community | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> An integrated set of workshops and resources | | | |

About Your Program Goals

Indicate **HOW IMPORTANT** you think each of these topics is as a goal for your youth program.

- | | Not at all
important | Somewhat
important | Very
important |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 27. Teaching youth about the doctrine and scripture of your denomination | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 28. Providing a safe and caring place for youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 29. Developing values and skills in youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 30. Providing positive activities to help youth avoid negative activities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 31. Nurturing a lifelong faith commitment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 32. Nurturing a sense of cultural identity | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 33. Supporting and educating parents | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



- | | Not at all
important | Somewhat
important | Very
important |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 34. Nurturing a commitment to service | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 35. Preparing youth to share their faith with others | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 36. Preparing youth for the world of work | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 37. Encouraging self-respect and personal dignity | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 38. Applying faith to daily decisions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 39. Building caring relationships with adults | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 40. Building caring relationships with other youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 41. Keeping youth involved in the congregation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 42. Reaching out to serve youth who may be at risk | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Indicate **HOW WELL** you think your youth program does in realizing each of these potential goals.

- | | Not at all
well | Somewhat
well | Very
well |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 43. Teaching youth about the doctrine and scripture of your denomination | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 44. Providing a safe and caring place for youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 45. Developing values and skills in youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 46. Providing positive activities to help youth avoid negative activities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 47. Nurturing a lifelong faith commitment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 48. Nurturing a sense of cultural identity | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 49. Supporting and educating parents | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 50. Nurturing a commitment to service | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 51. Preparing youth to share their faith with others | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 52. Preparing youth for the world of work | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 53. Encouraging self-respect and personal dignity | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 54. Applying faith to daily decisions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 55. Building caring relationships with adults | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 56. Building caring relationships with other youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 57. Keeping youth involved in the congregation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 58. Reaching out to serve youth who may be at risk | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



59. Does your congregation have a clear mission or purpose statement for your youth program?

- ☐ Yes
☐ I don't know
☐ No

How much trouble do you have getting and keeping youth involved in your program in each of the following grades?

| | <u>A lot</u> | <u>Some</u> | <u>None</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 60. Grades 5 and 6? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 61. Grades 7, 8, and 9? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 62. Grades 10 to 12? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

About Local Networks for Youth Workers

Some youth workers have told us that being part of networks with other youth workers can be helpful. The next questions explore that topic.

How helpful have each of the following types of youth worker organizations been to you?

63. A **local network** of youth workers sponsored by your denomination or faith tradition
- ☐ I have never belonged to such a group.
☐ Not at all helpful
☐ Somewhat helpful
☐ Very helpful
64. A **local network** for religious youth workers from different faith traditions
- ☐ I have never belonged to such a group.
☐ Not at all helpful
☐ Somewhat helpful
☐ Very helpful
65. A **local network** of both religious and secular youth workers
- ☐ I have never belonged to such a group.
☐ Not at all helpful
☐ Somewhat helpful
☐ Very helpful

66. A **national organization** sponsored by your faith tradition
- ☐ I have never belonged to such a group.
☐ Not at all helpful.
☐ Somewhat helpful.
☐ Very helpful.

67. A **national, secular organization** for all types of youth workers?

- ☐ I have never belonged to such a group.
☐ Not at all helpful.
☐ Somewhat helpful.
☐ Very helpful.

How often in the past year have you . . .

Participated in **training workshops** with other youth workers . . .

| | <u>0</u> | <u>1-2</u> | <u>3-4</u> | <u>5+</u> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 68. From your own congregation? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 69. From other congregations within your faith tradition? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 70. From congregations from other faith traditions? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 71. From secular youth-serving organizations? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How often in the past year have you . . .

Met for **support or networking** with other youth workers . . .

| | <u>0</u> | <u>1-2</u> | <u>3-4</u> | <u>5+</u> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 72. From your own congregation? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 73. From other congregations within your faith tradition? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 74. From congregations from other faith traditions? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 75. From secular youth-serving organizations? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Planned **special events** for youth with other youth workers...

| | <u>0</u> | <u>1-2</u> | <u>3-4</u> | <u>5+</u> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 76. From your own congregation? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 77. From other congregations within your faith tradition? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 78. From congregations from other faith traditions? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 79. From secular youth-serving organizations? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How helpful do you think each of the following would be in creating or improving an interfaith youth worker network in your community?

| | <u>Not at all helpful</u> | <u>Somewhat helpful</u> | <u>Very helpful</u> |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 80. Practical resources for planning and managing the network | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 81. A common vision of goals based on the needs of our youth and our community | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 82. An outside facilitator and a "starter kit" for forming a network | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How likely would you be to join a local, interfaith network of religious youth workers in order to . . .

