



TAKING

THE

NEXT

STEP



see...

Taking The

Next Step:

judge...

Creating a self-sustainable
YCS group





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Contents	Page
Section One – Introduction	4
Letter from National Executive	5
Endorsement Letter	6
Introduction	7
Section Two – Planning for Your Group	10
Planning for Your Group	11
Planning Step 1 – Understanding the Purpose	12
Planning Step 2 – Finalise Core Leadership Team	13
Planning Step 3 - What should your group look like?	14
General Meeting Plan Template	15
Planning Step 4 – How will you operate?	16
Leaders Meeting Template	22
Let's Make a Plan	25
Section Three – Taking The Next Step (single)	33
Leaders Preparation Notes	34
Meeting Outline One	39
Meeting Outline Two	41
Meeting Outline Three	43
Section Four - Taking The Next Step (double)	45
Leaders Preparation Notes	46
Meeting Outline One	55
Meeting Outline Two	57
Meeting Outline Three	59
Meeting Outline Four	61
Meeting Outline Five	63
Meeting Outline Six	65
Section Five – Supporting Resources	67
Prayer and Reflection Tools	68
Gospel Reflection Guide	69
Prayer Kit	71
YCS Creed and YCS Prayer	72
Getting Started	75
Tool 1 – Contradictions	76
Tool 2 – Review of Happenings	78
Tool 3 – Day in Your Life	80
Section Six – What Comes Next?	82
Strong and Sustainable	83
Key Tips	84
Other Resources	86
Contact Details	87

Section one: Introduction



AUSTRALIAN YOUNG CHRISTIAN STUDENTS



19th of April 2010

Dear YCS members and supporters,

For the students, teachers, Adult Assistants and Chaplains of the Australian Young Christian Students Movement (AYCS), it is my privilege as your National Chairperson to present you with the resource **“Taking The Next Step”** that is to follow a most successful program, the NUTS program.

The Young Christian Students movement encourages students to take action guided by their faith. The formation that YCS provides students with will always be an essential part and overall strength of the movement. YCS is student-run, meaning it is run for, by and among High school students, empowering them to develop and integrate their faith into their own daily lives.

“Taking The Next Step” runs for six weeks, and is designed to help, support and sustain existing groups so as to ensure they become effective YCS groups, following the use of the NUTS program. Differing from the NUTS program, **“Taking The Next Step”** is primarily based on providing tools for YCS groups to run effectively without the need for a detailed program. YCS groups can also use **“Taking The Next Step”** to help them maintain or refresh group members’ formation and knowledge of the movement.

I hope you find this program beneficial as we strive to ensure YCS members are constantly being challenged to be active Christian leaders in their community.

Yours in the Spirit of Cardijn

Rachel Addy
AYCS National Chairperson
Year 12 Student

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This resource *“Taking The Next Step”* is a wonderful contribution by the Australian Young Christian Students Movement to the life of the Catholic Church. Together with *“Never Underestimate The Students”* this program provides a holistic source of formation for young people who aspire to be active Christian leaders.

We are all called by Jesus Christ to walk amongst the world, to reflect on it and to transform it in the light of the Gospel. Over many years the YCS has formed young people to carry out this role through use of the Review of Life method. The development of leaders with a true passion for both action and reflection, based on the Gospel has become a trademark of the YCS movement in this country.

This resource adds further to that tradition by endeavouring to provide a framework for sustainable growth of YCS groups, whilst ensuring that young people themselves continue to have ownership of the YCS movement and its activities.

“Taking The Next Step” ensures that YCS members and groups around Australia will be able to effectively use both the Review of Life and the process of Gospel Reflection to grapple with and transform our world. This is something that is greatly needed, both by our Church and our world. It is with this in mind that I recommend this program and encourage its use throughout Australia.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eugene Hurley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning of the first letter.

Bishop Eugene Hurley
Chairman
Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life
ACBC



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Taking The Next Step

Introduction

“Taking the Next Step” is the second resource in a two part process for setting up a self-sustainable YCS group. Those who are using this program will have used “Never Underestimate The Students,” our eight week introductory program for starting a YCS group. In the final meeting of that program, the group reviewed whether or not they wanted to continue as a YCS group. **“Taking The Next Step”** is about supporting those who decided that they did want to use YCS to keep making a difference.

If you haven’t already used the “Never Underestimate The Students” program (NUTS) we recommend that you use that resource as the first step to starting a YCS group.

This program can also be used by existing YCS groups who are looking for more guidance in how to run their groups, however please keep in mind that it has been written for groups who have recently been set up.

The formation that students get from YCS is a long-term process that gets long-term results which are visible for the rest of their lives. Because of this, it is vital that YCS groups are self-sustainable so that they can continue to grow and so that students can get the full benefits that YCS can provide. The NUTS program was designed as a simple and effective way of starting a local YCS group, and with this second resource we aim to give you the necessary tools to make sure that your group is self-sustainable after finishing the NUTS program.

“Taking the Next Step” is designed to empower YCS leaders by giving groups the skills and experiences to confidently and effectively run their YCS Meetings. This program runs for 6 weeks and includes guides and tools for how to structure, organise and run YCS local group meetings whilst allowing groups to explore the key issues which are relevant to their lives. The program will provide ongoing support to YCS groups, ensuring continued formation and development of members and group actions.

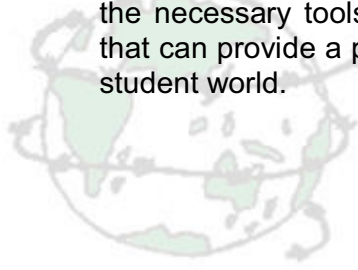
Importantly, one of the most essential elements of YCS is that local groups reflect and act upon the things that students themselves find relevant. That is why we start with the SEE section in the Review of Life process. A normal functioning YCS group will start their Review of Life from an experience or an action that of one of the group members and they will use the SEE-JUDGE-ACT process to look at this situation in the light of their faith and take action.

We recognise however that it is often difficult to volunteer information about yourself when a group first starts. This is why the NUTS Program provides all the necessary topics and reflections needed by a functioning group. In doing this students can get a taste for YCS and decide whether they are interested in being involved.



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Once the group has decided to continue with YCS they need to move from being dependant on a written program to being a living YCS group which responds to the daily lives of students. This resource aims to fulfil that role, to provide groups with all the necessary tools and skills to be an ongoing, self-sustainable, and living group that can provide a positive and active response to the challenge of the Gospel in the student world.



see...



judge...

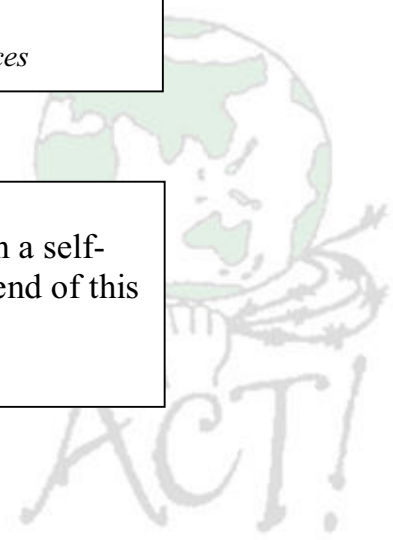
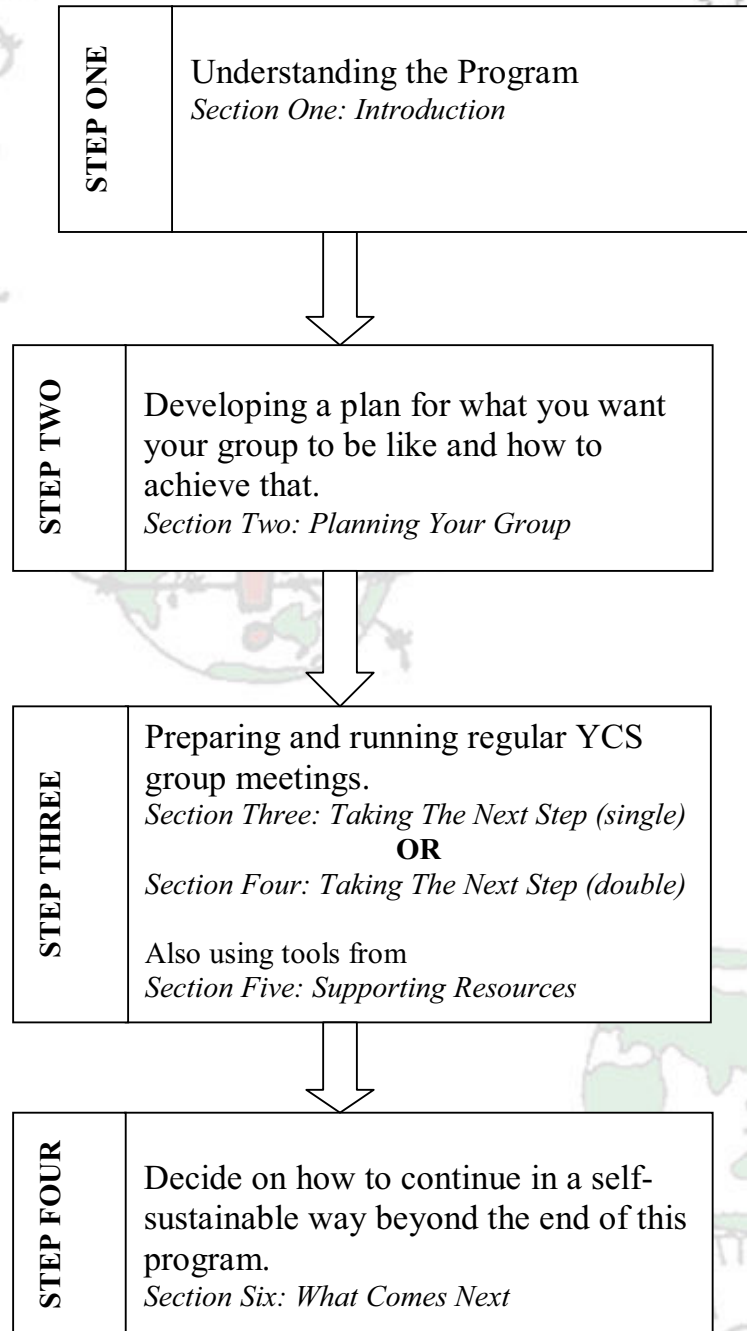




