

Faith and Society Files: Church and School - Resources from Youth for Christ

Youth for Christ (YFC) has been producing school resources for over twenty years and has now amassed a wealth of material aimed at both the casual visitor to a school and the professional in the classroom. This File outlines some of the wealth of material available, for use mostly in secondary schools.



Youth for Christ (YFC) has been producing school resources for over twenty years and has now amassed a wealth of material aimed at both the casual visitor to a school and the professional in the classroom. Recognising that many other groups already produce high quality material for the primary sector, most of what YFC produces is aimed at the secondary school age and has a distinct focus on this 11-18 age range.

People in your church may be able to make direct use of these good resources. If not, perhaps you could offer them to a local teacher, or schools' worker, and present them as a gift.

Explore

For those involved in classroom RE, YFC have created the Explore brand - a series of publications and resources which highlight the Christian faith within established schemes of work.

Part 1 – explore: The Christian faith

This resource is based on the famous Youth Alpha course and takes the themes of that course and turns them into classroom lessons complete with tasks for differentiated learning, tools for assessment and suggestions for homework. Explore part 1 is also now an accredited course with the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and can be taught as a course in school to gain valuable points towards awards.



Both come with a dvd crammed full of testimony, drama, quizzes, vox pops and music. *RE Today* recently reviewed the product and thought it 'well worth the asking price' and 'full of creative ideas for the struggling RE teacher'.

To support Explore there are two websites:

- » www.exploreforschools.co.uk
- » www.explore-tv.co.uk

These both contain additional material and teacher support.

Explore tv is a video site with regular updates of new drama, vox pops and testimony for use in assembly or lessons. It is easy to use and free to download.



Part 2 – explore: The life of Jesus



This material extends the work of part 1 with 14 sessions looking at all aspects of Jesus' ministry from birth to resurrection, teaching to miracles.

A recent development in this area has been the creation of an **Explore residential** for schools. Working with the Pioneer Centre, schools can have two days of outdoor activities coupled with RE input from YFC workers and other staff. It is a fabulous opportunity for schools to witness the Christian faith in action.



Crux Resource

For those involved in after-school clubs, YFC have created the crux resource.



Crux is a termly resource offering churches ready made sessions for every day of the week, every week of the school year. It offers five streams of after-school club.

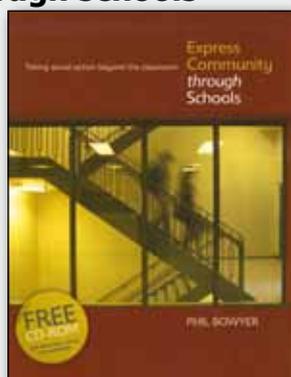
- Discovery** a discussion based group with a distinct spiritual foundation – aimed at older students
- Express** a fun and games session with Christian themes
- Risk It** an IT club which teaches real skills but using Christian examples eg the animation course equips students to do their own claymation picture but does so using the nativity story as its base
- Cre8ive** an arts club offering course in dance, drama, mask making etc
- Sports** a termly sports club giving an overview of football, basketball etc.

Each course is written by experts in their field and is accompanied by a 'how to' DVD to show you just how each session can be run.

In addition to the written material, YFC offer two mission teams – **crux theatre** and **crux media**. Both offer day-long or week-long options of workshops, lessons and performances that can stimulate the existing curriculum in any school.

Express community through schools

Tying in with schools' citizenship curriculum and key stage 5 requirements, this book, written by Phil Bowyer of Soul Action with lesson plan and schools' material by Nigel Roberts of YFC, has been praised by government and teachers alike. It is a handbook for churches to work with their local schools in creating community projects that can make a difference locally.



www.yfcschoolsconnection.co.uk

As well as producing written resources, YFC runs a website that operates as an information point and swap shop. This is the place to come for assembly ideas, lessons, inspiration and encouragement.

Training

A major emphasis in recent years has been to equip youth and schools' workers with qualifications so that they can offer service to schools of the highest quality. To that end, YFC has developed a degree with the Centre for Youth Ministry which is now available to students through Staffordshire University. The degree in schools', youth and community work with applied theology gives students the chance to work in both an education and youth work setting, allowing them to gain a JNC¹ and other relevant qualifications en route to their degree.



Bristol Baptist College also runs CYM courses including a BA in School, Youth and Community Work and Practical Theology².



- 1 To be a fully-qualified youth worker in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, you need to hold a qualification that is recognised by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), which is composed of youth work employers and trade unions. JNC recognition is currently attached to a range of qualifications - a foundation degree, a diploma in higher education, a postgraduate certificate or an honours degree.
- 2 www.bristol-baptist.ac.uk/courses.htm

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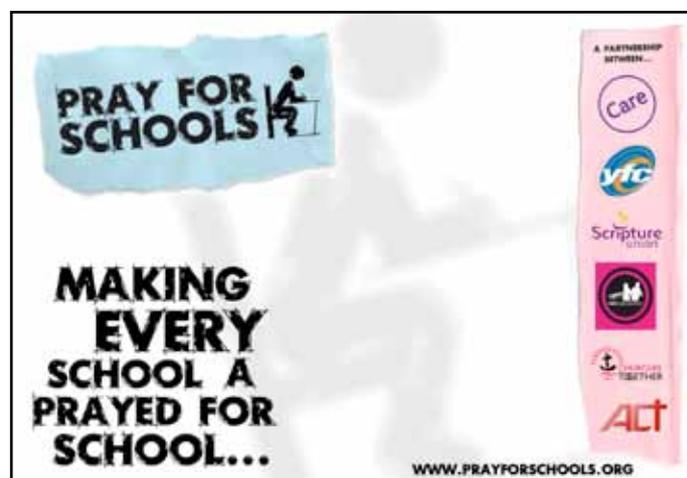
In recent years, YFC have recognised that it is not just students that struggle with transition. Scripture Union already produce excellent resources for children as they move from one stage of education to another but it did not seem that similar support was available to parents. YFC have created Refocus a course for churches to offer to schools to include in their parental support programmes.

ReFocus is made up of five modules which could be used separately by individuals, small groups or as part of a course. These modules are:

- » Choices
- » Change
- » Coping (with Parenting)
- » Communication
- » Community

Each module is then further divided into three sections exploring various topics in further detail.

It is advised that each session is run in a relaxed, informal setting in order to encourage meaningful discussion and reflection. Pilot tests in Leicestershire have met with enthusiastic support from both church and participants. It is a great way of serving a school and offers a real chance to engage at a significant level with local community. Check out the website www.tweenstoteens.co.uk



Pray for schools

Finally, YFC is a partner in the Pray for Schools network, a group of organisations dedicated to encouraging prayer links with schools. The website is filled with inspirational ideas for groups and events, and is a wonderful place for any church to start when considering the whole issue of schoolwork. www.prayforschools.org