

FINANCING YOUR YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAM

At some point ministry is going to be related to finances. This is the money used to conduct the youth program. This is a reality and the community is responsible to shape and develop a budget on behalf of the programs. This budget is based upon the guidance of Chaplains and other “invested” adults, parents and volunteers. Ultimately Chaplains are the one responsible to determine how they will resource the program. Some installation Chaplains decide to resource 100% of the requirement, some from a single chapel other using multiple congregations, and still others use a ministry support group of adults or some combination of all. The bottom line is that the program funding level must always be driven by the vision and goals of the chaplains, congregations, paid youth director (if available) and parents working in cooperation.

There are two sample budgets included as enclosures . The first is kind of generic and would be for an installation with high school ministry only. The second is a very stable, mature and busy program. Both are just examples and must be locally adapted. They are not even final products. They are “preparation” or “homework” to demonstrate vision and goals will require finances. One of the goals was to provide a kind of “plug and play” that allows for modification by including different cost structures in the event additional information is asked for by Chaplains or we are asked to review and resubmit.

When it comes to developing a budget to submit to your chaplains you have to start on your knees in prayer and with a lot of humility. Your task is to ask the Lord to give you a vision for how your ministry will look. You must then break it out into the smaller pieces that acknowledge the different categories of people you will attempt to engage. And finally select the programs and events that you will use to accomplish your vision. To do this you will have to come to some general decisions regarding recurring events and non recurring special events. A useful way of beginning is just asking yourself, “What experiences would I like to see our students have an opportunity to have in a three year period?” That drives you to practical questions like, “What would I want students to experience weekly?” From that will come a plan like, “I will run club from mid Aug to the end of May on Sunday evenings for middle school, minus certain holidays. I will budget \$35 per club to provide refreshments and program items.”

A statement like this can be used to work out a final budget. Take it to a calendar and work out a

One of the things that threw me off initially was the different kind of calendars;

Fiscal (Oct-Sep) for military folks.

Annual (Jan-Dec.) is the way most folks think.

School (Aug to May or adjust for local situations) which is how student cycles operate.

To adjust for this it was useful to me lay my budget out in for 18 months. The first being the present (usually sometime in the spring) to the end of September and then the next fiscal year. All of this was done in very sketchy terms by starting with the recurring stuff like weekly meetings, add the big expensive stuff that had to have deposits way ahead of time like, Retreats, Ski Trips and Missions/Service trips and then add one medium level event per semester, add water and

specific number of clubs, multiply it by 35 and you have your budget for club for a year. Where did the dates come from? The most effective time frame you can arrive at based upon observation of school and installation calendars and an estimate of the cost of responsibly bringing kids together for an hour and half per week that will allow for what you want that time to look like.

The same principles apply for special events. Example. I will provide one special event per month from July to May. Initial special events will be designed as image builders to attract kids to club and continue sporadically through out the year to maintain outreach, however every other month we will do something that requires more commitment and is intended for curious or committed students. Here is the question that will always drive the cost, "how many people will be involved." My guidance would be to, be reasonable, but always be optimistic.

Basically there are two kinds of funding involved, (1) recurring and (2) non-recurring.

1) RECURRING FUNDS: These are the funds that can be anticipated on a recurring basis each month. As a rule of thumb an amount of \$25 to \$35 dollars depending on numbers and would be adequate for most weekly club programming. These funds would be allocated for monthly program expenses (i.e. balloons from Wal-mart, pizza meal etc.). Staff would need to make separate arrangements for "how" you would access these funds. Normally through purchase order or impact card requests. As a general rule you want to forecast a little more than your actual monthly need, as well as allow for growth.

2) NON-RECURRING FUNDS: This is money for "special events and programs" i.e. lock-ins, retreats, etc. that cannot be handled by recurring funding. These kinds of funds are directly linked to what is planned. If you decide to do a retreat you would need this kind of money and like wise if you chose not to you would not need this kind of funding. Chaplains must be consulted to see how they will allow students/families to contribute "donations" to offset these kind of expenditures. Kids would be requested to donate money back to the fund for being able to participate in the retreat. This would allow you to "receive" donations from students for a retreat and then the chaplains fund could "disburse" those funds towards the expense involved in participating in a retreat. The amount of this kind of funding would be solely up to the special events communities offer their youth. However the opposite is also true in that there is a negative impact to not making these kind of events available because they are the kinds of events that attract, retain and create significant memory makers for kids that chaplains are solely able to offer because of the dedication and creativity of youth leaders.

