

YOUTH DEPARTMENT

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Introduction

“Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” (Isaiah 40:30-31)

During this turbulent time of an unprecedented pandemic, it has been a challenge for all of us to continue our work and faith with the same motivation as before. It has been especially worrying for youths, many of whom have had sudden changes in their daily lifestyles with online education and lockdown restrictions during the pandemic. What we can do is to focus on the stable development of the next generation by preparing them for their futures with strong Christian foundations and renew their strength in the Lord through hope in Him.

The Youth Department of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union encourages Christian living and promotes a healthy lifestyle free of harmful drugs. In addition, this year we are also hoping to explore ways we can care for this earth that God has created for us as we begin to understand the devastating problems our climate and environment are facing. This direction works well with the value of temperance - a lifestyle of conscious decisions in consumption and habits - to minimise the excessive waste that causes strain on our planet’s resources. The aim of this kit is to hopefully provide ideas for activities related to these efforts that will further the work being done by the youth departments around the world. We encourage you to get creative and adapt these to best suit your community.

1. Environmental Activities and Ways Of Working

Online Gatherings/ Conferences Through Video

Emails → Text messaging → Video communication

Recently, the adoption of video conferencing has strongly accelerated with remote working/ education as a result of the COVID-related restrictions on travel and group gatherings. Even many church services, annual forums, and conferences have moved online and have shown that this alternative is viable and the possibilities are endless. It is amazing that we have the technology to continue our work during such circumstances.

Although video conferences may not be a perfect substitute for the real feeling of connection we have when we gather in person, youths are much faster in adoption and sometimes more receptive toward digital activities. The following benefit is provided:

- Save resources - for large scale gatherings, the carbon footprint for these events and all of the travel required can be saved and at an individual level, participants would save time and money that would be spent to attend in-person at a venue.

This aligns with WCTU's goal to move in a more sustainable direction. Additionally, because of the greater convenience this provides, there may in fact be more participants who are able to join in than at an offline setting, not to mention those from distant locations. It may be interesting to think about what WCTU activities and gatherings may look like in the post-COVID era, seeing as many companies consider remote working to be a system that they will be keeping. Another idea to consider for the future is livestreaming (live video coverage) major events or even seminars of our conventions for youths who are unable to join in-person, as the technology to do these are much easier than ever (the opening ceremony of the FAS Prevention Center in Seoul was live streamed on their Youtube account).

As we are only beginning to see the endless possibilities for how video conferencing is used, the following are a few ideas relevant for WCTU activities:

- WCTU or YTC meetings
 - Regular meetings
 - Connections with branches of other countries
 - Bible study/ sharing testimonials
 - Group prayer sessions
- Activities
 - Temperance seminars
 - One-on-one mentoring
 - Support group sessions
 - Online workshops
- Youth group meetups
 - Casual meetups
 - Christian book club
 - Group study/ work sessions
 - Film night

Things to consider for online gatherings:

- A planned agenda - online gatherings work best with an appropriate amount of efficiency since it is much easier for people to lose focus in longer video calls. Just like with long in-person meetings, it may be wise to have a planned agenda with different activities to help with this or if you have several topics you would like to get through.
- The platform - each video conferencing platform has its own set of pros and cons. It would be good to look into the features (for example breakout rooms, chat messaging, screen/ file sharing) that will work best for your group and type of gathering.
- Screen fatigue - as mentioned above, it has been noted that too much time spent video conferencing can cause fatigue and eye strain. It is much more difficult to have video calls that go over one hour than it is in-person. For longer sessions, add in a break or a minute of stretching.

Examples of popular video conferencing platforms that require just an internet connection and a phone/ tablet/ computer. Most of these are free (up to a certain time limit and number of participants):

- Zoom
- Google Meet
- Microsoft Teams
- Skype
- Facetime (iPhone / iPad / iMac users only)

2. Activities Targeting Youth

IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES!



DESIGN YOUR OWN ACTIVITY!

This can be an activity in creativity on its own - identify the goal behind the project, think of your audience and ways to reach them, and execute! Feel free to share your great ideas with us.

A POSTER COMPETITION!

Some ideas for topics: sustainability, staying sober, harms of alcohol. Afterward, share these on your social media account or print these out and post around your school or church!

'TEXT A FRIEND' CAMPAIGN!

Text one friend a week to 'be sober' or encourage those trying to cut back on these substances. Introduce them to WCTU!

CREATE A NEWSLETTER!

NZKWCTU's Youth Temperance Council has begun their own awesome newsletter - members share testimonials, photos of activities, and writings on their WCTU journey. Showcase your talents and keep others updated at the same time!