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How to Use This Program

In order to help you develop a self-sustainable YCS group this program guides you through four key steps which are then broken down into smaller stages, questions or activities. The diagram below shows the flow of the program.



SECTION TWO: PLANNING FOR YOUR GROUP





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Planning for your group

The purpose of this program is to help new YCS groups become self sustainable to a stage where they can use the Review of Life to reflect on everyday situations and take positive action.

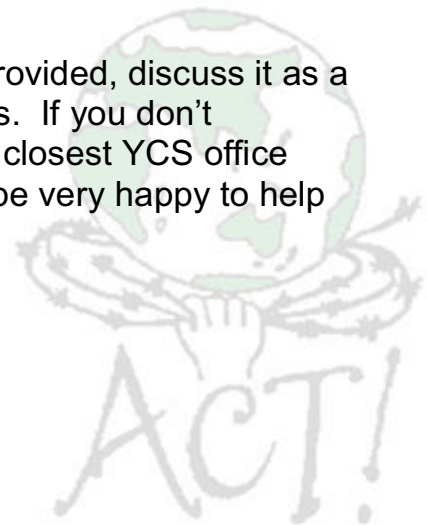
At the moment your group will have just finished the NUTS Program so you will be used to working out of a written program. Take the Next Step aims to give you the tools, structures and skills that you need to move from being totally program based to being self sustainable, whilst still working within the YCS model.

To do this there are five overall steps in this process that you will need to complete:

- 1. Understand the purpose of “Taking The Next Step” which is to make your group self-sustainable.***
- 2. Finalise your core leadership team.***
- 3. Look at what your group meetings should be like by the end of “Taking the Next Step.”***
- 4. Plan how your group will operate for the next term.***
- 5. Work through the meeting plans provided, which will help you with the transition to being a self-sustainable YCS group.***

The first four steps are set out in this section of the program. The meeting plans for the fifth are included in section 3 and section 4. Which one you use will depend on your answers to some of the questions in the first four Planning Steps. At the end of the section you will be directed to the next appropriate part of the program.

For steps one to four please read the information provided, discuss it as a leadership team and make any necessary decisions. If you don't understand something in here, please contact your closest YCS office using the contact details on p87 and someone will be very happy to help you out.





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Planning Step One: Understanding the purpose

The purpose of this **“Taking the Next Step”** program is to help your group become self-sustainable. However it’s important to know what this means.

YCS groups should be self-sustainable but this doesn’t mean that you are expected to go off and do things on your own without any support and without ever speaking to another YCS person again.

A strong and self-sustainable YCS group should:

- *Be able to do a Review of Life in their group meeting by focusing on a situation that a member has experienced in their life.*
- *Be able to prepare their own meetings.*
- *Be able to prepare their own Gospel Reflections and Prayer time.*
- *Be taking action coming from the Review of Life, both individually as members, and collectively as a group.*
- *Be linking up with other YCS groups as part of a movement – i.e. through attending diocesan events, being part of a co-ordination team, or having joint activities with another local group.*
- *Have social activities that allow the members to build a strong sense of friendship and community.*

By working through the next 4 steps in this group planning process we will assist you, as a leader or adult assistant, to move your group from being dependant on a written program to being a self sustainable group which can fulfill the criteria above. Please remember that there are always people from the wider YCS movement that can assist you to do this, whether through resources such as this one or through our personal help.

So please call or email one of the YCS offices if you ever need any help.





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Planning Step Two: Finalise your core leadership team.

As you learnt in the NUTS Program, a successful YCS group needs to have a core leadership team who prepares meetings and plans the direction of the group.

Usually this core leadership team will involve around four student leaders plus one or two adult assistants.

In this planning process you need to finalise your core leadership team. For most groups, the core leadership team that set up the group using the NUTS program will continue in the role. However this isn't always the case: perhaps one of them decided they weren't interested in YCS, or maybe they have left the school.

So before you can go forward you need to confirm this team of leaders. If you are looking for new members of this core leadership team, try to keep in mind the six things that make a YCS group successful and self-sustainable (from previous page).

If you're looking for someone to invite to be part of your core leadership team then think about whether they are able to help you achieve those six criteria. They should also be part of the wider YCS group.

Once you've worked out who to target, invite them to join the Core Leadership Team and take part in the planning process that you are using with this program.





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Planning Step Three:

What your group meetings should look like by the end of “Taking The Next Step”

Once you have your core leadership team, these are like the drivers of your group. The core leadership team will be the ones that make things happen. But you also need to know where you are going!

As a self-sustainable group your meetings will follow a similar structure each time. You might focus on a different thing each week in your meeting but by keeping the same structure you learn important things like how to use the Review of Life to respond to a situation, and how to run a meeting.

The template General Meeting Plan on the next page shows the structure that all your meetings should have by the end of this program.

Each week in this program there will be a meeting plan that uses this template and refers you to resources to use so that your meetings run successfully. You will get a chance to try out several different ways of doing things: whether it is starting a Review of Life, organising a game, or preparing a Gospel Reflection.

The idea is that by the end of the program you can work out which of these methods will work best for your group. You will be able to run your group meetings by adapting the General Meeting Plan to specific situations and you'll know where to access extra resources if you need them.

When this happens your group meetings will be self-sustainable.

There will still be help available when you need it, but you will know that there are leaders in your own group who are capable of running things without a written program telling them what to do!

In the end this gives your group more control and ownership of its own direction.



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General Meeting Plan

Template for group meetings

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION

GAME- where appropriate and time permits

REVIEW OF LIFE

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

- What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
- What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
- How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

- What do you think about this?
- What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
- What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

- What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
- What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
Individual Action or Collective Action
- Who else could you involve in this action?

GENERAL BUSINESS

PLANNING NEXT MEETING

CLOSING PRAYER



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Planning Step Four:

Plan how your group will operate for the next term to achieve this.

As the Core Leadership Team you need to be able to help your group become self-sustainable.

In order to do this you will need to look at a few issues that every group has to deal with as they try to become self-sustainable.

Planning Step Four guides you through these four main issues and helps you come to an informed decision about what direction is best for helping your group be successful and self-sustainable.

The list below shows the four issues that you will be asked to consider in “Planning Step Four.” Each of these are practical questions that your group needs to decide on as they significantly affect how you will work and how you can best become self-sustainable. On each page it will introduce the issue, why it is important and some of the things to consider. Then at the bottom of each page for Planning Step Four there will be a question that you are being asked to decide and a space to record your answer

1. How often will your group do the Review of Life?
2. How often will your group meet?
3. Leaders meetings
4. Making a balanced term plan





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Planning Step 4.1

How often will your group do the Review of Life?