Example a retreat costs \$7000 but you sent 60 participants who donated back \$100 apiece they made through fund-raising so the real cost to the fund is \$1000.

ANNUAL BUDGET: It is not the role of youth leaders to do everything cheaply. It is their role to offer quality programming that is safe, timely, engaging and effective. So then who determines the programs and events we perform and the expense associated with each? The answer is a balance between the Chaplains, command, parents/adults, and the youth

leaders. Budget needs to flow from two sources; i.e. vision and goals, (if contracts are involved hopefully they are simply the outcome of vision and goals. The financial requirements must be provided by, or owned, by some entity. Eventually this budget you develop is rolled into whatever planning document chaplains' use to forecast and plan for the future.

STUDENT FUNDRAISING: This is a critical area that youth leaders and chaplains must pay attention to as they develop their budgets. Youth Leaders cannot expect to be able to submit costly and aggressive program budgets without helping chaplains understand how students and families will contribute back to the chaplains fund. As a general rule of thumb leaders should plan on an a 80% return on student events with a high entertainment value (i.e. ski trips) and a 50% return on costly events such as missions trips or image builders. Whatever percentage used please mutually agree on the number. Over and over one of the first “learning curves” for chaplains is the high cost of youth ministry programming. Some chaplains will try to “help” by trying to take the “burden” of fundraising off but all that really happens long term is that the youth ministry program looks like a cash cow that is continually in need of underwriting.

A PLUG FOR Adult Support Groups: An Adult Support group organized as an installation recognized “not for profit group” (such as boy/girl scouts), can greatly enhance student fundraising. Ministry opportunities, which are paid for by non-appropriated chapel funds, can be prohibitive unless the fund can count on some portion of that amount being recouped. A solution is to allow students to fundraise. The worst-case scenario is to not allow fundraising because it is cumbersome. Yes it is cumbersome, but it also develops ownership, provides opportunity for service and builds community.

Chaplain's funds are guided and regulated by regulations that do not allow for one of the most popular and easiest forms of student fundraising, which is the resell of items. When an adult support group is formed as a private organization it can assist in student fundraising by conducting the fundraising under their sponsorship. At the conclusion the profits of those fundraisers could be “donated” to the chaplains fund or sent directly to the vendor from the support group. Sometimes the Chaplain chooses to designate a sub account within the fund to ensure accountability.

Example: Example your adult support group contacts T-shirt Company XYZ and coordinates to receive brochures; Students sell to friends, relatives and neighbors. A bulk order is made. T-shirts are distributed to buyers and checks made to the Support group are collected and distributed appropriately between the XYZ T shirt company and the chaplains Fund. The staff person can recruit an adult volunteer who keeps tabs on contributions to the fund on behalf of students and counts that towards the students who participate in the fundraiser.

