

Student Ministries Resource Manual

Your Guide to a Successful Ministry to Students



Student Ministries Resource Manual

Published by Word of Life Local Church Ministries
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Who is Word of Life?

Word of Life is a nondenominational Christian organization creating faith-defining experiences that give students and families the chance to encounter God and grow in their spiritual walks. Through high-energy camping ministries, in-depth biblical training, international missions, and local church ministries, Word of Life shares the message of salvation with those who have never heard and helps believers grow in their faith.



We are made up of four ministries:

- **Youth and Family Camps:** high-energy Christian camping experiences for youth and families.
- **Bible Institute:** collegiate-level biblical study programs.
- **International Ministries:** short and long-term missions trips to share the Gospel around the world.
- **Local Church Ministries:** curriculum, training, and resources to equip local churches in their children's and youth ministries.

Through each of these ministries, we create loving environments and engaging experiences where life-change happens. To learn more, visit www.wol.org.

This Resource Manual is an overview of the tools we have available for you and how they will help you be more effective in your ministry.

Youth Ministry Coaches

One key element that sets Word of Life apart from other youth ministry organizations is that we are committed to providing local churches with personalized, high-quality training. Our Ministry Coaches are spread throughout the country with the primary ministry of partnering with local churches. They equip leaders to maximize the impact of their ministries through resources, curriculum, and training that will help students grow in their faith. Our coaches are passionate about equipping you and those you serve through encouragement, coaching, and in-depth training.

Your Ministry Coach wants to do whatever they can to help you do ministry better.

Your Weekly Meeting

THE FUNNEL TECHNIQUE

We want to encourage you to craft your meeting in such a way as to encourage students to be more receptive to God's Word. Recognize that when they walk in, they may not have spiritual things on their minds. Like you, they come in from the craziness of life and need to "get into the meeting." By taking them through "the funnel technique" in the process of your meeting, you can engage them as they enter, prepare them for the focal point of the meeting, the Bible study, and then send them off from your small groups ready to apply the key thought from the night. Here is the process:

Huddle Before You Start

Though you may have planned out every aspect of the night weeks before, it is a great idea to have a quick huddle time with your leadership team before you start to ensure a smooth night. This would be a good time to pray as a leadership team and will ensure everyone is clear on the plan for the night. Encourage your leadership team to arrive 15-30 minutes prior to your scheduled start time, to make this huddle possible.

Start With Fun

Always start with fun, high-energy activities because that will get your students involved right away. If you want your students to be engaged during the Bible Study, you need them to engage during the whole meeting including the preliminary activities.

Here is a suggested meeting plan to help each night operate with the Funnel Technique:

Icebreaker/Game

- Have your most upbeat and energetic leader heading up this part of the meeting.
- Start with a fun and crazy game or icebreaker to break down walls of resistance in the students' hearts and lives.
- Change up your games from week to week; old games can easily become routine and sometimes boring.
- Plan an ice breaker that encourages everyone to be involved. Group games get the whole group moving and encourage involvement.
- Train your leaders to be involved with the students during this time because this will earn them the right to speak to them about spiritual things later.

Announcements

- Have someone with high energy lead this portion.
- Use videos to make your announcements.
- Use crazy skits to capture students' attention.

Singing

- Start your music with high energy songs.
- Step down the energy of the songs gradually as you move toward the Bible lesson.
- Transition to a prayer time just before the lesson or move right into the lesson.

Intercessory Prayer

- Consider scheduling a time to corporately pray for the unsaved friends of the students in your community.
- Encourage your students to be prepared to share the names of friends who need to trust Christ.
- Encourage them to pray for those friends outside of your meeting time.

Bible Study

- Once the singing is finished, get right into the Bible Study.
- Make sure all tech things are taken care of before the meeting starts.
- Remember the Bible Study is the focal point of the whole night. In the funnel technique, it's where you have been leading everyone with the preliminaries.
- Don't forget your students have been conditioned to have a 3-5 minute attention span. Make sure you change things up throughout your lesson to engage them.
- Each Word of Life lesson has just one key take-away statement (Sticky Statement). Make sure you focus on that so your students leave with that one key thought on their minds.

Small Groups

- This is the bottom of the funnel. What you focus on here is what you want them to think about during the week to come.
- Your goal is to help each student in your small groups to leave with a very specific application of the lesson.
- Be sure all of your Small Group Leaders have a copy of the Small Group Leader's Guide to help with direction in this area.

PRELIMINARIES

The time allotted for the preliminary activities should be flexible enough for you to allow for extra time on different parts from week to week. One week the prayer time may be longer than the singing time, but it is recommended that you still keep the preliminary activities within a 30-minute time frame.

Keep in mind that variety during this time is really key to accomplishing the main goal of the preliminary time: to breakdown walls and build relationships. Make it your aim to get all the students involved during this time, whether playing a game, watching a funny announcement, or singing a great worship song. Getting the students to engage in the preliminary time will encourage involvement as you move into the Bible Study. Consider the following as you plan this part of your meeting:

- Plan to have your youth leaders arrive at least 15-30 minutes early to pray and prepare for what is coming. When there is a group game, your leaders need to be actively involved whenever possible.
- Interaction during this time is key to connecting with students.
- With just 30 minutes to work with, the key elements that you should focus on each week are icebreaker/game, announcements, singing, and intercessory prayer.
- Announcements should not be boring. Work to keep them exciting and engaging.
- The specific order during the preliminaries is for you to decide. Arrange the elements however you would like, but we highly recommend that you use the Funnel Technique so your preliminary activities lead smoothly into your Bible Study time.
- In review, your preliminary time should do the following: build a sense of community, "break the ice," create a fun atmosphere, and prepare students to be open to the Bible study.

