



## Ministry Strategy: Notes for WyldLife

### CAMP

- Look for T-shirt ideas at camp. Identify designs that middle school kids like.
- Kids are dependent on parents for transportation. Consider having camp follow-up once a week for four weeks after camp. Finalize your plans before you go to camp and bring flyers with you.
- When parents pick up their kids after camp, hand each parent a flyer with information about a camp party and camp follow-up.

### AUGUST

#### CLUB PROMOTION/PARENTS

- Parents are key. You need their involvement and support to get kids to club. Host a pre-club parent meeting and give parents a vision for the ministry. Ask parents to sign up to help with snacks, transportation, crowd control and other tasks.
- Identify key moms for each grade of kids at each school. They will serve as your publicists and advocates with other parents.
- Collect names and addresses of current and incoming middle school students and create a mailing list. Start with last year's club cards. Ask high school kids for information on their younger brothers and sisters. Use last year's elementary school directories for upcoming middle school kids. Buy mailing addresses or labels from the school district.
- Create a parent email list. Ask key moms to give you email addresses for other moms.
- Every grade of kids often has a mom in charge of mass emailing. Ask her to send out WyldLife information to her lists.
- Get school calendars to check for conflicts with club dates.
- Before school begins, mail a semester calendar and a letter explaining WyldLife to parents. Address it "to the parents of \*\*\*\*" and not just the child. Mention camp and tell parents you'll send out dates in late fall.
- Put a copy of the semester calendar in the first PTA newsletter of the fall. Ask if you can place an ad or include an insert in the newsletter.
- Put your club dates on your msite. Parents will look there for information.
- Parent communication with urban kids may be more difficult, and mailing a semester calendar may not be the best option. Think outside the box. Send a letter home with kids after the first club or pass out WyldLife information at school when kids and parents come to pick up schedules if administration will let you.
- When doing contact work at games or events, leaders should spend time in the parent section as well as the student section.

#### CLUB PROMOTION/KIDS

- Design and order WyldLife T-shirts.
- Host a burger or pizza night the week before school begins for eighth graders. Give them the first opportunity to buy the new WyldLife shirt. Explain to them your need for their enthusiasm at club – they'll need to show younger kids how it's done. Take a survey and ask their favorite songs, skits, games and theme clubs. Ask them what they loved about club at camp. Let them have some input so they'll keep coming.
- When key parents pick up their kids from the burger night, ask if kids can shoe polish their back windshield with "WyldLife Coming Soon – Ask Me!" Give them semester calendars to share with other parents.
- If you have access to the school, leaders should go to lunch on the first day and visit kids who went to camp. They can begin meeting other kids, as well.
- Create a Facebook group for each class of WyldLife kids. Use it to announce club and other events. Kids may not see it but parents will. Create Instagram and Twitter accounts to announce club to kids.
- Adult leaders should do contact work weekly. Look for opportunities to volunteer at the school (schedule pick-up, dances, etc.) Give your leaders schedules for school sports, concerts, etc.



## OTHER

- Start thinking about a WyldLife Bus Tour, WyldLife Weekend or other overnight events for the fall or spring semester.

## SEPTEMBER

### FIRST CLUB

- Schedule club the first week of school. Kids come to middle school ready to get involved, and we need to capitalize on their enthusiasm.
- Send an email reminder to parents before club. Use your email list or ask your key parents to forward the email to their lists.
- Middle school kids are not the best to invite kids from younger classes, but they can communicate with their own, immediate groups. Encourage kids to bring their friends to club.
- Text eighth graders and ask them to wear their new WyldLife shirts to school. Use Facebook, Instagram and Twitter too. Ask key moms to wear WyldLife T-shirts that day too.
- Leaders should go to lunch at the school wearing their WyldLife T-shirts.
- Key parents can be there to greet other parents when they drop off their kids. Parents will feel more comfortable if they see parents they know and trust.
- Include at least one idea from the eighth grade surveys at club so kids will know they've been heard.
- Show a camp video so that kids will catch the enthusiasm of kids who went that summer.
- Ask kids to complete club cards – don't forget to ask for parent emails and parent phone numbers. Ask kids what social media they use – FB, Twitter and/or Instagram.

## OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

### MORE IDEAS

- Leaders should be doing contact work weekly. If leaders are only coming to club, it becomes an event-driven rather than relationship-based ministry.
- Continue to send email reminders to parents and text messages to kids about club. Use Instagram, Twitter and Facebook to announce club too.
- While eighth graders are not ready to lead club, you can ask them to do something special every club with help from their leaders – melodrama, lip synch, skit, video, etc. Be creative so they'll stay interested.
- Middle school kids love theme nights. Keep them simple so every kid can participate. (Jersey night, crazy sock night, girls v. guys night, etc. **Search "WyldLife" on the staff/volunteer web site for more theme ideas.**)
- Make videos of kids at school events and in the stands at games. Middle school kids love to see themselves on the big screen.
- Middle school bands love to have a place to perform.
- A WyldLife club typically includes more mixers, fewer up-front games, less singing and shorter talks. **Search "WyldLife" on the staff/volunteer web site for more thoughts on how to create a club that meets the needs of middle school kids.**
- Talk about camp every club – even if you don't have the dates yet.
- Invite eighth graders to be in the audience for the high school's Mr. Christmas Tree pageant.
- Host a Human Christmas Tree Scavenger Hunt club in December. (See example.)
- In the spring, rotate clubs with events like roller skating, battle of the bands, kickball, crud war, etc.

### CAMP SELL

- You'll want to get kids excited about camp at club, but communication with parents is just as important.
- **See "What can you do NOW to get kids to WyldLife camp?" for a detailed WyldLife camp sell timeline.**