- | | Not at all likely | Somewhat likely | Very likely | Already belong |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 83. Plan local activities for youth groups from different faith traditions in your community? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 84. Help make the community a better place for all youth by articulating common values and providing positive opportunities for youth? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 85. Provide support for one another and exchange programming ideas? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 86. Highlight the positive role of the religious community on behalf of youth? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 87. What else would you expect from a local network of religious youth workers to make it worthwhile? (Write on the lines.) | | | | |

88. If a "mentoring" or "partner congregation" system were established in which youth workers were available for advice and support in program and activity planning for other congregations, would you be interested in participating?

- ☐ Yes, I would be interested in being "mentored."
☐ Yes, I would like to be a mentor to someone else.
☐ Sounds interesting, but I do not have the time.
☐ No, I would prefer to receive the training myself rather than be "mentored."

About Working With Other Faith Traditions

How likely would you be to cooperate from other faith traditions (Christian, Jewish, etc.) in planning and sponsoring the following types of programs for youth?

- | | Not at all likely | Somewhat likely | Very likely | Already doing it |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 89. Community service projects | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 90. Mini-Olympics or other special events | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 91. Art, drama, or music programs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 92. Sports or other leagues or tournaments | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 93. Leadership training opportunities for youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 94. Programs or services to support youth in dealing with problems they face | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 95. Activities designed to help you learn what youth in your community need | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

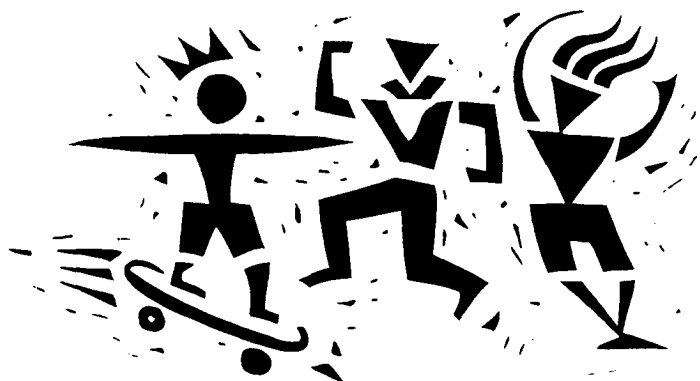
How much are each of the following barriers to working with youth workers and congregations from other faith traditions?

- | | Not at all | Some-what | Very much |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 96. Theological/doctrinal differences | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 97. Lack of models/examples in my area | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

- | | Not at all | Some-what | Very much |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 98. The senior clergy of the congregation is against it | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 99. The congregation's membership is against it | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 100. Lack of resources | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 101. Lack of time | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 102. Scheduling conflicts | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 103. Lack of shared understanding of the purpose of religious youth work | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 104. Which of the following faith traditions would you BE WILLING to work with, given your beliefs and experiences? | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Catholic | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Charismatic/Pentecostal | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Evangelical Christian | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Fundamentalist Christian | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Jewish | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Mainline Protestant | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Mormon | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Muslim | | | |

Indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

- | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 105. I am aware of the activities of youth programs in other local congregations. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 106. I am aware of the programs and services available to youth through local schools and agencies. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 107. Being part of a local, interfaith youth worker network would be a priority for me, if it were available. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 108. Having a "youth work mentor" in my community would enhance my ability to serve youth effectively. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



Below is a description of a multi-year service that could be available to congregations and youth workers in your community. Please read the description and respond to the questions that follow.

Energizing the Religious Community to Build Assets for Youth

An integrated, community-based effort that unites and energizes the religious community by . . .

