

Major Pastoral Needs with Youth

with Jennifer Cavanough

Ministry Conference 2012

How to identify a hurting student

- Look past the façade
- Become aware of their family situation
- Marginalisation or targeting
- Wearing long sleeves in hottest weather

What if I find it hard to connect?

- Find God's heart
- SEE them

Appropriate responses to pastoral needs

- Find opportunities to raise the issue
- Educate yourself
- Build a bridge between the church and social services

Safeguards:

1. Acknowledge your limits
2. Maintain strong boundaries
3. Don't compromise authority at the expense of rapport
4. Affirm their value
5. Recognise their potential
6. Use meaningful touch
7. Share dreams for their spiritual lives
8. Deal with rumours

Confidentiality

Reflect on your own journey

Mentally and emotionally, walk back into your own ninth-grade experience. Enter your classroom, remember your teachers, recall your friends, relive your memories, and allow yourself to feel again the joy and fear of being an adolescent. Revisit your home, your parents, your siblings, your bedroom and your memories.

Reflect on those who had an influence on you, for better or for worse. Examine your choices, actions, decisions and priorities. Get acquainted with your past.

Evaluate your own assets as a youth worker and their impact on your choices. Determine which assets you are able to provide your students, and which may be available through your colleagues, church, neighbours, parents and other resources. Discern which ones your kids lack.

Trust God. Give your kids, their families, your church and yourself plenty of time and grace.
1 Thess 5:24