Bible Study

There was a time when the average student had a basic knowledge of God and the Bible. Many ministries were built assuming that certain truths were inherently understood. This is similar to how the Apostle Peter ministered in Acts chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost. His audience was a group of Jews who knew a lot about God and the Scriptures. Because of their background, he was able to use their knowledge as a foundation for teaching others truths about God.

Today, though, we're working with groups of students who have little or no knowledge of Jesus Christ. Many believe that religious and moral standards should not be held as absolutes. In our current society, we can't assume anything! As a result of this truth, the approach to teaching Biblical truth needs to change.

PAUL AND A NEW APPROACH TO MINISTRY

In Acts 17, the Bible records a new approach to ministry demonstrated by the Apostle Paul. Since his audience was a group of Greek philosophers, he began teaching them about God using a strategy very different from the strategy used by the Apostle Peter in Acts 2. Paul started with the basics about who God is and what He is like. He engaged the philosophers by using their own beliefs and culture in order to help them understand and receive truth.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The Word of Life Student Ministries curriculum provides student ministries with engaging lessons so that students are equipped to obey the truth of God's Word out of love for Christ. In each lesson, students are brought to a point of decision and challenged to connect the truth of God's Word to their life through action. Each lesson is designed to help students with a great deal of biblical knowledge and students with very little biblical knowledge to apply the truth of God's Word. A 30-minute time slot is recommended for the Bible Study each week.

- **Core Essentials** – Lessons designed to help students understand basic truth for living out their faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Theology** – Major doctrines of the Christian faith to give students a solid biblical foundation.
- **Bible Book Studies** – One Old Testament and one New Testament book each year.
- **Apologetics** – Lessons that present a rational basis for the Christian faith.
- **Topical** – Current and culturally relevant topics that students are facing.
- **Christian Basics** – Basic biblical disciplines that lead to spiritual growth.
- **Video Series** – We provide a video series each year to help add variety to the teaching schedule.

Our weekly curriculum provides student ministries with engaging lessons so that students are equipped to obey the truth of God's Word out of a love for Christ.

LESSON OVERVIEW

We recognize those using our curriculum range from the experienced pastor to those who may be fairly new to teaching. We have developed our lessons in such a way that they will help the experienced teacher prepare with optimal use of time, but also give the less experienced teacher the tools they need to craft an engaging lesson. The lessons are packaged in modules, a format that provides multiple weeks of material of the same type.

General Lesson Format

Each lesson is written to include four basic parts: the Hook, Lesson Content, the Connection, and the Decision. The Hook helps students understand why they need to know the Lesson Content. The Lesson Content is the *biblical truth that the students need to know*. The Connection is *how the Lesson Content relates to the student*. The Decision is *what students can actually choose to do* about the biblical truth that has been connected to their lives. We encourage teachers to take the time they need to study, customize, and tweak the lessons to their style and audience. Each of our lessons are written in a way to provide the most inexperienced teachers enough material to present a solid, biblically based lesson; however, each teacher should feel free to adapt the lesson to the specific, immediate needs of their student ministry.

- **Objective**

Each lesson has a clearly stated objective that expresses the essence of the lesson in a short, significant statement. The entire lesson and desired outcome is described in one short statement so the teacher can keep the lesson focused on one main idea.

- **Key Verse**

Each lesson is built around the truth of God's Word. While the lesson may use a variety of Scripture references throughout the lesson, one key verse is highlighted to help the teacher and students focus on the biblical principle found in the lesson.

- **Sticky Statement**

Each lesson includes a Sticky Statement. The Sticky Statement is a single pithy saying that expresses the Lesson Objective in a memorable way. It summarizes the entire content of the lesson into one powerful, easy-to-remember statement that students can take with them each week.

- **Lesson Outline**

Each lesson comes with a Lesson Outline for the teacher. After studying the lesson content and passages of Scripture, a teacher could choose to teach from the Lesson Outline instead of the specific lesson content. This feature is designed to help the experienced teacher maximize preparation time. The outline can also be printed as fill-in-the blank Student Notes that provides a way for the students to follow along with the lesson.

- **PowerPoint Presentations**

A PowerPoint Presentation has been developed from each lesson outline that incorporates the graphics designed specifically for that lesson's module. Teachers are given the tools necessary for teaching the lesson but also have the opportunity to modify the PowerPoint Presentation to fit the specific needs of their Student Ministry.

Small Groups

The Bible demonstrates that discipleship and personal growth happen best in the context of personal relationships. Since this is true, our tools are built around the idea that students will be divided into small groups with one or two leaders during a portion of the weekly meeting. We have found that keeping the groups limited to a maximum of 6 students per leader is most effective and efficient. It is important to give this portion of your ministry ample time to accomplish its vital role. A 30 minute time slot is recommended each week.

One of the most important things that small groups accomplish is lesson application. We want students to not only learn the truth of God's Word, but make a choice to live differently because of what they've learned. We have developed a Small Group Leader's Guide to assist in this endeavor.

SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Small Group Leader's Guide is to help the small group leader build on what is shared in the Bible lesson and maximize every minute of small group time. We want to get your students talking and interacting with God's Word in a personal way so that it impacts them. The guide coordinates with the lesson and provides questions and discussion content to help lead the students to a point of decision each week.

Ultimately, we want every student to leave each week with a specific commitment to apply the truth from God's Word in a way that is tailored to their needs. Then the small group leader should pray for them and encourage their follow through to that commitment.