- A. Holding community-wide "Igniter Events" in which congregations of many faiths discover a **positive, research-based vision** for how they can help youth grow up healthy. This vision centers on building "developmental assets" that protect youth from many risky behaviors and increase the chances young people will thrive.
- B. Developing interfaith networks of youth workers and congregations to **work together to make the community a better place for youth**. Congregations will be able to participate in joint activities, and youth workers will have access to mentoring and peer support networks in their community.
- C. Providing **integrated resources and educational opportunities** to enhance congregations' youth work in areas such as youth service, leadership development, intergenerational relationships, family support, peer counseling, and mentoring.

How much do each of these elements of this proposal appeal to you?

| | None | A little | Some | A lot |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 109. Part A: A research-based vision for healthy youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 110. Part B: Connecting with other congregations of many faiths | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 111. Part C: Resources and training to build skills | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How much do you think this kind of proposal would . . .

| | Not at all | Somewhat | Pretty much | A lot |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 112. Work in your community? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 113. Just add more work to an already heavy load? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 114. Help you significantly in working with youth? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 115. Appeal to the active youth in your program? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 116. Appeal to those youth who seldomly participate in your program? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 117. Appeal to youth who are not currently connected to congregations? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 118. Conflict with your congregation's mission of faith development? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 119. Increase your congregation's commitment to youth? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 120. Give your youth program a focus and sense of excitement? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

121. If this type of opportunity were available to congregations in your community, would you be interested in taking a leadership role in organizing and maintaining it?

- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ Yes, I think
- ☐ Yes, definitely

About Possible Training Opportunities

122. From which of the following types of organizations are you **MOST LIKELY** to seek help to improve your youth program? (Choose only one.)

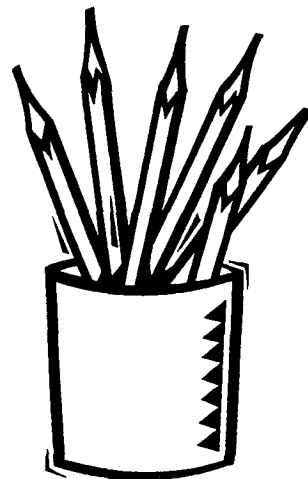
- ☐ Your own denomination
- ☐ Another denomination
- ☐ Non-denominational/independent organizations
- ☐ Secular youth-serving organizations
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Doesn't make a difference

Do you have access to quality resources (videos, books, pamphlets, etc.) to use in your youth programming that cover the following topics? (Answer yes or no to each.)

| | Yes | No |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 123. Teaching the theology and doctrine of your faith tradition | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 124. How to deal with current issues among middle and high school youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 125. Understanding adolescent development | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 126. Providing program and activity ideas for your youth program | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 127. Strengthening your knowledge and skills in working with youth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 128. How much do you think your congregation would be willing to pay for you to participate in a one-day educational event that addressed your specific needs and interests? | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Nothing | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Less than \$20 | | |
| <input type="radio"/> \$20-49 | | |
| <input type="radio"/> \$50-99 | | |
| <input type="radio"/> \$100 or more | | |

129. How much would **you** be willing to pay to participate in a one-day educational event that addressed your specific needs and interests?

- ☐ Nothing
- ☐ Less than \$20
- ☐ \$20-49
- ☐ \$50-99
- ☐ \$100 or more



If cost were not an issue, how likely would you be to attend each of the following?

| | Not at all likely | Slightly likely | Quite likely | Very likely |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 130. Workshops on a weekday | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 131. Workshops on a weekend | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 132. One- or two-hour workshops | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 133. Half-day workshops | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 134. Day-long workshops | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 135. Two-day workshops | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 136. Three-day workshops | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 137. Week-long workshops | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

What times of the year are you most able to participate in workshops and training events?

| | Would not attend | Might be able to attend | Would attend |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 138. January—February | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 139. March—April | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 140. May—June | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 141. July—August | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 142. September—October | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 143. November—December | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 144. Which ONE of the following best represents your attitude toward participating in further training in youth work? | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> I do not need additional training to do my job well. | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> I do not need training as much as I need resources to plan programs that will engage my youth. | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> I would like more training, but do not have the time or energy to go to it. | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> I would like more training, but not much is available here. | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> I would like more advanced training, not just the same basic material. | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> I already participate in a lot of youth worker training | | | |

About Your Youth Program

How many adults work with youth (grades 6-12) in your congregation (including yourself, paid staff, and on-going volunteers)? Write the number on the appropriate line.