As you know, the Review of Life is the central method of the YCS. It is the process we have for looking at the experiences of everyday life, seeing what our faith says about them, and taking relevant and powerful action that makes a difference.

It is therefore important for each group to give the Review of Life priority in their group meetings. The main purpose of the meeting is to do the Review of Life.

One of the first things for the Core Leadership Team to decide is whether to do a Review of Life in every meeting or to split it up over two meetings.

For some school based YCS groups they need to do their Review of Life over two meetings because of the short amount of time that they have during their lunch time meetings. Most groups would have done this in the NUTS Program.

However, if it is possible for it all to be done in one meeting this is the best way. This is because the See, Judge and Act sections all link in with each other and if they are split up with a week or even two weeks in between it can be hard to do an effective action. Also, in some circumstances the group may be doing a Review of Life on something that needs action straight away and they might not be able to wait until the next meeting in order to finish the rest of the process.

The Core Leadership Team should look at the pros and cons for each option and decide what will work best in their situation.

Once you have decided this please continue with the rest of this planning section. However at the end of the planning section you will either move on to **Section 3 if you are doing 1 Review of Life per meeting or Section 4 if you will do it over two meetings.**

Q: Will your group do a Review of Life in every meeting or to split it up over two meetings?

A: _____



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Planning Step 4.2

How often will your group meet?

The next decision you will need to make is whether to meet weekly or fortnightly. We encourage most groups to meet weekly if possible and it is more important to meet weekly if you are doing the Review of Life over two meetings, so that too much time doesn't pass in between.

Consider the pros and cons of each option and make a decision on which will work best for your group. Here are some pros for each option to get you started:

- Groups that meet every week get in a good flow and it is easier to remember that there's a meeting on.
- If you meet every week its not a big deal if you miss one because there will be one next week.
- Meeting every week can lead to better actions because you have more time to plan them and carry them out.
- Some groups that meet once a fortnight do their leaders meetings in the week between, this helps the group function better.
- Some groups have a meeting every two weeks but in between they do still get together – maybe for a social event or a group action.

You also need to make a time and place for your group meetings. For most groups it will be the same time and place as they have been meeting previously but just get agreement on this so that everyone is clear.

Q: Will your group meet every week or once a fortnight?

A: _____

Q: When and where will your group meet?

A: _____



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Planning Step 4.3 Leaders Meetings

Leaders meetings are a very important part of a well functioning YCS group. A good YCS group meeting occurs when leaders have met with their Adult Assistants to prepare the next meeting.

It is essential that you have Leaders Meetings in between each group meeting, both whilst using this program, and as an ongoing and self-sustainable YCS group.

On page 22 there is a template structure for Leaders Meetings. We recommend that you use this structure as a guide for your Leaders Meetings but feel free to include additional activities if you have time. There are some suggestions for additional activities on p23.

In this stage of the planning process you need to work out how your Leaders Meetings will work. There are three questions that you need to answer:

- *When and where will leaders meetings happen?*
- *How will you involve other members in running the group?*
- *Who will come to leaders meetings?*

Each of these questions are explained more fully below, but before you answer them, please read the Leaders Meetings template and look at what needs to be covered. Then take this into account when making your decisions about how to run your Leaders Meetings.





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When and where will leaders meetings happen?

This question is pretty straight forward; you just need to decide on a time and a place that are suitable for having your Leaders Meetings.

Most groups will have this established from the Leaders Meetings that you had when using the NUTS Program and they will just need to confirm that this system will continue.

Q: When and where will your Leaders Meetings be held?

A: _____

see...

How will you involve other members in running the group?

In the NUTS Program you were asked to rotate the leaders of each meeting. It was suggested that each time you should have one of the Core leaders and one person from the wider group.

This mixture of leadership helps the group to grow because more people are getting a chance as leaders. That way if a lot of the Core Leadership Team leaves at one time (i.e. when they all finish year 12) then the group can continue to be strong and self-sustainable because there are others with leadership experience.

Also, the more involvement that a member has in the group, the more they see it as “their group” and the more they are committed to it. By involving more people in running the group you will ensure that you have more members who are more committed.

So you need to work out how you can involve group members in running the group as well as the Core Leadership Team. Will you continue the system of having two people run each meeting – one being a member of the Core Leadership Team and one being a normal group member, or maybe you have another system that might work well.

Q: How will you involve group member from outside the Core Leadership Team in running the group?

A: _____



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Who will come to leaders meetings?

This is your final question about Leaders Meetings. Each week there will be a couple of leaders who are directly involved in running the next meeting. The purpose of the leaders meeting is for these people to prepare what they have to do in the group meeting.

What you need to decide is whether at your Leaders Meetings you just have the Adult Assistant and the two students running the meeting, or whether you actually have the whole Core Leadership Team there.

List out some pros and cons for each option and then make a decision about which one will be best for your group.

If you decide not to have the whole Core Leadership Team at every Leaders Meeting it might be a good idea to have a special meeting just for this team. The CLT wouldn't have to meet all the time in this situation, probably twice a term would be enough. Keep this in mind when making your decision

Q: Will the whole Core Leadership Team attend every Leaders Meeting or just the people who are running that meeting?

A: _____





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LEADERS MEETING TEMPLATE

Evaluate your last meeting:

Use these questions to look at your last meeting and learn from it (don't use every question)

SEE

What did we observe in our group meeting?

- What went well? What didn't? Why did these things happen?
- What impact did this have on the meeting and the group?
- What have we learnt about ourselves and our group?

JUDGE

What are we aiming for?

- What are/were we trying to achieve? What does our faith say about that?
- What do we want our next meeting to be like?

ACT

How do we improve?

- What can you do personally to improve the next meeting?
- What do we need to take notice of for our planning of the next meeting?

Plan your next meeting:

- Who are going to be the two main leaders for this next meeting?
- What parts of the meeting will they each run?
- How will you get the Review of Life started? Is there a suggested method you can use?
- Have you prepared a Prayer or Gospel Reflection? You can use the resources on pages 68-74 to help you with this.
- Who will type and print an agenda for your meeting?
- Make sure you have included something that addresses any issues from your evaluation of the last meeting.

Other:

If you have time during your meeting, use this part to look at an aspect of what it means to be a leader. On the next page there is a list of additional activities that you could include in this section.



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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR LEADERS MEETINGS

Prayer/Reflection

Saying a prayer when you meet as a group can be an excellent way to focus on what you are doing and why. Feel free to use an existing prayer or develop your own. From early 2009 you will be able to access our new YCS Prayer Resource from our website.

It's also great to have some reflections that you can use to look at leadership, your group and/or your purpose. You can find some of these in the AYCS Gospel Reflection Booklet or you could find or develop your own.

Leadership Training

These are some ways that you could reflect on YCS leadership skills and formation, as well as your own progress as leaders:

- **DISCUSSION:** What makes a good leader?
- **DISCUSSION:** What is servant leadership and why is this important for young Christians?
- **DISCUSSION:** Look at the key principles of YCS, how are you carrying these out in your group?
- **LEADERSHIP MONITOR:** One thing that some groups do is to create a "leadership monitor." They make a list of the things that are important leadership qualities that they want to have. Then they make a table with everyone's names and all the leadership qualities. With this table they can tick off the areas that each person is competent in and see what areas they need to improve in.
- **CHALLENGE:** Have a think about what your weaknesses are as a leader. Discuss these as a group and set a challenge for each person where they have to do something that will improve their weakness (it could be something inside a meeting or out in the real world). Make sure you write down what the challenges are so you can check next time.



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Planning Step 4.4 Making a balanced term plan

Now it's time to make a plan for your group for the term. By planning the group's activities a term at a time you can give people some certainty and direction, plus it gives members things to look forward to.

With a plan like this you have a chance to make sure your group has a balanced direction and this is very important for ensuring that your group becomes self-sustainable

In Planning Step One (p12) there were six criteria that we explained as being the important steps that make up a self-sustainable YCS group.

Those criteria come from five basic elements that every local YCS group needs to have. They are:

- *Review of Life*
- *Prayer*
- *Personal and Collective Action*
- *Movement*
- *Social*
- *Leadership*

Using the guide on pages 25 - 32 you now need to develop a plan for the term that makes sure that you do at least one thing that touches on each element. The guide includes a description of each element, a step-by-step process for your plan, and examples of what your plan could look like.

We encourage you to continue making one of these plans at the end of each term to set the direction and activities for the next term.



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Let's Make A Plan

the guide to making a term plan for your group

The Purpose

The purpose of having a term plan is so that you can develop a balanced direction for your group that includes each of the “elements” below. This will help your group be stable and self-sustainable.