The Small Group Leader's Guide has five sections:

- 1. GOAL OF SMALL GROUP:** This is a restating of the main objective of the lesson in a way that helps the small group leader understand what specific outcome they are aiming for with their group.
- 2. LESSON CONTENT:** This section contains the outline of the Bible lesson. It is the same content as the student notes, but contains the correct answers for each blank.
- 3. SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** The Leader's Guide has questions (**in bold**) and content (*in italics*) to guide the small group in a meaningful discussion about the lesson. The **questions** are designed to start the conversation of the small group and should not be the only questions asked or discussed. The *content* is to help the Small Group Leader think through how he might go about leading the discussion but is not designed to be read to the small group.
- 4. DECISION:** This part of the Leader's Guide is where the leader will guide the students toward specific application of what has been discussed both in the Bible lesson and during small group.
- 5. STICKY STATEMENT:** The Sticky Statement summarizes the entire content of the lesson into one powerful, easy-to-remember statement that students can take with them each week.

The Small Group Leader's Guide has questions and content to guide a meaningful discussion about each lesson.

We have several training videos that give specific guidance and powerful ideas to help your small groups be more effective.

Small Group Lesson Application



Small Groups part 2



Small Groups part 1



Your First Month of Small Groups



Quiet Time

For Christians to grow spiritually, it's essential that they take time each day to intentionally focus on and commune with God: meditating on God and His Word as well as taking time for prayer and personal worship.



Wolstore.org

The Word of Life Quiet Time is a dynamic devotional tool that helps people spend purposeful time with the Lord every day. Word of Life has customized versions of the Quiet Time for every age group from preschoolers through adults. Each of these tools follow the same path through Scripture so the whole family will be reading from the same passage every day. This is an incredible way to bring an entire family or an entire church together in their daily time with the Lord and leads to some powerful times of sharing and unity.

Quiet Time is a daily devotional tool that allows Christians to take time each day to intentionally focus on and commune with God.

Here is a quick summary of all of the versions of the Quiet Time:

Quiet Time Interactive

- a. Provides a more structured approach to devotions including things such as step-by-step commentary and personalized questions relating to specific topics and verses in the passage.
- b. Great for those who are not as experienced with studying God's Word on their own.
- c. Geared towards teenagers.

Quiet Time with Commentary

- a. Asks two simple questions each day: "What is the writer saying?" and "How can I apply this to my life?" This approach allows the beginner or the more mature Christ-follower to study at their own level of understanding.
- b. Includes a custom commentary for each passage which helps the reader understand and apply the passage. This also provides extra help for adults and ministry volunteers who need to answer questions from students and children about the passage.

Online Quiet Time

- a. Passages available in 26 Bible translations in 10 different languages.
- b. Enjoy going deeper with written commentaries for students, adults, and video commentary using the Life Essentials Study Bible, with renowned Bible teacher Gene Getz.
- c. The journal includes a prayer section, which allows you to add your own prayer requests and intercede on behalf of others.
- d. With the "Community" Section, you can see, comment, and dialogue with all of your friends as it relates to their Quiet Time. Jack Wyrzten, Founder of Word of Life, used to say, "Your Quiet Time isn't done until you've share it with someone." "Community" is a place where you can share with others what God is teaching you and how He is working in your life.
- e. The Accountability tool helps friends and family hold each other accountable even if they live half way around the world.

Children's Quiet Times

- a. Word of Life also offers 4 versions of the Quiet Time designed for children.
 - 1. Early Learners Quiet Time (Pre-School/Kindergarten)
 - 2. 1st-2nd Grade Quiet Time
 - 3. 3rd-4th Grade Quiet Time
 - 4. 5th-6th Grade Quiet Time
- b. Each Quiet Time is specifically geared toward the reading and learning levels of that particular age group.

The Quiet Time makes it easy to set personal goals and be consistent in daily devotional time with the Lord. Your local Ministry Coach can help guide you through ways to effectively use the Quiet Time as a tool in your ministry.

Creative Discipleship Program

In 1 Timothy 4:7b, the Word of God instructs believers to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Creative Discipleship is designed to reward your students as they develop habits of spiritual discipline to strengthen their personal relationship with Christ.

Developing healthy spiritual habits is a crucial step toward spiritual growth for every follower of Christ. We need to develop consistency in our lives in order to remain close to God and grow in our relationship with Him. *The components of the Creative Discipleship Program are NOT intended to be used simply to earn a scholarship but rather to create biblical habits.* Help your students use this program as a platform to grow their faith. Train your students to remain faithful to these spiritual disciplines even after they reach the maximum points in any section of the program.

As students make progress in their spiritual disciplines, Creative Discipleship encourages them with periodic incentives. The incentives encourage movement towards spiritual habits while the Spirit of God grows their desire for a deepening relationship with Jesus.

We have designed Creative Discipleship to allow students to make progress even if they have little or no parental help. They can work at their own pace with the flexibility to adapt the program to their strengths.

We encourage you to help them set weekly, monthly, and yearly goals. Your students live in a culture that wants everything immediately. With Creative Discipleship, each time a student reaches a goal, you can encourage him or her with another incentive.

The WOL Multiply App has a tool built into it to help track a student’s progress in Creative Discipleship. Be sure to download and use this FREE App.

The Scripture Memory portion of the Creative Discipleship Program utilizes the Quizlet App for convenience. Be sure to download and use that FREE App as well.

Creative Discipleship focuses on student involvement in seven key areas of growth.

Attendance

- Since God has made us interdependent to work together in one body, His church, attending a local church is vital for the study of and instruction from the Word of God.
- Students can earn points for the first 20 student ministry meetings that they attend. TWO POINTS will be awarded for each student ministry meeting attended.
- In order for any scholarships to be awarded, a student **MUST** attend a minimum of 20 student ministry meetings in their local church.
- Using Word of Life’s Multiply! App will make tracking a student’s attendance each week a breeze.

