**5 THINGS EVERY INTERMEDIATE MINISTRY NEEDS TO KNOW!**

Let’s face it Intermediate Ministry is crazy!! Your group has so much going on developmentally, like year 8 girls act like they’re 16 and year 7 boys act like they’re 8 and then there’s a whole range in between. I think that’s what makes them such a rewarding group to work with. You see their faith development so raw and curious. They are so open to getting answers about God. There can be some amazing growth in this time… if we do it right!!

**IMPORTANT FACT ONE - Belonging**

The new movie “Inside Out” has a lot to teach us about Intermediates. It’s about what’s going on with the emotions in a preteen, asking who is going to control you. It’s a great conversation starter and would be brilliant for Intermediates Ministries to watch together and discuss but most importantly it highlights the confusion in a preteens head. The brain is rewiring, things they used to like they don’t anymore and a huge question they’re asking and will continue to ask is… **who am I and where do I belong. Belonging is essential!!** So Intermediate ministry needs to primarily be a place where they know people really care about them. That it’s OK that we’re all so different as God loves variety. This is a place where you can question, have fun, and be accepted.

**IMPORTANT FACT TWO – Communicating so it sticks**

With all that going on how and what do you communicate so that Intermediates can connect with God and so their own faith sticks? The research says that for ideas to be retained and grow into life practice they need to see how it’s **relevant to their lives**. So always apply what you’re doing to how it works in your life and how it affects theirs. When leaders relate their own lives with God it is powerful. The good news is even if a young person doesn’t get how it’s relevant they’ll listen and take it on board IF they think that you care about them. So our relationships have to be more than Sunday deep. That’s why fun nights and camps are essential.

**IMPORTANT FACT THREE – Resources**

Where do you get great resources that can help you do this? There are lots of good resources that you can buy through Manna or through the internet. Some material that’s really popular is by Mark Oestricher. He does a “Wild Challenges” series. Talksheets for Junior Highs are good. We have some great material ready to go on [www.bym.org.nz/resource/intermediates](http://www.bym.org.nz/resource/intermediates). Youthtrain is another NZ website that also has great New Zealand curriculum that you can develop for your young people.

**IMPORTANT FACT FOUR – Contextualizing to my community**

You may have found a fantastic resource but you really have to make sure it will work in your situation. Even if it’s written by NZ youth workers each community is so different that you may need to add more current and relevant content, make it more fun, find ways to connect it to life, take out reading etc. You also need to keep on asking the question, “What is God wanting to communicate here?”.

**IMPORTANT FACT FIVE – We all need support… and it’s free!**

You don’t need to do it alone!! There are great people all over NZ ready to give you resources, support and ideas. These people are **Baptist Youth Ministry Coaches** [www.bym.org.nz/about](http://www.bym.org.nz/about) or the **Baptist Children and Families’s Ministry Coaches,** [www.bcfm.org.nz/aboutus/meet-the-team](http://www.bcfm.org.nz/aboutus/meet-the-team).

Even if you don’t live in their area they are really happy to chat and give advice through visits, email or over the phone.

The other great thing going are networks where people can meet, share ideas, get support, pray and discuss a topic relevant to intermediate ministry. In Auckland the next network is the 10th of August, 7:30pm at Crave Café in Kingsland. To find out more about your networks contact the consultant in your area.