This plan will include all the key things that you are going to do in YCS this term. It should incorporate things such as:

- Group meetings
- Diocesan or regional events
- Group retreats, socials, workshops etc

The Resources

The main resources that have been developed by the AYCS to help you with this balanced term plan are:

- ***Taking the Next Step***
- ***The Gospel Reflection Booklet***
- ***AYCS Prayer Booklet***

Please check out these resources and others by accessing our website: www.aycs.org.au

The Elements

Your term plan should include some aspect of each of these elements. Read through each element and its description so that you can know how best to include it in your plan below.

- **Review of Life**

In each of your group meetings you should be using the Review of Life method. The Review of Life actually includes some of each of the other elements and it is the central method for forming active Christian leaders in YCS.

If you need any further information about the Review of Life, check out the resources on the AYCS website www.aycs.org.au or contact the National Office using the details on p87.



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- **Prayer**

YCS leaders should be developing a relationship with God as this is the basis for true and effective action. Prayer is the way of talking to and listening to God. Therefore Prayer is an essential element to being a balanced and self-sustainable group.

You should be using a form of prayer in your group meetings. If there are people in your group that are comfortable with leading this it can be very effective. However, often most group members aren't used to prayer and don't use it in their own lives. But don't worry about the AYCS Prayer Booklet and Gospel Reflection Booklet have some interesting and varied forms of prayer and reflection. These can give you a chance to try different types of prayer and then use them back in your group.

Prayer can often be the easy element to drop if you are running short of time. Please don't do this because you will find that you get the best actions happening when you are connected to what God is calling you to do and prayer is the best way you make that connection.

- **Personal and Collective Action**

We can take actions that are individual ones (personal action) or we can take an action that you do as a group or with other people (collective action).

It is essential that you are taking actions each time you do a Review of Life. If you don't actually get to the stage of doing anything then you aren't really being a true YCS member or leader.

So when you are doing your plan you might decide to focus particularly on making sure you are doing actions from your group meetings. Alternatively you could run a session on what action is and why it is important. You could also do a bigger Review of Life on a social justice issue and take a collective action to do something about the issue.

It is important to do a mix of both kinds of actions. So if you always do personal actions from your local group Review of Life then find a way that you can take a collective action, or vice-versa.

- **Movement**



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One of the key principles of YCS is that we are part of “a local, diocesan, national and international movement and we accept that we have responsibility at all these levels”

Being part of a movement is awesome because we are connected to something that is so much bigger than ourselves. We are able to change the individual situations that face in our own lives, and then as a movement we are able to make a difference when it comes to the root causes of many problems. Not only are we changing the local area but we are joining with 2.5million other young people who are transforming the whole world.

In order to get this power, we need to be “plugged in” to it. We need to get involved with YCS in our dioceses; our state and our country and we need to contribute to it. The Australian YCS is simply people like you who are taking this chance and making the best of it.

So try to link up with events that are being planned, and maybe next time you can help out in the organising! You can also do things like have joint social events or twilight retreats with another group. And if there aren't other groups nearby try using the internet to “plug in” to YCS in other places either in Australia or around the globe.

- **Social**

YCS is run for high school students by high school students. We're young and we want to have fun as well as make a difference. So it's important to have social events.

It's also important to build up a community – a group of people who are friends and who support each other rather than just seeing someone at a meeting every week.

You can do all sorts of social events, from things that are just for your group, to things that you can involve the rest of your school in or activities that you'd want to bring a friend along to. You can be as exciting as you want with social events. It's up to you!

- **Leadership**

YCS aims to form active Christian leaders. We do this through everything we do, from running group meetings to organising social events, being positive examples to our friends, through the actions we take or by becoming involved in running YCS on a bigger level.



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However, it is also helpful to reflect on what it means to be a leader and to do activities, workshops and training that helps us with the skills and knowledge we need.

Each group runs itself so it needs to make sure its leaders are getting good leadership training and experience. Like with prayer, sometimes you will be able to do this in your own group, but sometimes you'll need the support of a YCS event or some of the resources that are available such as Camps and Leaders Days, The Gospel Reflection Booklet and Prayer Booklet.

see...

Another great thing to do is getting past YCS members involved in talking about leadership and how YCS has influenced their lives. Not everyone has past members you can draw on but if you do it's a great idea.

Check out our website for more resources.





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The Process

The Core Leadership Team should get together and use this process to ensure that you have a good, well balanced plan for the term. It's a good idea to continue doing one of these plans at the end of each term, so that you have a direction for the next one.

1. Get a calendar of the term.
2. Referring to the decisions you have already made about meeting times etc, write in your group meetings and leaders meetings. You will be doing a Review of Life in your group meetings so that covers this element.
3. The element of "movement" is about participating in a larger body than just your own group and contributing to the way the YCS movement is making a big difference around the world. Find out whether there are upcoming YCS events for your diocese or region. If there are write these into your calendar and encourage your group members to attend them so that they can make links with other students. If not, you might like to organise a gathering with another local group. If you don't have any groups nearby, perhaps you could organise to send a big group letter to YCS in another state or you could organise to talk with another group over the internet.
4. YCS shouldn't just be about meeting all the time, it's important to have fun and make friends with each other. So we suggest that you do at least one social thing each term. This could be small (i.e. you might change one of your meetings into a fun lunchtime with nice food and music) or it could be something larger where you involve other people (i.e. have a BBQ open to everyone, run a movie day, or go out bowling together). Include this somewhere in your term plan.
5. Look back over the plan that you've set out in your calendar and make sure everyone in your Core Leadership Team agrees with the plan.

Check that it is balanced and isn't too crowded. You don't want to make a plan that people can't commit to.

Remember that you don't need to do something major for each element, as long as you make an effort on it that is the point. So you don't always need to do a big session about action, as long as you know your group is taking action when you do a Review of Life.



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Also if you are a group that has been going for a while, try to make sure you're not just doing the same things each term.

The Example

TERM PLAN - TERM 4 2007

The calendar below shows a term plan of a group from Brisbane. It includes:

- **Review of Life** - in each group meeting
- **Action** – A retreat focused on social justice and action.
- **Prayer** – Using a different prayer style in each group meeting to see what works
- **Movement** – attending a diocesan leadership camp in the school holidays
- **Social** – Holding a BBQ at school plus inviting people to the after school retreat
- **Leadership** – attending the diocesan leadership camp

october

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 <i>School term starts</i>	7	8 <i>Group meeting</i>	9	10	11
12	13 <i>Leaders Meeting</i>	14	15 <i>Group meeting</i>	16	17	18
19	20 <i>Leaders Meeting</i>	21	22 <i>Social BBQ</i>	23	24	25
26	27 <i>Leaders Meeting</i>	28	29 <i>Group Meeting</i>	30	31	

ACT!



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november

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 <i>Leaders Meeting</i>	4 <i>After School Retreat</i>	5 <i>Group meeting</i>	6	7	8
9	10 <i>Leaders Meeting</i>	11	12 <i>Group meeting</i>	13	14	15
16	17 <i>Leaders Meeting</i>	18	19 <i>Group meeting</i>	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 <i>No meeting— Exams</i>	27	28	29
30						

december

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 <i>No meeting</i>	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 <i>School ends</i>	13
14	15	16	17	18 <i>Leadership Camp</i>	19 <i>Leadership Camp</i>	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SECTION THREE

TAKING THE NEXT STEP - SINGLE



MEETING PLANS AND LEADERS NOTES FOR
GROUPS DOING A REVIEW OF LIFE
IN A SINGLE MEETING



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Leaders' Preparation Notes

Introduction

This section of the program is the Leaders Preparation Notes; these notes should be used at the "Leaders Meeting" when you are preparing the YCS group meeting. You will notice that the Leaders Preparation Notes follow the same order as a group meeting, this is because they explain the different sections of the meeting. They also provide important tips on what you need to prepare and things you need to decide. The Leaders Preparation Notes should therefore be used together with the meeting outline for the meeting you are organising.

Everything in the Leaders Preparation Notes is important, but the things that you need to make a decision on are highlighted in *blue and italics* for extra attention. It is vital that you cover these points.

If you have any trouble understanding anything when you are preparing your meetings feel free to contact your nearest YCS offices, or the National YCS office, using the details on p87.

Preparation Notes

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION- 5minutes

Similar to the NUTS Program, every YCS meeting should open with a Gospel Reflection or a Prayer. Faith Formation is a very important aspect of the YCS and both Prayer and Gospel Reflection play an important role in helping students develop a relationship with God and relate their faith to their everyday situations.