Quiet Time

- Quiet Time builds an intimate relationship and fellowship with God. Students are encouraged to consistently spend time in God’s Word and in prayer.
- Students can earn points for the first 200 days of quiet time that they complete in a Word of Life Quiet Time Journal. ONE POINT will be awarded for each day completed.

- Only one point can be awarded on any given day that Quiet Time is done.
- Students are encouraged to work with a small group leader to establish a goal for having a consistent quiet time with God throughout the year.
- Quiet Time devotional books are available for purchase at wolstore.org.

Scripture Memory

- The Word of Life Scripture memory packs cover relevant topics with a variety of key biblical themes. They are available in both paper and digital formats.
- Students can earn points for the first 24 verses memorized. FIVE POINTS will be awarded for each verse memorized.
- Verses can be accessed digitally through a mobile device by using the Quizlet app. (Search for Quizlet on your device or go to Quizlet.com)
 - Using the Quizlet App, click on the magnifying glass in the top right-hand corner of the App and search for “WOLLCM.” (WOLLCM = Word of Life Local Church Ministries). You do not have to join a class to access the verses.
 - Click on “folders” and choose your preferred translation, then the topic.
- Verse packs are available in ESV, NASB, NIV, NKJ, and KJV translations.
- To demonstrate that a verse has been memorized, students can write out or quote the verse (without help) to any student ministry staff member of the church.
- Printed verse sheets are available for purchase at wolstore.org.

Service

- We encourage students to show their love for Christ as they serve others in their church and community. We have developed a creative list of service ideas to engage students in ministry.
- You can find the full list of suggested service opportunities in this resource manual. Also, the Multiply! App has the list of service opportunities included for quick reference.
- Students can earn points for the first 16 service items completed. FIVE POINTS will be awarded for each service item.
- Service items must come from the list provided by Word of Life to qualify for scholarship.
- There is no limit to the number of times a student can do a specific service.

Reading Books

- One good way to allow the lives of other Christians to help develop our character is by reading about their challenges and victories in Christ.
- We encourage students to read books from a specific book list of relevant topics, Christian biographies, as well as the entire New Testament.
- Students can earn points for the first 3 books read. TWENTY POINTS will be awarded for each book read.
- Reading the entire New Testament will count for 2 books.
- A list of approved books can be found in the Resource Section of lcm.wol.org.

Bringing Friends

- A great way to introduce students to Jesus is to have their Christian friends bring them to an event in your student ministry at church so you can begin the conversation with them about Jesus.
- Students can earn points for the first 2 friends that they bring to a student ministry meeting, student ministry event, church service, or church event. TWENTY POINTS will be awarded each time a different friend attends.
- When awarding points for bringing friends, please consider that the purpose of having students bring friends is to help them understand how to begin a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Gospel Conversations

- Word of Life's founder, Jack Wyrzten aptly said, "It is the responsibility of every generation to reach their generation with the Gospel of Jesus Christ."
- Making disciples who make disciples is the ultimate cause and it begins with having Gospel conversations.
- The most effective way to engage every student with the Gospel of Jesus is for students to have personal Gospel conversations with their friends.
- Students can earn points for their first 6 Gospel Conversations. TEN POINTS will be awarded for each Gospel Conversation.
- A Gospel Conversation is defined as sharing the Gospel with someone.

NOTES: The student doesn't need to complete the conversation with the person since that may not always be possible. The important thing is that the student initiated the conversation about having a personal relationship with God.

If the person indicates he or she is already a believer, it still counts as a Gospel Conversation. What is important is that the conversation took place.

Simply talking with a person about spiritual matters, or offering to pray for them, or inviting them to church are all good things, but they fall short of a clear Gospel conversation.

	Maximum Number	Points Each	Max Points
Attendance	20	2	40
Quiet Time	200	1	200
Scripture Memory	24	5	120
Serve others	16	5	80
Read a book	3	20	60
Bringing Friends	2	20	40
Gospel Conversations	6	10	60
Total Possible			600
Minimum needed for Word of Life awards and scholarship			500

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

REMEMBER: The goal of Creative Discipleship is NOT to achieve a certain level or gain an award, but rather, to make PROGRESS in their spiritual development and walk with Christ.

We have built some incredible incentives into the program to encourage students to make progress in these key areas of growth. To earn the awards and scholarships, a student needs to earn a minimum of 500 points out of a maximum of 600 points.

• WORD OF LIFE AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Word of Life offers the following three awards for every student who reaches a minimum of 500 points in the Creative Discipleship Program in one year:

1. One FREE ticket to one Word of Life Reverb event.
2. One FREE week of Word of Life Summer Camp OR one weekend of Word of Life Snow Camp (New York) or Pursuit Camp (Florida).
3. A \$500 Scholarship for the Word of Life Bible Institute in Pottersville, New York or Hudson, Florida.
For a list of other colleges that honor this scholarship, go to <https://lcm.wol.org/resources/>.

• LOCAL CHURCH AWARDS

To encourage consistency, Word of Life recommends that each church set up a rewards system in the student ministry where prizes are accessible during the weekly youth meeting. As students reach milestones throughout the year, they will receive rewards. For example, for every 50 points achieved, a student could receive a reward.

Prizes could be in the form of gift cards, candy bars, drinks, or whatever would help motivate students to create and maintain spiritual disciplines. The price range of the prizes is determined by each local church.

IMPORTANT: For students to be eligible for Word of Life Awards and Scholarships, all requirements must be completed on or before May 31st of the award year. The Creative Discipleship Record Sheet or Multiply! App must be completed with all requirements achieved by May 31st. Connect with your Word of Life Ministry Coach for questions about the Creative Discipleship Program.

OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS

The Word of Life Bible Institute has other scholarships available, up to a potential of \$8,000. To find out more about these scholarships, please go to:

<https://wordoflife.edu/admissions/financial-aid-scholarships/>

WORD OF LIFE MULTIPLY! (APP)

Word of Life has made recordkeeping for Creative Discipleship a snap with the use of the Multiply! App. A small group leader or administrator can input students' weekly progress and know exactly how they are progressing throughout the year! Students who are seeking to achieve awards and scholarships can find out from their leader exactly where they are in the program each week, and leaders are able to encourage them.

The Multiply App is FREE and can be downloaded from the App Store. Schedule a time with your Local Ministry Coach for training on how this tool can revolutionize not only how you keep track of Creative Discipleship points, but also how you will schedule your yearly calendar, how small group leaders operate during small groups, how you will communicate with your leadership team, how you can access the lessons and small group guide, etc. Make it a priority to download, learn, and use the Multiply App. It can revolutionize how you minister to your students! Once you have it, you will not want to do ministry without it.

Service

Helping young people discover, develop, and then deploy their spiritual gifts is vital in their spiritual development. Scripture makes it abundantly clear that every believer is to be involved in service in order to bring glory to God (Matthew 5:16; Ephesians 2:10). When a believer is serving others, they are serving the Lord (Matthew 25: 35-40), and every believer is to use their spiritual gift(s) to glorify God as good stewards (1 Peter 4:10).

With this in mind, Word of Life has developed a list of ideas you can use to engage your students in service. We encourage you to have students try a variety of service ideas to help them see how God can use them in different ways. The list below is not inclusive of all types of service but gives a good variety of activities for students to try.

Keep in mind that for students participating in Creative Discipleship, only service items from the list below can be counted towards scholarship.

Service List

1. **Package:** Encourage someone spiritually by sending a care package and note of encouragement with a verse of Scripture.
2. **Community Service:** Assist your church in ministering to a local public entity or an individual in the provision of repairs, maintenance, or meals.
3. **Family Devotions:** Prepare a devotional and share it with family.
4. **Follow-up of New Believer:** Meet with a new believer to guide them through a follow-up curriculum.
5. **In-Church Presentation:** Take part in a segment of your church's worship service, ministry to children, or adults within the church.
6. **Invitation Counseling:** Counsel an individual who responds to a message or Gospel presentation.

7. **Meet a Need:** Meet an individual's practical/physical need to encourage them spiritually.
8. **Ministry Assistance:** Complete a task or a project that helps your church, a Christian worker or a missionary in their ministry.
9. **Missions Trip:** Participate in a mission trip.
10. **Notes of Encouragement:** Write and distribute four notes to encourage someone in their walk with God.
11. **Nursery/Babysitting:** Provide childcare for ministry-related purposes.
12. **Public School Bible Study:** Take part in leading a Public-School Bible Study Group or bring a new person to the study group.
13. **Teach/Preach:** Prepare a Bible message and share it with a group.
14. **Team Gospel Presentation:** Participate with a group to take the Gospel outside the walls of the church in a spoken presentation of the Gospel.
15. **Tract Distribution Team:** Participate in an organized distribution of Gospel tracts at a location outside your local church.
16. **Visitation:** Visit others for the purpose of ministering to their needs.

Leadership Training

Word of Life Local Church Ministries is committed to providing your local church with personalized, high-quality training. We do this through a passionate group of missionaries. These youth ministry experts partner with local churches to equip them with resources, curriculum, and training to help students grow in their faith and maximize the impact of their ministries.

As churches partner with Word of Life, they have access to a variety of great resources to equip their leadership team for effective ministry to students. Here are some of those key resources:

ORIENTATION

If you are like most people with something new, you are eager to get this Word of Life ministry started. You received a box of stuff from Word of Life; you opened the box and looked at its contents and thought, "What do I do with all of this stuff?" That is why your Ministry Coach will schedule a personalized orientation. The orientation is designed to show you how to implement the philosophy and tools of Word of Life into your ministry. Because we want to be thorough, we ask you to invest five hours in two meetings.

Goals of Orientation Session One:

- Understand how to best incorporate the Word of Life tools into your youth ministry.
- Gain a good understanding of the discipleship tools you will be using.
- Learn how to make a lasting impact in your small group ministry.

Goals of Orientation Session Two:

- Lay out the teaching strategy and schedule for the year.
- Plan out in detail four exciting and impactful ministry nights.
- Leave knowing your specific responsibility for the next month of ministry.

How to Maximize your Orientation

- Plan to have your entire leadership team present. You will not want anyone left out of this important training session! (It would be a great idea to invite the pastor to the first session.)
- Arrange to have childcare as needed.
- Have leaders read over this Student Ministries Resource Manual.
- Bring questions to ask your Word of Life Ministry Coach. (The only dumb question is the one that isn't asked!)
- Make sure you have all of your Student Ministry materials with you (just bring the box of material that was shipped to you and you will have all you need).

MINISTRY VISITS

Your Ministry Coach's goal is to help your ministry be the best it can be. Word of Life Ministry Coaches have years of experience, and they have the combined resources of Word of Life Local Church Ministries behind them. Your Ministry Coach will visit 30-40 ministries each year to help in the following ways:

Encourage your walk with God

We know the foundation in any ministry is the growth of the leadership in their walk with God. Don't be surprised if your Ministry Coach shares something from that day's Quiet Time passage and be ready to share yours as well.

Give constructive feedback

We all become accustomed to our situation. A visitor will always see things with fresh eyes. What they see can give you great insight and help you move your ministry forward. Your Ministry Coach has the advantage of seeing things with a different perspective that could be very helpful for your ministry.

