

BUILDING CONNECTIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

We seek to engage with young people, care for their wellbeing, invite them into fun spaces where they can join a family and explore faith. But where in our community can we connect with young people, and how can we engage with them?

WHERE IS GOD AT WORK AND HOW CAN WE JOIN IN?

Start with building strong relationships in the community. Be known, be a good neighbour, meet people face to face and participate in community. Look and pray for where God is at work in young people's lives, expressing curiosity, experiencing crisis, contributing to the community, or "coincidences". Consider the following for your local community:

- Where do young people hang out?
- What kinds of things do they do?
- How do they get around?
- What facilities do you have that can meet their needs and interests?
- What gaps are there in services in your area?

KEY COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

In every community there are a number of services and organisations that work directly with young people. Building strong relationships and trust with these groups can help us partner together for the benefit of young people. Some examples are:

- High Schools (see below)
- Community Centres (like PCYC or YMCA) and other community services
- Youth Networks (Red Frogs, Youth Alive)
- Sporting clubs or hobby groups
- Local police
- Other youth ministries

HIGH SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

You can connect with high schools in a number of different ways. The best way to approach a school is to ask, "How can we help? What are your needs we can assist with?".

Here are some possibilities:

- Breakfast clubs
- Homework groups
- Lunch time activities
- Mentoring
- Work experience or Citizenship program placements
- Connect with the school chaplain and guidance counsellor

YOUNG PEOPLE INVITING THEIR FRIENDS

We know that most young people connect with The Salvation Army through their friends, as they are invited by someone they trust to a place that is fun. Think of how to encourage your young people to invite their friends.

- Pray with them for their friends
- Work with young people to plan events they want to invite their friends to
- Create a fun culture that accepts and celebrates new people

CORPS-BASED CONNECTIONS

Think of all the connections The Salvation Army has in your local community and ask the question "where might there be opportunities to connect with young people in these spaces?"

- Corps welfare/Doorways worker
- Children "graduating" from children's ministries
- Leaders' contacts with young people
- Children of clients of Salvation Army services
- Salvos stores/Thrift stores
- Salvation Army Emergency Services