- *As you prepare for this meeting decide whether you want to do a Gospel Reflection or Prayer. Then prepare this using the guides provided:*
 - *Gospel Reflection Guide p69*
 - *Prayer Kit p71*

GAME- 5 minutes

Due to the short meeting times of many YCS meetings you will need to decide if your group has enough time to do a game as well as get through all the meeting content.

Games are a great way of getting students to interact with each other. They also have various purposes including team building, trust, and awareness-raising or even just to have fun. However they shouldn't take away from the purpose of the meeting which is the use the Review of Life and develop actions.

If you decide to use a game, they should serve a purpose in the meeting. YCS has a "**Games Booklet**" which you can download from our website. You should also feel free to use games that you know of, make up your own, or find them on the internet.

- *If you decide to use a game, make sure that it is relevant to helping the group and the meeting.*
- *Make sure the game is well prepared so that it will run to time.*
- *Use any of the resources mentioned above for finding a game.*



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

PREVIOUS ACTIONS

It is always important to follow-up whether members have taken their actions. This way you can make sure that they are done and support the person if they need help or if they need more realistic actions. Also the action could be the starting point for another Review of Life because there will often need to be more than one action taken.

- *When preparing this part of the meeting, make sure that you have a list of actions from the last meeting.*
- *Work out how you should ask people about whether they have completed their actions. Keep in mind that the aim is to support the other members and leaders in their actions, not to intimidate or humiliate them.*

GETTING STARTED

In the NUTS Program you would have had the opportunity to experience a Review of Life based on a chosen topic. This would have given you a good understanding of SEE JUDGE ACT.

In **“Taking The Next Step”** the aim is for your group to start using the Review of Life to look at situations in the lives of your group members.

For your group to be self-sustainable you should be doing the Review of Life focused on an experience or situation that a group member has seen or been part of.

Each week you will try out a different tool for getting the Review of Life started. By trying a few different methods you can work out whether there is one way that works particularly well for your group or whether you would like the variety of rotating through different styles. As leaders it is your role each week to prepare and lead the Review of Life, including the tool for getting it going. Then at the end of this program you will know which of these tools to continue using for your group.

Using the list below, prepare the “Getting Started” tool for your next meeting:

- *Meeting One* *Contradictions activity* *Page 76*
- *Meeting Two* *Review of Happenings* *Page 78*
- *Meeting Three* *Day In The Life* *Page 80*

The below questions are the Review of Life questions that you will use in every meeting and every Review of Life. *Once you have chosen a situation to focus on, the leaders then run the Review of Life using these questions as a guide. Make sure that you read and understand all these questions so you can confidently ask them when leading.*



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

7. What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
8. What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
 - What individual action/s?
 - What collective action?
9. Who else could you involve in this action?

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

This time in the meeting is for organising any additional activities that your group is involved in. *Use the questions below to check whether there is anything you need to discuss in this section, remember to keep your time limit in mind.*

This time is important to use well because your YCS group should be part of the wider YCS movement and it should be involved in the local community, this is the time that you have to make sure your group is involved in these activities.

Some times you will need extra time when you are organising events, for example if you have a social event or a twilight retreat coming up that you need to plan. *When preparing the meeting, work out whether you will need extra time and if you do, arrange how you will get this extra time.* Some suggestions might be to have a meeting that is focused on organising that event, or reducing the time spent on other parts of the meeting. However this should only be used as a “one-off” solution and shouldn’t continue every week.

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is taking part in?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings/National YCS.
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

PLANNING NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

It is always important to work out the details of your next meeting and who will run it. Below are the questions or points that you will need to discuss with your group.

When preparing the meeting work out some possible answers to the questions and think of who you could suggest for the various roles at the next meeting.

This way, when you are running the meeting you can help the others to make a decision. But remember you are just coming up with suggestions and it is important not to force your opinion onto the group

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting. Refer to pages 19-23 for tips.
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food
- Get each member to think about who they could invite to come to the next meeting with them.

CLOSING PRAYER/ OR REFLECTION - 2 minutes

Just like with the opening prayer/reflection, it is important to close with a prayer so that we keep sight of God who inspires and empowers us. *Below are directions for a short "prayer time" to fit into this section. However, when you are preparing the meeting, feel free to be creative with this and just use it as a guide.* For example if you have time you might like to create a prayer space with a candle and cloths.

1. Get everyone to be quiet.
2. Start with the sign of the cross
3. Pray a group prayer together. We encourage groups to alternate between using the YCS Creed and the YCS Prayer in order to reflect on the purpose and mission of the YCS and the actions they are committing to. (YCS Creed p72, YCS Prayer p72)
4. If you have time after the group prayer, the leader should invite anyone in the group to share anything that they would like the group to pray for. When people share their prayers the leader should lead the group in saying "Lord hear our prayer." Below is an example:
 - Leader: Would anyone like to share any prayers with the group now?
 - Member: Dear Jesus, I pray that my Dad can recover safely from the operation he is having this week. Lord hear us.
 - Group: Lord hear our prayer.
5. Finish with the sign of the cross

Checklist

- There is a copy of the meeting outline for every group member.
- You have an opening prayer or reflection prepared.



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- If you are having a game, make sure you have all the equipment needed and you are well prepared to keep it on time.
- You have a list of the actions from the previous meeting to check how people are going.
- You have prepared a "Getting Started" tool to start your Review of Life.
- You are familiar with the SEE-JUDGE-ACT questions to ask in the Review of Life.
- You know what needs to be discussed in General Business.
- You have thought of some suggested answers for the "Planning the Next Meeting" section.
- Closing Prayer is prepared, with a copy of the group prayer provided for each member.
- Finally, remember to put a lot of emphasis on the importance of getting a specific and achievable action out of your Review of Life. Without action all the talking becomes pointless.

see...



judge...





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Meeting One: Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using the Leaders Preparation Notes

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION- 5minutes

GAME – if relevant and time allows- 5 minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

GETTING STARTED

Use the “Contradictions” activity to help you start a Review of Life, your leaders will have prepared it earlier (p76)

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

7. What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
8. What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
 - What individual action/s?
 - What collective action?
9. Who else could you involve in this action?



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from Diocesan or National events?
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising, etc to organise?

PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Who will run the next meeting?
- Who will take notes next week?
- Who can bring/organise some food?

CLOSING PRAYER - 2 minutes

see...



judge...





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Meeting Two: Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using the Leaders Preparation Notes

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION- 5minutes

GAME – if relevant and time allows- 5 minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

PREVIOUS ACTIONS

Check how everyone in your group has gone with the actions they committed to.

GETTING STARTED

Use the “Review of Happenings” tool to help you start a Review of Life, your leaders will have prepared it earlier (p78)

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

7. What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
8. What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
 - What individual action/s?
 - What collective action?
9. Who else could you involve in this action?



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from Diocesan or National events?
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising, etc to organise?

PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Who will run the next meeting?
- Who will take notes next week?
- Who can bring/organise some food?

CLOSING PRAYER - 2 minutes





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Meeting Three: Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using the Leaders Preparation Notes

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION- 5minutes

GAME – if relevant and time allows- 5 minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

PREVIOUS ACTIONS

Check how everyone in your group has gone with the actions they committed to.

GETTING STARTED

Use the “Day in the Life” tool to help you start a Review of Life, your leaders will have prepared it earlier (p80)

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

7. What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
8. What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
 - What individual action/s?
 - What collective action?
9. Who else could you involve in this action?



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from Diocesan or National events?
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising, etc to organise?

PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Who will run the next meeting?
- Who will take notes next week?
- Who can bring/organize some food?

CLOSING PRAYER - 2 minutes



judge...



SECTION FOUR:

TAKING THE NEXT STEP - DOUBLE



MEETING PLANS AND LEADERS NOTES FOR
GROUPS DOING A REVIEW OF LIFE
OVER TWO MEETINGS



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Leaders' Preparation Notes

Introduction

This section of the program is the Leaders Preparation Notes; these notes should be used at the "Leaders Meeting" when you are preparing the YCS group meeting. You will notice that the Leaders Preparation Notes are broken into three parts:

- Preparation Notes – Meeting One
- Preparation Notes – Meeting Two
- Checklist

Because your group will be doing the Review of Life split across two meetings, the same two leaders should lead both on the meetings in that Review of Life. The Leaders Preparation Notes follow therefore follow that same order. This is because they explain the different sections of the meeting. They also provide important tips on what you need to prepare and things you need to decide. The Leaders Preparation Notes should therefore be used together with the meeting outline for the meeting you are organising.