Gain new ideas

As your Ministry Coach goes from church to church, he will see many different variations of how to do youth ministry and how churches are implementing Word of Life in their church. You may be doing something in a way that will be a huge help to another church and vice versa.

Evaluate future training needs

As our Ministry Coaches observe ministries from week to week, common needs arise and help to give them clear direction for planning future leadership training sessions and tools.

ONE-ON-ONE MEETING

Your Ministry Coach is available to meet with your ministry administrator to give specific customized training as needed. Just call him to set up a time to meet.

TRANSFER MEETINGS

You will find Transfer Meetings to be unique from other meetings you might attend because it is more than a meeting; it is a time when you gather together with other like-minded leaders. You share many of the same interests. As a group, you are characterized by your desire to disciple and evangelize young people. Transfer meetings accomplish four goals:

Training

Training on relevant topics characterize each Transfer Meeting. Those experienced in Student Ministry have prepared helpful lessons to further equip you. The instruction, discussions, and practical applications will greatly benefit your leadership team.

Encouragement

Encouragement can be the high-octane fuel that keeps you going. Attending a Transfer Meeting can provide you with the boost you need. An idea from another leader, fellowship with others in a similar ministry, a time of praise and prayer, a dynamic lesson offering insights into a specific area of ministry; many of these sources of encouragement are found at Transfer Meetings.

Accountability

Transfer Meetings are designed to build relationships among leaders and your Ministry Coach to help you be the best leader you can be. Your accountability relationships with other leaders do much to build you and your ministry.

Motivation

After visiting with other leaders from your area, enjoying a time of fun and fellowship, sharing in prayer and praises, and learning practical ministry helps and ideas, you'll find yourself motivated! You'll be anxious to get back to your ministry to implement all you have learned at the Transfer Meeting.

Your Word of Life Ministry Coach has a schedule of the Transfer Meetings available for you and your leadership team. We know you are busy and that is exactly why we have strategically planned and scheduled these incredible times of training carefully. Be sure to connect with your Ministry Coach for the dates in your area and get them on your calendar. As you plan to take your leadership to the next level, these sessions will need to be a priority.

TRANSFER LIVE WEBSITE

TransferLIVE.com is a website that can also help you take your ministry to the next level. It's packed with over 100 ten-minute ministry training videos. These videos are designed to be short and practical to help in specific areas of ministry. We cover areas and topics like improving your weekly meeting, small group leader training, and personal spiritual growth.



TransferLIVE

Take ten minutes, watch an engaging online video, and gain valuable tips and insights for your ministry at TransferLIVE.com.

TRAINING EVENTS

Throughout the year, Word of Life will offer various other opportunities for you and your team to grow both in ministry and in your walk with the Lord. Depending on the part of the country in which you live, we offer things like weekend conferences and retreats, day-long training events, live online events, and local gatherings of churches where our ministry experts provide specialized training.

PLANNING MEETINGS OVERVIEW

Because planning meetings are so vital to the health and effectiveness of every ministry, we have given this subject its own section so we can go into greater detail on the types and purposes of each.

PLANNING MEETINGS

"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail." — Benjamin Franklin

Most people don't plan to fail; they just fail to plan. But you are not most people! You are someone who is interested in having a huge impact on a group of students in your youth ministry this coming year. But to do this, you must plan to succeed.

Sometimes we feel that planning just takes too much time, but in reality planning leads to excellence. Lack of planning leads to stress. Young people are worth your investment. We have a small window of time with these young people so it is vital that we plan well so we make the most of this time. What we have to do is far more important than any job you can think of, as we are involved in ministry that impacts students for eternity. With this in mind, here are several types of planning meetings to help you have the most effective ministry year.

Prayerful planning puts your team on the path to effective ministry.

BIG PICTURE PLANNING (ANNUAL)

This meeting is designed to set up the entire year in basic detail and will become your roadmap for the entire year as you move from month to month. You will set goals for the year, set up your calendar, and also connect that to your budget. As you are putting this meeting together, here are some things to consider:

- Set aside one-half of a day at the beginning of the ministry year to do the following:
- Talk through goals: What do you want to accomplish this coming year?
- Review your budget to make sure you have the finances to support the goals you have set.
- Layout your yearly calendar:
 - Put major events on the calendar. These events should be based on your goals for the year. Make sure you merge all of this with what is happening at your church as well.
 - Lay out teaching strategy. Your ministry should have a teaching schedule. This does not mean that you can never deviate from it, but it does give the teacher(s) a schedule so they can be well prepared.
 - Put your monthly leadership planning meetings on the calendar for a year.
- Split up small groups. Take careful thought as to how you might make up your groups. Check out the video "Small Group Selections, Who Goes Where?" by Hayley Miller at transferlive.com for guidance on this.
- Extended time of prayer. Take time to commit the year to the Lord.

BIG PICTURE PLANNING MEETING (ANNUAL) AGENDA

SUBJECT	AGENDA ITEMS
Bible Study Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine what modules you will teach in the upcoming year• Determine who will teach each of the modules• Determine other times you will insert special speakers
Calendar Preview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Church events (date, time, and place)• Church meetings (revivals, special meetings, socials)• Student Ministry activities• Leadership Events• Transfer Meetings• Leadership training opportunities• Future planning meetings• Upcoming lessons to be taught• Word of Life events• Evangelistic events• Ministry opportunities• Discipleship group activities

Detailed Planning

Event Detail Planning

- Purpose of the event
- Budget
- Location
- Speaker
- Transportation arrangements
- Food and drink plans
- Time frame
- Extra help needed
- Dress standard for the event
- Promotion
- Delegation of Responsibilities

DETAILED PLANNING (MONTHLY)

Your monthly planning meetings take what was planned in the annual meeting and puts detail to it. Without monthly planning with your key youth ministry staff (if possible your entire staff), it will be only by chance that you reach any of your annual goals.

