**Connecting With Students Beyond Sundays**

Well, if you have been in student ministry for any amount of time you have probably heard something from a parent like “My baby just doesn’t feel connected to the youth group”. You may have even noticed a lack of connection from students who might be on the fringe or just a little bit reserved. Have you felt the struggle of trying to connect students who are visiting the church? With the busyness of the world in which we live, it can feel impossible to connect with students and to connect students with other students.

I want to talk today about 3 ways we can be a little bit more effective in those attempts to connect with students beyond Sunday morning.

1. **Connection is Purposeful more than it is Accidental**

* Organic is a really trendy term in ministry and has been for a while.
* Relationships need to happen organically, small groups blossom organically, growth happens organically.
* While that’s true and there needs to be authenticity, we also have to be intentional
* Plan to be where students are for in person connection.
* Maybe this happens in a one on one setting — grabbing coffee, etc.
* Perhaps its in a small group setting — you’re playing pickle ball with a few guys on Tuesday evenings.
* School or community functions are also important.
* Figure out where they are, and be there as often as you can.

1. **Students connecting with Students is Vital**

* A hard truth for some of us is the realization that the best way to reach students is with students.
* You’re probably in one of two places as a student pastor
* Either you’re the coolest guy in the room
* Or you’ve gotten old enough to realize you’re not.
* I’ve been both places.
* Gone, though, are the days of the rockstar youth guy being the focal point of mega youth ministries.
* How am I equipping my students to connect with other students.
* Have I considered partnering older, more mature students with younger students as points of connections?
* Do my students have the desire and ability to reach out to their peers and connect with them?

1. **Empowering Leaders to Connect with Students is a Necessity**

* Properly background checked, vetted, and trained ministry leaders also need to be out and about connecting with students.
* Sure, you and I need to be intentional about connecting personally with students, but we also need other points of adult connection.
* Small group leaders showing up at a baseball game or recital could be huge for your students.
* Adults who are able to connect with both students and parents are essential.
* We also need to be connecting parents with parents.
* The rate of families who leave the church after their students leave student ministry is alarming.
* Part of the problem is those parents were never connected to the church, just the student ministry.
* Do we have a plan in place to connect families to the church beyond just serving in student ministry?