Everything in the Leaders Preparation Notes is important, but the things that you need to make a decision on are highlighted in *blue and italics* for extra attention. It is vital that you cover these points.

If you have any trouble understanding anything when you are preparing your meetings feel free to contact your nearest YCS offices, or the National YCS office, using the details on p87.

Preparation Notes – Meeting One

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION- 5minutes

Similar to the NUTS Program, every YCS meeting should open with a Gospel Reflection or a Prayer. We encourage you to do a Gospel Reflection for Meeting One and a prayer for Meeting Two

Faith Formation is a very important aspect of the YCS and both Prayer and Gospel Reflection play an important role in helping students develop a relationship with God and relate their faith to their everyday situations.

- *Prepare a Gospel Reflection using the guide provided on p69.*



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

PREVIOUS ACTIONS

It is always important to follow-up whether members have taken their actions. This way you can make sure that they are done and support the person if they need help or if they need more realistic actions. Also the action could be the starting point for another Review of Life because there will often need to be more than one action taken.

- *When preparing this part of the meeting, make sure that you have a list of actions from the last meeting.*
- *Work out how you should ask people about whether they have completed their actions. Keep in mind that the aim is to support the other members and leaders in their actions, not to intimidate or humiliate them.*

GETTING STARTED

In the NUTS Program you would have had the opportunity to experience a Review of Life based on a chosen topic. This would have given you a good understanding of SEE JUDGE ACT.

In **“Taking The Next Step”** the aim is for your group to start using the Review of Life to look at situations in the lives of your group members.

For your group to be self-sustainable you should be doing the Review of Life focused on an experience or situation that a group member has seen or been part of.

Each week you will try out a different tool for getting the Review of Life started. By trying a few different methods you can work out whether there is one way that works particularly well for your group or whether you would like the variety of rotating through different styles. As leaders it is your role each week to prepare and lead the Review of Life, including the tool for getting it going. Then at the end of this program you will know which of these tools to continue using for your group.

Using the list below, prepare the “Getting Started” tool for your next meeting:

- *Meeting One* *Contradictions activity* *Page 76*
- *Meeting Two* *Review of Happenings* *Page 78*
- *Meeting Three* *Day In The Life* *Page 80*

The below questions are the Review of Life questions that you will use in every meeting and every Review of Life. *Once you have chosen a situation to focus on, the leaders then run the Review of Life using these questions as a guide. Make sure that you read and understand all these questions so you can confidently ask them when leading.*



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

Next week your group will do the second half of the Review of Life by finishing off the ACT section. You will be coming up with actions to work towards changing the particular situation you are currently reviewing. However often you need more information or time to think before you can plan a successful action. So every group member needs to commit to something that they can do between now and the next meeting that will contribute to the Review of Life going forwards by answering one of these two questions below.

The leader needs to have prepared how they will get each group member to commit to one of these “mini-actions”

- 1) *What can I commit to doing to find out more information about this particular situation?*

OR

- 2) *What can I do to bring ideas for collective action to the next meeting?*

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

This time in the meeting is for organising any additional activities that your group is involved in. *Use the questions below to check whether there is anything you need to discuss in this section, remember to keep your time limit in mind.*



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This time is important to use well because your YCS group should be part of the wider YCS movement and it should be involved in the local community, this is the time that you have to make sure your group is involved in these activities.

Some times you will need extra time when you are organising events, for example if you have a social event or a twilight retreat coming up that you need to plan. *When preparing the meeting, work out whether you will need extra time and if you do, arrange how you will get this extra time.* Some suggestions might be to have a meeting that is focused on organising that event, or reducing the time spent on other parts of the meeting. However this should only be used as a “one-off” solution and shouldn’t continue every week.

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is taking part in?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings/National YCS.
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc

PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

It is always important to work out the details of your next meeting and who will run it. Below are the questions or points that you will need to discuss with your group.

When preparing the meeting work out some possible answers to the questions and think of who you could suggest for the various roles at the next meeting.

This way, when you are running the meeting you can help the others to make a decision. But remember you are just coming up with suggestions and it is important not to force your opinion onto the group

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting. Refer to pages 19-24 for tips.
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food
- Get each member to think about who they could invite to come to the next meeting with them.

CLOSING PRAYER/ OR REFLECTION - 2 minutes

Just like with the opening prayer/reflection, it is important to close with a prayer so that we keep sight of God who inspires and empowers us. *Below are directions for a short “prayer time” to fit into this section. However, when we you are preparing the meeting, feel free to be creative with this and just use it as a guide.* For example if you have time you might like to create a prayer space with a candle and cloths.

1. Get everyone to be quiet.
2. Start with the sign of the cross
3. Pray a group prayer together. We encourage groups to alternate between using the YCS Creed and the YCS Prayer in order to reflect on the purpose and mission of the YCS and the actions they are committing to.
4. If you have time after the group prayer, the leader should invite anyone in the group to share anything that they would like the group to pray for. When



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

people share their prayers the leader should lead the group in saying “Lord hear our prayer.” Below is an example:



- Leader: Would anyone like to share any prayers with the group now?
 - Member: Dear Jesus, I pray that my Dad can recover safely from the operation he is having this week. Lord hear us.
 - Group: Lord hear our prayer.
5. Finish with the sign of the cross

Before finishing your preparation, refer to the checklist at the end of these preparation notes to make sure that everything is covered.

see...



judge...





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Preparation Notes – Meeting Two

35 minutes

Opening Prayer - 1 minute

Similar to the NUTS Program, every YCS meeting should open with a Gospel Reflection or a Prayer. We encourage you to do a Gospel Reflection for Meeting One and a prayer for Meeting Two

Faith Formation is a very important aspect of the YCS and both Prayer and Gospel Reflection play an important role in helping students develop a relationship with God and relate their faith to their everyday situations.

see... ○ *Using the guide provided on p71 prepare an opening prayer based on the YCS Creed.*

GAME- 5 minutes

Due to the short meeting times of many YCS meetings you will need to choose a game that can fit in the short amount of time you have.

Games are a great way of getting students to interact with each other. They also have various purposes including team building, trust, and awareness-raising or even just to have fun. However they shouldn't take away from the purpose of the meeting which is the use the Review of Life and develop actions.

When deciding on a game to use, they should serve a purpose in the meeting. YCS has a "**Games Booklet**" which you can download from our website. You should also feel free to use games that you know of, make up your own, or find them on the internet.

- *Choose a game that it is relevant to helping the group and the meeting.*
- *Make sure the game is well prepared so that it will run to time.*
- *Use any of the resources mentioned above for finding a game.*





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

Last week we started doing a Review of Life on a member of the group's personal experience. We looked at what was happening and what we believed should be happening. In this meeting we will quickly revisit that stuff, and then we will plan how we can change the situation we are talking about. We will look at taking personal action as well as a collective group action.

Re-cap of SEE and JUDGE

1. The leader asks the note-taker from last time to read out what was discussed in the SEE and JUDGE Sections.
2. Does anyone have anything to add to this that might have been left out?
3. The leader asks everyone to share how they went with their "mini-actions" from the last meeting that were aimed at either finding more information or coming up with ideas for action.
4. How does this new information affect our thoughts and opinions about the situation?

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

5. What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
6. What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
7. Who else could you involve in this action?

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

This time in the meeting is for organising any additional activities that your group is involved in. *Use the questions below to check whether there is anything you need to discuss in this section, remember to keep your time limit in mind.*

This time is important to use well because your YCS group should be part of the wider YCS movement and it should be involved in the local community, this is the time that you have to make sure your group is involved in these activities.

Some times you will need extra time when you are organising events, for example if you have a social event or a twilight retreat coming up that you need to plan. *When preparing the meeting, work out whether you will need extra time and if you do, arrange how you will get this extra time.* Some suggestions might be to have a meeting that is focused on organising that event, or reducing the time spent on other parts of the meeting. However this should only be used as a "one-off" solution and shouldn't continue every week.

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is taking part in?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings/National YCS.
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc



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PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 2 minutes

It is always important to work out the details of your next meeting and who will run it. Below are the questions or points that you will need to discuss with your group.

When preparing the meeting work out some possible answers to the questions and think of who you could suggest for the various roles at the next meeting.

This way, when you are running the meeting you can help the others to make a decision. But remember you are just coming up with suggestions and it is important not to force your opinion onto the group

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting. Refer to pages 19-24 for tips.
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food
- Get each member to think about who they could invite to come to the next meeting with them.

