[Going for growth](http://www.going4growth.com) resource sheets



**CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTERS**

**What do youth and children’s ministers do?**

Ministry with and among children and young people can take many forms.  It might be in a parish, a school, a Deanery or with a Christian organisation.

Traditionally in parishes, the focus has been on Sunday mornings or evenings, with a strong emphasis on Christian formation in peer groups.  However increasingly churches are exploring other ways and times of engaging with children and young people. A children or youth minister might find themselves involved with:

* All-Age/Intergenerational Worship
* Mid-week groups based in schools and churches
* Collective worship in schools
* Carer and Toddler services
* Youth groups
* Messy Church
* Godly Play
* Holiday Clubs and Fun Days
* Praise Parties
* Sports ministry
* Quiet Days
* Early Years groups
* Creative Prayer
* Chaplaincy in schools
* Confirmation preparation
* Residential activities
* Training and supporting volunteers

The variety of activities will depend on the needs and vision of the parish, and will probably include meeting with the Incumbent or staff team on a regular basis to plan and pray; building a team of volunteers to work alongside in the various activities; and representing the voice and concerns of children and young people to the PCC.

**How do I become a youth or children’s minister?**

God calls all sorts of people into this ministry and there’s no single route. However, it’s good to have a love of working with and among children and young people; some practical experience; and maybe some formal training or qualification.

Practical experience can be gained through volunteering in your own church or a local project, or maybe on a gap year or CEMES scheme. Talking with employed ministers will also give you an idea of what’s really involved.

Diocesan Children and Youth Advisers often run courses which give some basic skills and background in this ministry, and many colleges (e.g. St Mellitus, Cliffe College, CYM) offer training or formal qualifications in children, youth, school and family ministry.

**What should I do next?**

* *Find someone to talk to* – it might be your church minister or the Diocesan Children or Youth Adviser. They will help you think about your gifts and skills, the areas in which you might need more experience or knowledge, and how you might start testing your call.
* *Do some reading* so that you have a wider perspective of the theology and good practice in this ministry. Your Diocesan Adviser will be able to recommend some relevant books or articles.
* *Check out what parishes and organisations are asking for* – each job is different (and not all are full-time). Are there any which seem to match with your gifts and skills? Pray, apply and use any interview as a two-way exploration of whether you are the right person for this role at this time.