

5 WAYS TO WIN TEENS

REV. TITUS LEE

Relating to teens today requires more than a list of do's and don'ts. Many teens are emotionally detached because of domestic issues and being socially marginalized. Some of them have hidden behind the masks of social aggression and others behind attitudes of apathy. However, there are great opportunities for adults to win these teens every day. The use of the term win here is alluding to making a significant connection that you may be able to influence their attitudes and actions. Here are five things that you can do this week to win teens in your home and community.

INTEREST IN THEM

Remember that interest precedes instruction. It's easy to authoritatively give orders to teens. After all, "you've been there and done that." However, teens long for relationship over redundant reminders of right and wrongs. Take a Saturday off from what interests you and "go to their world" by walking the mall with them, taking them to the favorite eating spot or taking them to see that "can't miss" new movie. Showing a genuine interest in them is the beginning of winning them.

INVEST IN THEM

Whether it's the teen in your household or the one in your neighborhood, make time to listen to them. They have many feelings and fears that often go unheard. This feeling of being unheard and/or ignored

creates frustration. The feeling of frustration precipitates risky, rude and rowdy behaviors in them. Therefore, "giving teens your ear" is one of the most validating gifts that you can give to them. The investment of listening to them can create a return of dialogue and peace in our homes and communities. If you listen to them for an hour...they will listen to you for the rest of their lives!

INVITE THEM

Once in a while take a day to invite them into your world. Set a part time for them to join you for dinner (if they aren't family), take them to church with you or bring them to your family gathering. Significant acts like these can foster a sense of belonging in teens who are struggling with detachment and acceptance issues. Take note of the "loners" and invite them into your world. They are grateful whenever a concerned, trusted adult says, "come on and go with me".

INSPIRE THEM

Ask teens questions about what's important to them. Ask them about grades, athletics and community service to name a few. Locate their priorities and then work hard to inspire them to excel in what matters. Take them to the library for study time with a promise of their favorite meal afterwards. Take them to a college, semi-pro or professional game to expose them to the hard work of next level athletes. Take them to serve elderly, disabled and impoverished individuals (even if they themselves are impoverished) that they may learn to help solve other people's problems through selfless service.

INSTRUCT THEM

Teens yearn for instruction and direction. However, they respond best to those whom they perceive to care for them. When you have previously shown an interest in them it creates a platform for you to instruct them, challenge them and correct them! Constructively critique them but never make it an attack on their intelligence or their potential. Let your instruction help to push them to excel!



Upcoming Event

MAKE THE CONNECTION TRAINING SUMMIT 2017

NORTHWEST INDIANA

Life Point Church

7350 Kennedy * Hammond, IN

MAY 22, 2017 * 10:00AM – 2:00PM

Join Rev. Titus Lee and Operation Link-Up Teen Mentoring Ministries for a day of empowerment! Youth Workers from across Northwest Indiana will be equipped to excel at reaching teenagers in their organizations, ministries and schools. There will be dynamic and exciting sessions such as: "Mentoring that Makes A Difference", "Starting the Program from Scratch" and "Keys to Connecting with Disconnected Teens". There will be a delicious complimentary lunch! You will also receive youth program resources that you can use immediately!

REV. TITUS LEE is the Founder and Director of Operation Link-Up, Inc. which is a youth empowerment program that mentors, motivates and mobilizes youth. This program, which began as an after-school program in Chicago, Illinois, has grown into a national program that's being used across the United States. Rev. Titus Lee also travels nationally and internationally to speak to teens as well as train youth workers. He is also the author of *Teen Life Soulutions Curriculum*.