CLOSING PRAYER/ OR REFLECTION - 2 minutes

Just like with the opening prayer/reflection, it is important to close with a prayer so that we keep sight of God who inspires and empowers us. *Below are directions for a short "prayer time" to fit into this section. However, when you are preparing the meeting, feel free to be creative with this and just use it as a guide.* For example if you have time you might like to create a prayer space with a candle and cloths.

1. Get everyone to be quiet.
2. Start with the sign of the cross
3. Pray a group prayer together. We encourage groups to alternate between using the YCS Creed and the YCS Prayer in order to reflect on the purpose and mission of the YCS and the actions they are committing to.
4. If you have time after the group prayer, the leader should invite anyone in the group to share anything that they would like the group to pray for. When people share their prayers the leader should lead the group in saying "Lord hear our prayer." Below is an example:
 - Leader: Would anyone like to share any prayers with the group now?
 - Member: Dear Jesus, I pray that my Dad can recover safely from the operation he is having this week. Lord hear us.
 - Group: Lord hear our prayer.
5. Finish with the sign of the cross



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Checklist

- There is a copy of the meeting outline for every group member.
- You have an opening prayer or reflection prepared.
- If you are having a game, make sure you have all the equipment needed and you are well prepared to keep it on time.
- You have a list of the actions from the previous meeting to check how people are going.
- You have prepared a "Getting Started" tool to start your Review of Life.
- You are familiar with the SEE-JUDGE-ACT questions to ask in the Review of Life.
- You know what needs to be discussed in General Business.
- You have thought of some suggested answers for the "Planning the Next Meeting" section.
- Closing Prayer is prepared, with a copy of the group prayer provided for each member.
- Finally, remember to put a lot of emphasis on the importance of getting a specific and achievable action out of your Review of Life. Without action all the talking becomes pointless.

judge...





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Meeting One Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using *Leaders Preparation Notes* – meeting one

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION- 5minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

GETTING STARTED

Use the “*Contradictions*” tool to help you start a *Review of Life*, your leaders will have prepared it earlier (p76)

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

Because your group is doing a *Review of Life* split over two meetings, next week your group will do the second half of the *Review of Life* by finishing off the ACT section.

You will be coming up with actions to work towards changing the particular situation you are currently reviewing. However often you need more information or time to think before you can plan a successful action. So every group member needs to commit to something that they can do between now and the next meeting that will contribute to the *Review of Life* going forwards by answering one of these two questions below.



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

1) *What can I commit to doing to find out more information about this particular situation?*

OR

2) *What can I do to bring ideas for collective action to the next meeting?*

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings/National YCS.
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc

PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting. Refer to pages 19-24 for tips.
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organise some food
- Each member to think of who they can invite to come to the next meeting with them.

CLOSING PRAYER/ OR REFLECTION - 2 minutes



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Meeting Two Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using Leaders Preparation Notes – meeting two

35minutes

OPENING PRAYER - 1 minute

GAME- 5minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

Last week we started doing a Review of Life on a member of the group's personal experience. We looked at what was happening and what we believed should be happening. In this meeting we will quickly revisit that stuff, and then we will plan how we can change the situation we are talking about. We will look at taking personal action as well as a collective group action.

Re-cap of SEE and JUDGE

1. The leader asks the note-taker from last time to read out what was discussed in the SEE and JUDGE Sections.
2. Does anyone have anything to add to this that might have been left out?
3. The leader asks everyone to share how they went with their "mini-actions" from the last meeting that were aimed at either finding more information or coming up with ideas for action.
4. How does this new information affect our thoughts and opinions about the situation?

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

5. What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
6. What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
7. Who else could you involve in this action?

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc



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PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 2 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food
- Each member to think about who they could invite to come to the next meeting with them.

CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION- 2 minutes

see...



judge...





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Meeting Three Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using Leaders Preparation Notes – meeting one

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION- 5minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

GETTING STARTED

Use the “Review of Happenings” tool to help you start a Review of Life, your leaders will have prepared it earlier (p78)

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

Because your group is doing a Review of Life split over two meetings, next week your group will do the second half of the Review of Life by finishing off the ACT section.

You will be coming up with actions to work towards changing the particular situation you are currently reviewing. However often you need more information or time to think before you can plan a successful action. So every group member needs to commit to something that they can do between now and the next meeting that will contribute to the Review of Life going forwards by answering one of these two questions below.



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

1) *What can I commit to doing to find out more information about this particular situation?*

OR

2) *What can I do to bring ideas for collective action to the next meeting?*

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings/National YCS.
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc

PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting. Refer to pages 19-24 for tips.
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food
- Each member to think of who they can invite to come to the next meeting with them.

CLOSING PRAYER/ OR REFLECTION - 2 minutes



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Meeting Four Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using Leaders Preparation Notes – meeting two

35minutes

OPENING PRAYER - 1 minute

GAME- 5minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

Last week we started doing a Review of Life on a member of the group's personal experience. We looked at what was happening and what we believed should be happening. In this meeting we will quickly revisit that stuff, and then we will plan how we can change the situation we are talking about. We will look at taking personal action as well as a collective group action.

Re-cap of SEE and JUDGE

1. The leader asks the note-taker from last time to read out what was discussed in the SEE and JUDGE Sections.
2. Does anyone have anything to add to this that might have been left out?
3. The leader asks everyone to share how they went with their "mini-actions" from the last meeting that were aimed at either finding more information or coming up with ideas for action.
4. How does this new information affect our thoughts and opinions about the situation?

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

5. What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
6. What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
7. Who else could you involve in this action?

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc



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PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 2 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food
- Each member to think about who they could invite to come to the next meeting with them.

CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION- 2 minutes

see...



judge...





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Meeting Five Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using Leaders Preparation Notes – meeting one

35 minutes

PRAYER or REFLECTION- 5minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

GETTING STARTED

Use the “Day in the Life” tool to help you start a Review of Life, your leaders will have prepared it earlier (p80)

SEE

The SEE Section is about finding out exactly what is happening in a situation that the students want to talk about.

1. What exactly happened? What was your action in response? (the facts)
2. What caused this to happen and why? (the causes)
3. How were people affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

The JUDGE Section is about applying our faith and beliefs to the situation and developing an idea about what we are called to do.

4. What do you think about this?
5. What does your faith say about this situation? What would Jesus do here?
6. What *should* be happening? (the ideal situation)

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

Because your group is doing a Review of Life split over two meetings, next week your group will do the second half of the Review of Life by finishing off the ACT section.

You will be coming up with actions to work towards changing the particular situation you are currently reviewing. However often you need more information or time to think before you can plan a successful action. So every group member needs to commit to something that they can do between now and the next meeting that will contribute to the Review of Life going forwards by answering one of these two questions below.



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1) *What can I commit to doing to find out more information about this particular situation?*

OR

2) *What can I do to bring ideas for collective action to the next meeting?*



GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings/National YCS.
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc

PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 3 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting. Refer to pages 19-24 for tips.
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food
- Each member to think of who they can invite to come to the next meeting with them.



CLOSING PRAYER/ OR REFLECTION - 2 minutes





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Meeting Six Outline

Ensure leaders have prepared using Leaders Preparation Notes – meeting two

35minutes

OPENING PRAYER - 1 minute

GAME- 5minutes

REVIEW OF LIFE- 20 minutes

Last week we started doing a Review of Life on a member of the group's personal experience. We looked at what was happening and what we believed should be happening. In this meeting we will quickly revisit that stuff, and then we will plan how we can change the situation we are talking about. We will look at taking personal action as well as a collective group action.

Re-cap of SEE and JUDGE

1. The leader asks the note-taker from last time to read out what was discussed in the SEE and JUDGE Sections.
2. Does anyone have anything to add to this that might have been left out?
3. The leader asks everyone to share how they went with their "mini-actions" from the last meeting that were aimed at either finding more information or coming up with ideas for action.
4. How does this new information affect our thoughts and opinions about the situation?

ACT

The ACT Section is about deciding what we can do to change the situation in the way that our faith and beliefs are calling us to.

5. What exactly do you want to change? (Long term aim)
6. What action could you take this week that would be a worthwhile step towards achieving this change? (Short term action)
7. Who else could you involve in this action?

GENERAL BUSINESS- 5 minutes

- Are there any school/parish/community activities that the YCS is being part of?
- Feedback from the Diocesan Team Meetings
- Are there any camps, socials, fundraising to organise etc



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PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING- 2 minutes

- Remind the other students when the meeting is
- Leaders to work out how they will prepare and reflect for the next meeting
- Who will take notes next week
- Who can bring/organize some food
- Each member to think about who they could invite to come to the next meeting with them.

