

Supporting a new Next Gen Leader effectively can make a significant difference in their success and the impact they have on the Children/Youth/Young Adults in the church. Here are some suggestions:

1. Clear Expectations and Goals

- a. Orientation: Provide a clear overview of the church's mission, values, and expectations for the Next Gen ministry area.
 - i. Decide early on in the search process if this is a heavy teaching position or mostly relationship and fellowship oriented or a healthy mix of both.
 - ii. Determining that will help you decide who the right candidate should be.
- b. Goals: Work with the new Next Gen Leader to set achievable short-term and long-term goals for the ministry.

2. Mentorship and Support

- a. Assign a Mentor: Pair the new Next Gen Leader with an experienced mentor in the church, like the senior pastor or a seasoned youth leader.
- b. Regular Check-Ins: Schedule regular meetings to discuss progress, challenges, and provide feedback.
- c. When a potential conflict arises, insist that the person with the issue first addresses the Next Gen Leader in the spirit of Matthew 7:3-5 and 18:15-17.

3. Training and Resources

- a. Provide Training: Offer opportunities for ongoing training in ministry, leadership, and pastoral care.
 - i. The EPC Next Gen Council has a yearly [Next Gen Leadership Summit](#).
 - ii. Reformed Youth Ministries has a yearly training event at the end of January in Nashville. There is also a Northeast Youth Ministry Summit in March at Camp Ligonier in Ligonier PA.
 - iii. Other Next Gen ministry training can be found on the [PCMA website](#).
- b. Budget for Resources: Ensure the Next Gen Leader has access to necessary resources, such as curriculum, materials, and a budget for activities.
- c. Salary Should Be Commensurate With the Local Teacher Pay Scale: This information should be easy to find on your local school board website. Remember that benefits will be part of the package.
 - i. Obviously, education and experience will be factors in determining pay, but so should family size and local living expenses.
 1. For example, a rural area will probably not be as expensive to live in as an urban area.
 - ii. Consider making continuing education part of the deal
 - iii. Consider making a gym membership part of the deal
 1. Encourage healthy lifestyle patterns, because it's all too easy to get into unhealthy habits in Next Gen ministry
- d. Legal and Ethical Responsibilities:

- i. The church needs to have policies on child safety, including background checks, and reporting protocols in place, ideally before hiring a new Next Gen Leader.
4. Help Build Relationships with the Next Gen students and families
 - a. Introduction: Facilitate a warm introduction to the children's/youth/young adult group, possibly through a special event or meeting.
 - b. Relational Time: Encourage the Next Gen Leader to spend time getting to know the students/families outside of formal church settings.
5. Parental Involvement (for Children's & Youth Ministry)
 - a. Engage Parents: Help the Next Gen Leader build relationships with parents, which is key to a successful children's/youth ministry.
 - b. Parent Meetings: Organize meetings with parents to share the vision for the youth ministry and address any concerns.
 - i. If parents want more of a "say" in the children's/youth ministry than what these meetings provide, encourage those parents to be involved in the children's/youth ministry (see point #7).
6. Encourage Creativity and Innovation
 - a. Freedom to Innovate: Encourage the Next Gen Leader to bring new ideas and approaches to the ministry, understanding that experimentation can lead to growth.
 - b. Support New Initiatives: Back their initiatives and help them navigate any challenges in implementing new programs.
7. Foster Team Building
 - a. Volunteer Team: Assist in building a strong team of volunteers who can support the Next Gen Leader in various aspects of the ministry.
 - i. Get your parents involved HERE. If you're lucky you'll grow a team of parents, grandparents, college students, teachers, and student leaders who all enjoy each other enough to work together. If you can do it, it's the most fun part of youth ministry.
 - ii. The committee must be comprised of actively participating volunteers!
 - b. Team Activities: Plan team-building activities to create a cohesive and supportive ministry team.
8. Integration with the Wider Church Community
 - a. Involvement in Church Activities: Encourage the Next Gen Leader to participate in broader church events and services to build connections with other members.
 - i. Insist that the Next Gen Leader be present early before worship services to meet and greet not only youth families but to also (and maybe primarily) build relationships outside of a youth focus.
 - b. Cross-Ministry Collaboration: Foster collaboration between the youth ministry and other church ministries, such as music, outreach, or education.

9. Regular Prayer Support

- a. Prayer Teams: Establish a prayer team dedicated to supporting the Next Gen Leader and the children's/youth/young adult ministry.
- b. Congregational Prayer: Regularly include the Next Gen Leader and ministry in the congregation's prayers during services.

10. Constructive Feedback

- a. Annual Review: Conduct an annual review with constructive feedback and celebrate achievements.
- b. Open Communication: Create a culture of open communication where the Next Gen Leader feels comfortable sharing successes and challenges.

These steps can help create a nurturing environment for a new Next Gen Leader, allowing them to grow in their role and effectively minister to the youth in the church.

1. 3 things no one should ever do alone:
 - a. Swimming
 - b. Weightlifting
 - c. Children's/Youth/Young Adult ministry