PRACTICAL STEPS TO DEVELOPING YOUR LOCAL BUDGET

1. Develop your own “working” budget. Use the sample budgets as a reference. This is to ensure that your fundraising plan is already roughed out and able to be discussed. If you are new try it out first on your regional director or if you have been around awhile seek out an invested adult to share your plan. Here are a few tips:
 - a. Be as general as possible with titles and descriptions to allow for flexibility so the funds are present regardless of what they are applied to. For example it would usually be appropriate to list “special event” rather than a specific kind of event. This way the funds are available and already allocated. Even if you have to ask for more or are able to say the funds won’t be needed you don’t end up looking like a poor planner who forgot to ask.
 - b. Note the way that each line is given a priority of A,B or C and even a financial outcome based on priority at the end. This is probably not anything you’ll be asked to do but it puts you in a position to discuss “negative impact.” Thus you would be able to explain very quickly what would not be able to be accomplished on limited funding.
 - c. Programming tempo is another aspect of budgeting. For instance you’ll need “image builders” just prior to school and in the month of Jan for sure. For example pool party’s or a super “Super bowl” event. Other examples are high cost items such as retreats, ski trips, or mission/service trips.
 - d. Focus Groups are another way of looking at a budget. For example is there an allocation for volunteer training. Try to take max advantage of targets of opportunity such as Youth Specialties, Group or Serendipity Trainings, etc... Have you budgeted sufficiently for all the different kinds of groups of people you will bring together?
 - e. Durable, as opposed to expendable, items are also a consideration and should be planned for and purchased as well. Over time you will decide on certain items you need to conduct your ministry. Be reasonable about purchasing them but do plan for it. By the way always keep a “decrement list” available. This is a list of: item, vendor and cost that can quickly be accessed for year end spending if made available.
 - f. Publications and subscriptions.
 - g. Transportation can be an issue as well. Sample budget 2 had a line for Transportation on an “as need” basis. In most instances it wasn’t needed but occasional use of rental vans was preferred for convenience and liability issues.
 - h. Remember there are no short cuts. If you say you’ll do fundraising and don’t hit your goals you’ll eventually be found out. That is why it is so important to include projected and actual cost and how they were off set by fundraising into your after action reports.
2. Arrange a time with your chaplain to share with them your vision and goals for the ministry and the price tag that would be associated. The goal of this time would be to help them see what their investment will “buy.” You will need to be very open and

be able to hear both permissions and concerns. As you leave you will need to ensure that you understand the chaplains guidance and the format (or the person you need to speak to) for the ministry budget.

3. Now comes the fun part of wrestling your dreams into a “final” and refined document according to the Chaplains guidance before you resubmit it. Remember every installation will want you to organize the information a little differently but it is pretty much the same information they will need.

SAMPLE BUDGET #1

Two sample budgets are included below. The installation chaplain has provided the following guidance;

The fund will provide 100% of the resources for programming but desires that

For the conduct of kick off events, service projects, and discipleship opportunities the youth program will attempt to return 50% to the fund through fundraising and donations suggested in return for participation for these events.

For the conduct of large events where the entertainment value is substantial (i.e. retreats, lock-ins, and ski trips) the youth program will attempt to return 80% to the fund through fundraising and donations suggested in return for participation for these events.

(ASG's could also serve to offset the funding of certain large activities as well)

Youth Ministry FY 00/01 Funding Input

RECURRING EXPENSES (Monthly)

\$50	Programming
\$100	Supplies
\$200	Commissary
	TOTAL: \$4200

NON RECURRING SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

Fall 00

\$2500	Oct 00	Retreat at local facility
\$150	Oct 00	Hayride(s) HS GROUP
\$250	Nov. 00	Lock in(s) HS GROUP

Spring 01

\$10,000	Mar 01	Weekly HS Program Special event to Colorado
\$350	Apr. 01	Youth Specialties Youth Resources Seminar (training for volunteers)

Summer 01

\$8000	June 01	DC 01(Youth For Christ Event)
\$150	July 01	Pool Party Club Beyond
\$150	Aug. 01	Pool Party Weekly HS Program
\$2500	June 01	Retreat at local facility

Non Recurring Literature

\$190	Oct 00	Youth Leaders, Interlinc.
\$250	Jan 00	Youth Leaders, Interlinc. Graduation Gift
\$325	Apr. 00	Senior Bibles

SAMPLE BUDGET 2

From: Lead Chapel Youth Worker

To: Chapel Resource Manager

Date: Early Spring

RE: YOUTH MINISTRY FY00/01 FUNDING INPUT

1. Following is the proposed weekly youth ministry funding input for the period of 1 Oct 00- 30 Sep 01

RECURRING

						TOTAL
\$150 for programming	99/00	Weekly HS Program(38)				\$ 1800
\$ 150 for food	99/00	Weekly HS Program(38)				\$ 1800
\$25	99/00	Nursery (YOC Leaders meetings Monthly Aug-May, 10)				\$ 250
\$150 for programming	99/00	Weekly MS Program (33)				\$ 1800
\$150 for food	99/00	Weekly MS Program (33)				\$ 1800
\$100	99/00	HS GROUP& MS GROUP Program-Transportation (11)				\$ 1100

