

Youth For Christ Mentors Provide Needed Support to Teen Fathers During Pivotal Times

As Americans prepare to celebrate Father's Day, Youth For Christ (YFC,), a leader in the missional ministry community in America for 77 years, acknowledges and supports all fathers, no matter their age or capabilities. Through YFC's Juvenile Justice Ministry and Parent Life programs, YFC leaders have the unique privilege of working with expectant and parenting teen moms and dads, coming alongside them during pivotal and trying times to provide loving encouragement and prayer.

Many young men in the justice system are young fathers, something that Alex Mathew, YFC's local executive director, doesn't take lightly. Mathew commented on how God has uniquely positioned YFC for such a time as this.

"We are not a normal youth ministry," Mathew says, "so as we work with high-risk youth from juvenile offenders to teen parents, we want to have authentic Christ-sharing relationships. At Youth For Christ, my job is not to change people, but to model what Christ did for me and accept all my students like a father in Christ. If each dad knew that his role on earth is to be a father even to other people's children, a lot of lives would be changed."

The CDC reported that "teens need access to youth-friendly ... support from parents and other trusted adults, who can play an important role in helping teens make healthy choices about relationships." The support that YFC mentors supply for teen parents both in and out of the justice system is crucial for

their mental, emotional and spiritual health during such a trying time in their lives.

One teen dad said, “My YFC mentor helped me with a lot of things, like how to become a better man, by guiding and helping me through the situations I am actually in.”

YFC chapters impact thousands of communities across the nation, seeking out and serving youth from all walks of life. Young people are silently struggling through a wide variety of challenging issues—and through the YFC ministry God empowers, they see the living power of a loving God. YFC trains its leaders in a proven, relational ministry model called 3Story®, which encourages staff and volunteers to *be* good news while also sharing the stories of *the* good news of Jesus. It involves building relationships through the ups and downs of everyday life to lead people to Christ.

YFC has been a pillar of missional ministry since 1944, when the Rev. Billy Graham served as YFC’s first full-time staff member. Since then, Youth For Christ has continued to be both a rural and urban ministry on mission, and it is always about the message of Jesus. YFC reaches young people everywhere, working together with the local church and other like-minded partners to raise up lifelong followers of Jesus who lead by their godliness in lifestyle, devotion to the Word of God and prayer, passion for sharing the love of Christ, and commitment to social involvement. Youth For Christ operates in over 100 nations and has over 130 chapters that impact communities across America.

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