- Set aside 90 minutes each month.
 - If your meetings are too long you will find it difficult to get your leadership team to attend.
 - If you have a large leadership team, a monthly meeting with all team members may not be possible. In this case develop another level of leadership (key leaders), giving each of your key leaders a group they communicate with. Meet monthly with your key leaders and have them communicate to the leaders you assign to them.
- Pick a time and stick to it for a year.
 - A set time is easy for all to remember (like the first Sunday of every month at 3:30 p.m.)
 - If you choose to meet on a weeknight (like the last Tuesday of every month) plan to have food and childcare available.
- Review goals each month to be sure you are staying on track.
- Review events in the next 90 days and go over the details for it to run effectively.
- What events do we have on the calendar? Is there anything we need to do in preparation for the event?
- Lay out in detail the next four (4) ministry nights. Go into detail on each meeting and talk about how you will make each one an impactful night. Each leader should leave knowing clearly the direction and their role in the next 4 youth ministry meetings.
- Plan your meeting agenda using the tool below. It was created to help you think through what items should be on your meeting agenda.
- It would also be helpful to invite your Word of Life Ministry Coach to one of your planning meetings in the year. He can be a great resource.

MONTHLY PLANNING MEETING AGENDA

SUBJECT	AGENDA ITEMS
Detailed Planning	Weekly Meeting Detail – planning 4 weeks of meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refreshments• Game/Icebreakers• Announcements• Worship Songs• Bible study module and dynamics to use• Discipleship group topics
Problem Solving	Problems to work through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schedules• Student issues• Parental issues• Weekly meeting issues that need to be worked on• Problems to discuss with your Ministry Coach
Evaluation	How are we doing in...? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Past meetings• Past activities• Discipleship involvement• Leadership team responsibilities• Progress toward achieving goals• Evangelistic events• Getting students involved in ministry opportunities

ANNUAL REVIEW

It has been said, "Practice makes perfect." The late Howard Hendricks made this excellent observation when he said, "Practice makes permanent. Evaluated practice makes perfect." Nothing will improve without evaluation with the focus to improve. That is the main focus of the annual review. We strongly recommend that every first year Word of Life ministry have their Ministry Coach come and help with this meeting.

Time Frame

The best time for this meeting is anytime from the end of your current ministry year to a month before you kick off your fall ministry.

Focus of meeting

The entire leadership team will work through a process to evaluate every area of your ministry. We use a ministry evaluation form to guide in this process. Usually 1-3 areas are highlighted for improvement and a detailed plan will be formed to accomplish this. After the first year, this detailed evaluation could be done every other year to continue the process of growth in the ministry.

Leadership Structure

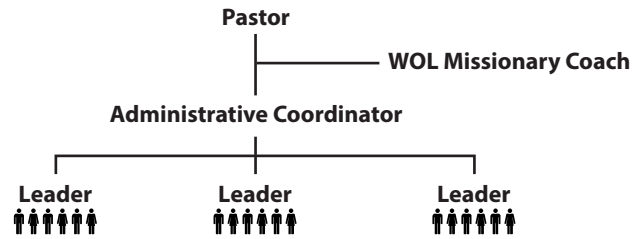
As you think about organizing your leadership team to have an effective weekly ministry, you must have a structure that is optimized to allow your ministry to grow bigger and smaller at the same time.

Growing bigger means your students are inviting friends who trust Christ. As your group grows larger, it can become challenging to keep the same level of intimacy connecting with each individual student every week. Growing smaller means that as your ministry grows, you will need to divide small groups to keep them small. You will need to form new small groups to accomplish this.

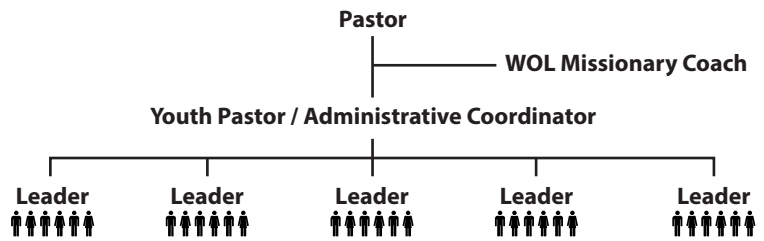
The organizational charts on the next page give you a picture of how your ministry could and should develop as you grow. So whether you are a small ministry or a giant ministry, there is a leadership structure that will fit your need. Keep in mind a good rule of thumb for the size of your small groups should be about a 6:1 student to leader ratio.

