

Youth Engagement Summit Recommendations

As delegates to the AUC Youth Engagement Summit, we affirm the pivotal role of engaging our children, youth and young adults and call all members to affirm these recommendations.

Through the Holy Spirit's leading and power, we, as the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia, commit to significantly lifting the engagement of children, youth and young adults in being a thriving, disciple-making movement. We will demonstrate to our children, youth and young adults a positive picture of our loving God by being a grace-filled, Christ-centred, Spirit-led authentic community. We aim to not simply keep our children, youth and young adults connected to the church but rather engage them in being the church.

In being this inclusive community, we vote to endorse the following recommendations:

Recommended that:

1. We lift the intentionality of prayer for our children, youth and young adults.

-We call all members to commit to intentionally praying every day for at least one young person and then actively engaging with them. We will foster strategies that encourage this focus in an ongoing way.

-We will engage and extend our current prayer ministries and networks to be actively praying for our young people and the initiatives we are working on in terms of engagement.

Measurable – Youth focused prayer champions in every school and congregation

2. We empower families as the primary place of faith development.

-We will collaborate to find effective ways to assist families in recognising the home as the primary place of faith development. This will include resources that will guide families in creating and sustaining a strong spiritual foundation and emphasis in their everyday family life.

-We will particularly equip and resource fathers in view of their influence in developing a child's picture of God, faith and engagement in our faith communities.

Measurable – an ongoing selection of relevant, current and engaging family life resources that are specifically designed to strengthen spiritual life of our families available at disciple.org.au – measure uptake.

3. We invest in growing Authentic Biblical Intergenerational Communities.

-Resource and equip members to fuel warm communities and play an active role in creating inclusive communities with a focus on empathizing with today's young people.

-Model, resource and promote intergenerational connection in the life of the local church and at wider church events.

-Promote, resource and equip mentorship initiatives

-Measurable - move our Australian National Church Development (NCD) measurement for loving relationships (44.4) from second bottom to at least second in our NCD profile

4. We synergise strategy in all areas of church life for the sake of engaging and discipling our children, youth and young adults.

-At all levels of church life in our country we commit to collaboration, sharing and synergising strategy so that silos that negate effective ministry are broken down for resources and expertise to be shared and reach to where they are most needed.

-Affirm youth engagement as a key priority in the AUC strategic plan and encourage all areas of church life to collaborate in making it a key focus area for their strategies.

-We commit to having the AUC leadership team and board of directors regularly reaffirming, reengaging with and noting progress on the strategy. Youth engagement will be a standing item for the AUC board and we encourage the same commitment from the division, conferences, schools and local churches.

-Disciple.org.au will become our central resource hub where all departments, leaders and members can share and access resources that focus on children, youth and young adults.

Measurable – Youth Engagement features prominently in strategic plans at all levels.

5. We, as role models, commit to resourcing and equipping our children, youth and young adults as disciples who take the message of Jesus seriously. This includes a focus on apologetics that integrates Adventist identity into everyday life and equips our youth for positive engagement in our world.

-Use disciple.org.au as a central hub to synergise the faith-development resources that already exist for children, youth and young adults and address resource gaps. By so doing we will ensure that parents, teachers (Schools, Sabbath Schools, Adventurers, Pathfinders), small group facilitators and leaders are readily resourced to share our Adventist identity and beliefs in ways that engage and impact everyday life.

-We will use Adhub to intentionally track decisions of our young people as they grow in discipleship including baptism and beyond.

-Enhance tertiary chaplaincy and connect more intentionally with students as they transition from high school.

-We will implement a media strategy that engages young people with relevant, creative discipling media resources.

Measurable –AUC attendance survey moves the youth self-score for relationship with Jesus from 10% growing strongly and 50% growing to 25% growing strongly while maintaining 50% growing.

6. We endorse and actively support the Growing Young strategy and with it the unlocking of 'keychain'* leadership and the prioritization of young people, families and intergenerational relationships.

-Develop, foster and support Growing Young pilot programs within conference churches and schools.

Measurable – number of initiatives operating in each conference

7. We encourage and resource our local church and school leadership teams to participate in the children, youth, young adult engagement discussion and local strategy development.

-Create guides and promote media resources that help local church and school leadership facilitate the discussion in their context and then work with them on resourcing, training and equipping that strategy.

-Facilitate and communicate relevant Australian research regarding Adventist children, youth and young adults.

Measurable – All conferences engaged in a plan to facilitate the local church discussion process. Research made easily accessible.

8. We leverage influence in endorsing and resourcing children, youth and young adults, to be actively involved in service, mission and volunteerism with a particular focus on developing and engaging young leaders.

-Champion through our communication channels children, youth and young adult engagement and 'give permission' in the local church and school.

-Engage young people in creating relevant disciple-making media.

-Strengthen and extend the reach of strategies that foster the serving and leadership capacity of our children, youth and young adults. We will foster opportunities for young people to serve others, pursue social justice, find their calling and interact with the world around them.

-Actively model and promote the inclusion of young people in influencing and shaping the direction of the church including youth advisories and active inclusion/engagement in the decision-making processes.

Measurable – AUC attendance survey measure for youth serving and involvement increases by 25%.

9. We strengthen Institutional partnerships with a focus on our children, youth and young adults particularly the links between Home, Church and School.

-Intentionally foster the links between church and school, highlight where it works well and promote models and strategies that foster this connection.

-Work with education and pastoral ministry teams to enhance the ministry connection and establish a common ministry philosophy between teachers and pastors. Avondale College of Higher Education will be invited to join us in this strategy.

-Recommend to the chaplaincy working party an increase in chaplaincy and youth pastoral care to enhance opportunities in schools and universities.

-Put in place strategies that extend the reach of school evangelism initiatives and establish schools as partners in outreach ministries.

Measurable – An increase in the Quality Adventist Schools measurements on church, home and school collaboration and improved chaplaincy student ratios.

*Keychain leadership is the term used in the 'Growing Young' resource in reference to a pattern of leadership that encourages, facilitates and empowers young people to lead in the life of the church. Drawing from stages of life that include young people being given house, car and workplace keys, the 'key' is used as a symbol of access, influence and responsibility.

1 – Pray

2 – Empower Families

3 – Connect

4 – Collaborate

5 – Disciple

6 – Grow Young

7- Communicate

8 – Engage Participation

9- Synergise Strategy