NON RECURRING PROGRAMMING

AMOUNT REQUEST	USE	WASH	PRIORITY	EVENT		Actual Cost
Weekly HS ProgramSummer 01 (Jul to Aug)						
\$50	Jul 01 Aug 01	0%	A	Leader Training Materials		\$ 50
\$50	Jul 01 Aug 01	0%	A	Leader Training Meal		\$ 50
\$2500	Jul 01 Aug 01	50%/1250	B	Weekly HS ProgramRetreat (OHC)		\$ 1250
\$250	Jul 01 Aug 01	0%	A	Weekly HS ProgramPool Party		\$ 250
\$250	Jul 01 Aug 01	0%	A	MS GROUPOol Party		\$ 250
\$3000	Aug 01 Sept 01	50%/1500	B	Weekly HS ProgramJV Retreat (OHC)		\$ 1500
Weekly HS ProgramFall 00 (Sept-Dec)						
\$250	Sep 00 Oct 00	0%	B	Serendipity Small Group Trng		\$ 250
\$600	Sep 00 Oct 00	0%	C	YS Conf. (4 two tuition/lodging)		\$ 600
\$500	Sep 00 Oct 00	80%/400	B	Weekly HS ProgramSpecial Event		\$ 100
\$500	Sep 00 Oct 00	80%/400	B	MS GROUPSpecial Event		\$ 100
\$5000	Oct 00 Nov 00	80%4000	C	Weekly HS ProgramSki Co(Deposit)		\$ 1000
\$500	Oct 00 Nov 00	80%/400	B	MS GROUPOski Weston (Deposits)		\$ 100
\$5000	Nov 00 Dec 00	80%4000	C	Weekly HS ProgramSki Co(Deposit)		\$ 1000
\$50	Nov 00 Dec 00	80%/40	B	Bake Shop, Fund.		\$ 10
\$200	Dec 00 Jan 00	80%/160	B	Spaghetti Dinner CGC, Fund.		\$ 40
\$5000	Dec 00 Jan 00	80%4000	C	Weekly HS ProgramSki Co(Deposit)		\$ 1000
\$3000	Dec 00 Jan 00	80%/2400	B	JYOC Ski Trip (Weston)		\$ 600
Weekly HS ProgramSpring 01 (Jan-May)						
\$6,600	Jan 01 Feb 01	80%/5280	C	SYOC Ski Trip (Co. 54@400)		\$ 1320
\$500	Jan 01 Feb 01	50%/250	B	Retreat Deposits		\$ 250
\$500	Feb 01 Mar 01	80%/400	B	Weekly HS ProgramSpecial Event		\$ 100
\$500	Feb 01 Mar 01	80%/400	B	MS GROUPOSpecial Event		\$ 100
\$300	Mar 01 Apr 01	0%	C	Easter Pancake Bkfst,		\$ 300
\$400	Apr 01 May 01	0%	A	YS Resources Seminar		\$ 350
\$4000	Apr 01 May 010	50%/2000	B	HS GROUP SC Service Trip (20@200)		\$2,000
Weekly HS ProgramSummer 01 (May-June)						
\$360	Jun01 Jul 01	0%	A	Weekly HS ProgramSummer Mtgs/W Suppers(6)		\$ 360
\$10000	Jun 01 Jul 01	50%/5000	C	Weekly HS ProgramMissions Trip		\$ 5000
<u>NON RECURRING LITERATURE & SUPPLIES</u>						
\$500	Mar 01 Apr 01	0%	B	Senior Bibles		\$ 500
\$152	Jan 01 Feb. 01	0%	B	Student Praise Interactive Network		\$ 152
\$600	Aug 01 Sept 01	100%/600	C	Student T-Shirts		\$ 0

PROGRAMMING TOTALS:		EXPENSE	WASH	COST TO Fund
	Recurring	\$8,550	1,100	7,450
	A:	\$1,360	0	1,360
	B:	\$16,652	9,600	7,052
	C:	\$33,100	22,880	10,220

2. For questions or comments call _____ @ xxx-xxxx.