PLEDGES!

A pledge card makes the promise that much more special and official. And motivating too. You can download pledge cards on our website.

CONTENT CREATOR!

Another creativity project. Whether it's a blog, livestream, artwork, or a youtube channel, create content and share the cause!

IDEAS FOR A 'GREEN CAFE'!

The Green Cafe is an annual campaign done by the Korea YTC team - the team organises a day on campus full of various activities to introduce non-members and regular students to WCTU's cause. Here are some creative ideas that have been successful in the past:

OBSTACLE COURSE WHILE WEARING DRUNK GOGGLES

Fatal Vision has a series of goggles that visually simulate the effects of alcohol and drug intoxication. The goggles were available at the local health center, which students would wear before completing an obstacle course (walking along a straight line, playing a driving computer game etc). This fun activity allowed students to experience the impairment these substances have on our ability to do simple tasks, while sober.

MOCKTAIL PARTY

Not only is this a great way to draw a crowd at a college campus, but it also demonstrates an alcohol-free alternative.

ALCOHOL ADDICTION SURVEYS / MENTORING

A simple survey to determine the seriousness of their alcohol habits and 1:1 mentoring. This has been a source of surprise for many students.

Additional tips: It's always great to have educational handouts at the ready. Have music to create a vibrant mood (maybe a Christian playlist) and prepare plenty of free food or books to draw a crowd (previously done toasted marshmallows, jellies on skewer sticks, and a sausage sizzle!)

Additional Reading

Teen Vaping: The Growing Trend of E-cigarettes

Vaping and e-cigarettes has been a rapidly growing trend that is taking over the youth, in place of regular cigarettes, that parents or youth workers should be aware of. The CDC calls e-cigarettes the “most commonly used tobacco product among youth”¹. Before a law in 2019 that “prohibited the sale of cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products to people under the age of 21”², a survey from 2018 found that a whopping 37.3% of 12th graders reported to vaping during the year in the U.S.³

What is Vaping?

Vaping refers to the use of electronic cigarettes (or e-cigarettes), which is an electronic device that often contains nicotine, which is the very “addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products”⁴, and other chemicals that people inhale vapor from (rather than smoke). Due to the marketing and product development towards a younger demographic in recent years, as well as a lack of regulations in some countries, it has grown in popularity as an alternative to smoking cigarettes.



The Different Types of E-cigarettes

The designs make it look less like cigarettes of a harmful substance and more like a trendy, tech product. Photo Source: <https://opustreatment.com/teen-vaping-what-parents-need-to-know/>

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/pdfs/Electronic-Cigarettes-Infographic-p.pdf

² <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/01/02/fda-issues-ban-on-some-flavored-vaping-products.html>

³

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/news-events/news-releases/2018/12/teens-using-vaping-devices-in-record-numbers>

⁴

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html

As a matter of fact, one of the largest tobacco companies, Philip Morris International, announced a drastic decision in 2016 to bet on a “smoke-free future” and get “at least 40 million of its adult customers to stop smoking and switch to one of the alternatives.”⁵ They have noted the health concerns and environmental reasons to quit smoking - launching Unsmoke marketing campaigns and a website called Unsmoke Your World. In the place of cigarettes, they are pushing for their e-cigarette products.

The Problem

However, the looming problem surrounding vaping and the previous lack of regulations, is that it hasn't been around long enough for us to know the exact effects it has on the body. Although it is said to be the lesser evil than a regular cigarette and contains less harmful substances, it's a new device that requires further scientific study. Recently, the CDC, U.S. FDA, state and health departments of the U.S., have recently begun to investigate an “outbreak of e-cigarette, or vaping, product use-associated lung injury (EVALI)” in the U.S.⁶. They explicitly state on their website that “e-cigarette, or vaping, products (nicotine- or THC-containing) should never be used by youths, young adults, or women who are pregnant.”⁷

Thankfully there have been active in their efforts to curb teen vaping, by implementing rules such as a ban on fruit and mint flavoured vaping products in 2020 by the FDA⁸, as well as a law signed in 2019 to prohibit the selling of e-cigarettes to those under 21 in the U.S. Regardless, we should be vigilant about these new trends in youth culture that can cause harm.

For additional resources, this fact sheet by the CDC is a great summary on e-cigarettes: https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/pdfs/Electronic-Cigarettes-Infographic-p.pdf

⁵ <https://www.pmi.com/our-transformation/delivering-a-smoke-free-future>

⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html#cdc-recommends

⁷ Ibid

⁸ <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/01/02/fda-issues-ban-on-some-flavored-vaping-products.html>