

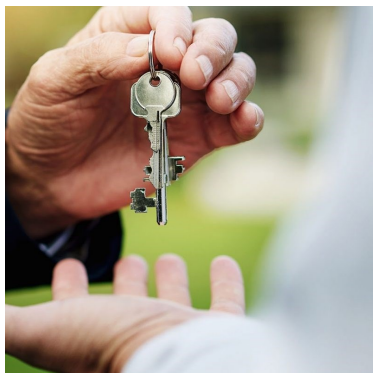


Commitment #1: Unlock Keychain Leadership

“Instead of centralizing authority, empower others—especially young people.”

From the Fuller Youth Institute blog:

FYI’s Growing Young project set out to ask why certain churches succeed in their ministry with young people. From our research, we discovered that these “bright spot” congregations—diverse in region, size, denomination and culture—had six core commitments in common. One of those commitments was *keychain leadership*. In other words, they were brimming with staff, volunteers, and parents who help their church flourish by handing over the “keys” of power, access, and ability to their students.



Often the persons who are most trusted in an organization are given a set of keys to the building. Those people also hold the most power—they can literally decide to let people in or to keep people out. Keys provide access to physical rooms, as well as to strategic meetings, significant decisions, and central roles or places of authority. The more power you have, the more keys you tend to possess.

But while we can think of a set of keys tangibly as a physical privilege and responsibility of leadership, they can also be symbolic of the capabilities,

power, and access leaders in a church have to carry the potential to empower young people. No matter how many “keys” you hold (whether physically or symbolically), if you are willing to entrust your keys of leadership to young people, they will trust you with their hearts, their energy, their creativity, and even their friends.

From the book:

Keychain leaders can be volunteers, senior pastors, parents, youth pastors, associate pastors, Sunday school teachers, and more. Beyond any particular role, keychain leadership is a spirit and commitment demonstrated by both paid and volunteer leaders that permeates every area of the church.

The research revealed six essentials of keychain leadership. Keychain leaders:

- Are mature, not always young
- Are real, not “relevant”
- Are warm, not distant
- Know what matters to people, not just other leaders
- Entrust and empower others; they don’t try to be a “superhero”
- Take the long view, not short-sighted steps

From your Growing Together Team:

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