Organizational Charts

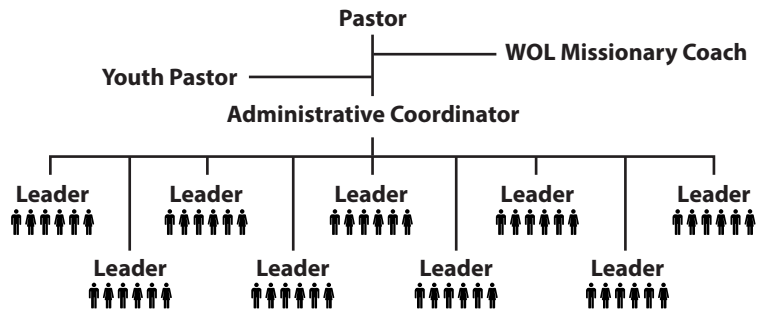
SMALL MINISTRIES 6-20 Students



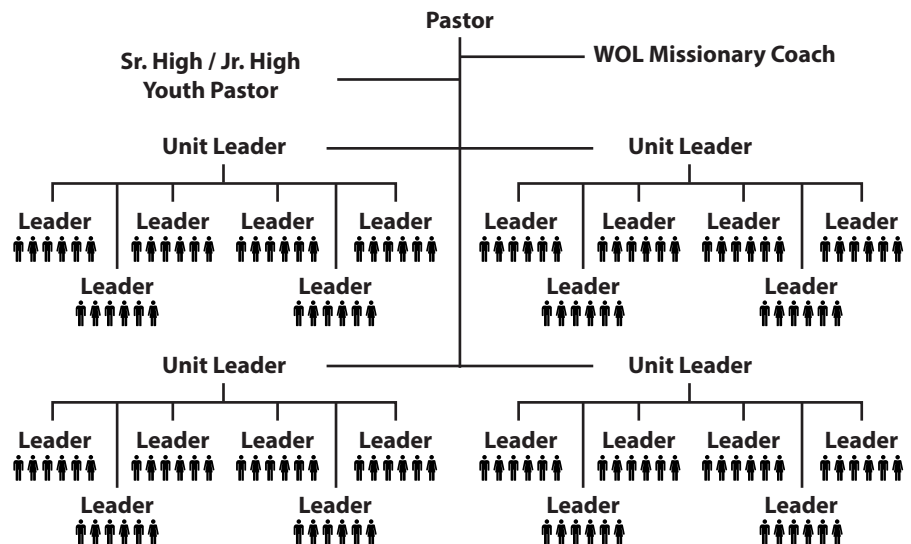
MEDIUM MINISTRIES 20-40 Students



LARGE MINISTRIES 40-100 Students



VERY LARGE MINISTRIES 100-1000 Students



EVENTS

REVERB (reverbnight.com)

Formerly known as Word of Life Super Bowl, Reverb could be the most exciting night of your entire youth ministry year! This all-night event starts off with attendance at a professional sporting event, followed by an awesome time hanging out with students, playing group games, winning cool prizes, and best of all, seeing lives transformed through the preaching of the Gospel!



Reverb

But that's not all! Afterwards, you'll dive into incredible activities like go-karts, paintball, indoor sporting facilities (hosting archery tag, flag football, volleyball, and the like), inflatables, skating, bowling, arcades, laser tag, and tons more at venues reserved all night exclusively for Reverb.

The best part? We'll take care of all of the details for you! Just provide transportation for the evening and have a great time. We do the heavy lifting so you can focus on spending time building relationships and ministering to your group.

STORM

STORM is an evangelistic event that you and your team can put on at your church. We recommend the layout of the night, games, and activities based on a proven model that usually can double or quadruple the size of your group in one night (seriously, we've seen this happen hundreds of times!). Your Word of Life Ministry Coach will come to help you run the event and can preach the Gospel. Have your youth group "storm" the community inviting their friends, and the friends of their friends, and you'll see a huge group of lost young people hearing the life-transforming message of the Gospel of Christ! This is a unique way to connect with unsaved students in your community and introduce them to both your ministry and the Gospel.

SLOPSTACLE

If you threw a mud pit, a color run, an obstacle course, and Word of Life into a blender and hit puree, you'd end up with Slopstacle: a one-of-a-kind event that combines the outdoor fun of an obstacle course with all sorts of SLOP along the way! We recommend the layout, games, and activities, and your WOL Ministry Coach will come to help you run the event and preach the Gospel. This is another way to connect with unsaved students in your community and introduce them to both your ministry and the Gospel.

CAMP (camps.wol.org)

Word of Life has camping ministries in the United States and nearly 70 other countries around the world. Every year, new families experience their faith at Word of Life Camps, discovering a place of physical and spiritual refreshment. Whether young or young-at-heart, you will find a friendly welcome at Word of Life Camps, plus dynamic programs, challenging Bible teachers, life-changing ministry focus, and relationships that will leave you feeling refreshed!



Camp

We have camps specifically designed for children, middle school, high school, and the entire family.

MISSION TRIPS (missions.wol.org/studentfusion)

Students, ages 16-22, head out around the world with the awesome task of sharing Christ with people who desperately need Him. Student Fusion teams accomplish work projects, support the work of local missionaries, and bring the Good News of the Gospel to prisons, orphanages, public schools, and even people on the street.



Mission Trips

Each Student Fusion team experiences a week of intense training at the Word of Life Bible Institute and then launches out to a foreign country. It's just you and your team with the awesome task of sharing the love of Christ with people. Student Fusion is a chance for your students to truly impact their world!

BIBLE INSTITUTE (wordoflife.edu)

The first few years after graduating from high school can be some of the most critical years in a student's life. Often these are the years in which they decide whether or not to remain faithful to the things they have learned to this point in their lives. At the same time, they are also usually facing new challenges to their faith from their peers, their educators, and their society.



Bible Institute

The Word of Life Bible Institute allows your students to continue growing in their faith and building a solid foundation on God's Word after they graduate from high school. The Bible Institute is fully accredited, which means almost all of the course work can be transferred to other schools after completing either one or two years of study at the Bible Institute.

CAMPUS PREVIEW WEEKEND (wordoflife.edu/admissions/#preview)

If you or your students are wondering what it's like to attend the Bible Institute, you can find out firsthand at one of our Campus Preview Weekends. Campus Preview is a great opportunity for your students to come visit the campus, make friends, meet the staff, and interact with current students. Campus Preview is for anyone in your ministry: high school juniors or seniors, college-aged students, or anyone interested in a solid Bible education.



Campus Preview