145. Primarily doing youth groups, recreation, etc.:

146. Primarily doing religious education:

Which of the following describes the duties of your position?

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 147. Coordinating the youth program is my primary responsibility. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 148. Coordinating the youth program is one of several responsibilities I have in the congregation. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 149. I am the senior clergy (pastor, rabbi, etc.) in the congregation. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Yes No

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 150. I am responsible for coordinating the religious education program in my congregation. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 151. I serve on a committee that is responsible for planning the youth program. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 152. I work directly with youth as a teacher, coach, or youth advisor. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How often does your congregation offer each of the following for youth?

| | Not offered | Once a year | Several times per year | Once or twice per month | Weekly or more often |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 153. Formal religious instruction | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 154. Recreation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 155. Youth worship services | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 156. Retreats, camps, and other residential experiences | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 157. Leadership development | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 158. Trips to Israel, Mecca, or other religious locations | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 159. Youth community service projects | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 160. Youth choir | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 161. Mission projects | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 162. Regional/national gatherings | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 163. Prevention programs (violence, drugs) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 164. Discussions of sexuality | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 165. Scripture study group | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 166. Youth group | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Do you offer or sponsor these types of programs?

| | Yes | No |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 167. After-school programs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 168. Community centers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 169. Mentoring programs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 170. Peer counseling/peer ministry | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How would you rate the support of your congregation for youth work in each of these areas:

| | Poor | Fair | Good | Excel- lent |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 171. Providing budget/funds | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 172. Making youth work a priority | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 173. Providing volunteers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 174. Providing paid staff | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

About Your Young People

About how many youth grades 6-12 are part of each of the following? Write a number on each line, if none, write "0"; if you can't even make a guess, write "DK" for "don't know."
(Note: The numbers are not expected to add up.)

175. Your congregation: _____
176. Formal religious education: _____
177. Youth programs: _____
178. Regular attenders in youth programs: _____

About how many of the youth grades 6-12 involved in your program are ... (Give a separate answer in each category.)

| | About | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | None | Some | half | Most | All |
| 179. Low income? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 180. American Indian? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 181. Asian or Pacific Islander? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 182. Black or African American? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 183. Latino or Hispanic? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 184. White or European American? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 185. Bi-racial or bi-cultural? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

About how many youth in your youth program are from families ...

| | About | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | None | Some | half | Most | All |
| 186. Who are NOT members of the congregation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 187. Who live within two miles of the congregation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 188. Who live more than 10 miles from the congregation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Indicate whether you think each of the following programs is effective in increasing involvement of hard-to-reach youth (whether or not you offer the program).

| | Yes | No |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 189. Camping, retreats, or other special trips | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 190. Recreation (e.g., basketball, baseball) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 191. Community service projects | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 192. Music or drama activities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 193. Drop-in centers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 194. Small-group discussions of spiritual issues | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 195. Small-group discussions of issues youth face today | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 196. Tutoring or other academic enrichment programs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 197. Other effective approaches you know about: | | |

And Finally, Some Questions About You

198. Are you male or female?

- ☐ Female
☐ Male

199. How old are you?

- ☐ Younger than 25
☐ 25-29
☐ 30-39
☐ 40-49
☐ 50-59
☐ 60 or older

200. How do you describe yourself? (Mark only one.)

- ☐ American Indian
☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
☐ Black or African American
☐ Latino or Hispanic
☐ White or European American
☐ Bi-racial or bi-cultural

201. To give us an idea of your congregation's location, please write your congregation's ZIP Code here: _____

202. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Mark only one.)

- ☐ Grade school
☐ High school
☐ Vocational/technical school
☐ Associate degree
☐ Bible college
☐ Other college or university
☐ Seminary
☐ Other professional or graduate degree

Which of the following types of training/education, if any, have you had specifically for youth work?

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 203. Seminary-level work | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 204. College or graduate program | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 205. Continuing education classes or workshops | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 206. One- or two-day workshops | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 207. Basic volunteer training in the congregation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 208. Internship in a congregation or other youth program | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Thanks