CLOSING PRAYER or REFLECTION- 2 minutes

see...



judge...



SECTION FIVE: SUPPORTING RESOURCES



THIS SECTION CONTAINS THE RESOURCES REFERRED TO THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM FOR USE IN MEETINGS. THEY ARE SPLIT INTO:

1. *PRAYER AND REFLECTION TOOLS* (p68)
2. *"GETTING STARTED" RESOURCES FOR STARTING A REVIEW OF LIFE* (p75)



PRAYER +
REFLECTION
TOOLS



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Gospel Reflection Guide

Gospel Reflections are used at the start of a YCS meeting. The purpose of doing a Gospel Reflection is to ensure that our discussion, reflection and action in the Review of Life are grounded in our faith. The best way of doing this is reading a Gospel Passage and reflecting on what it means to us in our lives.

You will have done several Gospel Reflections already in the NUTS Program so you will be familiar with the style. Below there are some instructions for how to prepare a Gospel Reflection. Alternatively you can use one that has already been written by other students from the AYCS Gospel Reflection Booklet which you can download from <http://www.aycs.org.au/Content/Resources.html>

Even if you use one from the Gospel Reflection Booklet it is still important that you prepare how you will use this reflection in the meeting. Use Section B. of this Gospel Reflection Guide to do this.

A. Steps to writing a Gospel Reflection

1. Choose a passage from the bible that you can relate to and can see a deeper meaning in, or that you think is a really good story.
2. Read through the passage a couple of times to identify the key messages.
3. If you can, think of a story that is real in your life that is similar to the Gospel passage. You probably won't have had the same experience, but maybe you can relate to the feelings and reactions of the people involved.
4. Use the Review of Life questions as a guide to write questions which you can ask the other members of your group. Write one SEE question, one JUDGE question and one ACT question.
5. Make the questions challenging and reflective. You want the group to really think about how the passage relates to their lives.
6. Ask only three questions as you will run out of time in your meeting.

Example from AYCS Gospel Reflection Booklet "Jesus is rejected at Nazareth" Luke 4: 17 - 21

He stood up to read the scriptures and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announced that the time has come when the Lord will save his people."

Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him, as he said to them, "This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read."



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Some questions for discussion

1. What point is Jesus making?
2. What does this mean in our lives, and our mission as students?
3. How do we see other Christians live out this mission in their lives?

B. Using it in the Group Meeting

So you now have a Gospel Reflection, either one you wrote or one you have chosen. Now some tips for preparing to actually use it in the meeting:

- At your Leaders Meeting, read over the Gospel Reflection with the other leader and Adult Assistant so that you are familiar with it.
- Decide who will actually read the Gospel passage and who will ask the questions.
- Discuss what the passage means, this is an area where your Adult Assistant or Chaplain can really help out.
- Think of how you would answer the questions and discuss these. This helps you understand it better, plus it gives you some ideas that you can use to prompt the group if it's hard to get the conversation going.
- Work out what you'll do if people don't understand it or aren't sharing.
- Make sure that you can keep it all in the right timeframe!

judge...





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Prayer Kit

Prayer is a really important part of YCS, which is why we start and end each meeting with a Prayer or Gospel Reflection. There are many definitions of prayer but it is essentially about making a conscious effort as individuals or as community to be 'aware' of God's presence and enter further into *relationship* with Father, Son and Spirit.

Unfortunately, because your YCS meetings are very short, especially for school groups, we generally only get to do a very short form of prayer. These prayers that will be used regularly are explained below in Part A, B & D of this Prayer Kit.

However there are many different types of prayer, so Part C of the Prayer Kit gives an explanation of what Prayer is and some different ways of doing it. We encourage you to make some time to try a few of these different styles at some stage. This won't be every meeting but it might be once a term, or when you do a longer event like a "Twilight Retreat" you might be able to use some of these options then.

A. Prayer Guide for YCS Creed

If you are doing your group Review of Life over two meetings and using Section Four, then you will be starting every second meeting with a simple prayer. We suggest that you use the YCS Creed for this.

The YCS Creed states all of our beliefs, when we do this we are talking to each other and affirming the basic beliefs and principles of our YCS community which is very important. However, to be a prayer we need to add something extra where we talk to God as well.

So, when you are preparing this part of the meeting, you need to read the YCS Creed (p72) and write your own short prayer.

When you come to the group meeting you will get everyone to read the YCS Creed aloud together and then the leader will say the prayer for the group.

The YCS Creed is on p72 and an example prayer is below, but it would be great if you write your own prayer so that it really says what you want it to say in a way that will be relevant for your group.

Example of a prayer to use with YCS Creed:

Dear Jesus,

We ask you to give us the courage to loving live out these beliefs in our everyday lives, so that we can truly follow you.

Amen.



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B. YCS Creed and YCS Prayer

These are referred to for use at various times throughout the program.

YCS Creed

As Young Christian Students we believe in God.

We believe that God created the universe and that we, as part of God's creation, are invited to help complete God's plan.

We believe that the earth has been entrusted to us, to care for, to nurture and to respect. People, as God's creation, have a dignity and worth beyond measure, and deserve to be treated with respect and understanding.

We believe the Holy Spirit empowers us to live active lives following the example of Jesus Christ. We do this through communicating our thoughts, opinions and emotions and accepting and loving each other unconditionally.

We believe that our schools should promote these values through encouraging students to form and question their own opinions and beliefs, and treating each student as a worthwhile individual who has unique needs and talents. Our schools should educate for life.

And we believe that Jesus calls us to live through actions, not just words.
Amen.

YCS Prayer

Dear Jesus,
Please fill us with your spirit of love.
Help us to SEE the world as you do,
to JUDGE with your heart,
and to ACT with the strength and courage you have shown us.
As we work to transform our world.
Amen



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C. Trying Different Styles of Prayer

What's Prayer?

There are many definitions of prayer but it is essentially about making a conscious effort as individuals or as a community to be 'aware' of God's presence and enter further into *relationship* with Father, Son and Spirit.

There are a couple of things to remember in this relationship, just like in any other relationship:

- We don't always have to communicate in words - we can just be in silence with the other person.
- We definitely need to *listen* – as Christians we believe that God speaks to us in many ways (including through nature, life experience, Sacred Scripture, the sacraments and, most fully, through the person of Jesus).
- We can speak to God in the silence of our own heart or aloud in words, song or any other mode of expression (our words may be those of praise, thanksgiving, petition, wonder, fear, joy, sorrow etc.)
- We believe that our prayer can bring about *transformation* in our own lives and, therefore, in our faith communities, in society and in the world.

Here is a list of websites that you may find useful for helping to run and explain prayer in your YCS groups:

<http://www.prayingeachday.org/prayersites.html>

www.scaredspace.ie

www.churchresources.info/pray/

www.rejesus.co.uk/spirituality/

You can also access the AYCS Prayer Booklet that YCS members from around Australia have contributed to as a way of making prayer relevant to high school students. You can get this from our website www.aycs.org.au/Content/Resources.html from January 2009



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D. Closing Prayer

The explanation below is the same as the instructions for preparing a closing prayer which are in the Leaders Preparation Notes. However, this adds a couple of extra suggestions for ways to be more creative if possible.

Just like with the opening prayer/reflection, it is important to close with a prayer so that we keep sight of God who inspires and empowers us. *Below are directions for a short "prayer time" to fit into this section.*

1. Get everyone to be quiet.
2. Start with the sign of the cross
3. Pray a group prayer together. We encourage groups to alternate between using the YCS Creed and the YCS Prayer in order to reflect on the purpose and mission of the YCS and the actions they are committing to. (YCS Creed p72 , YCS Prayer p72)
4. If you have time after the group prayer, the leader should invite anyone in the group to share anything that they would like the group to pray for. When people share their prayers the leader should lead the group in saying "Lord hear our prayer." Below is an example:
 - Leader: Would anyone like to share any prayers with the group now?
 - Member: Dear Jesus, I pray that my Dad can recover safely from the operation he is having this week. Lord hear us.
 - Group: Lord hear our prayer.
5. Finish with the sign of the cross

When you are preparing the meeting, feel free to be creative with this and use it as a guide. Below are some examples of simple changes that you can make but you are free to add your own touches:

- Create a "Prayer Space" with some cloths and a candle.
- Occasionally use a different prayer that you like or are familiar with, just make sure you can give a copy to each person.
- If your group has been taking action on a particular issue you could find or write a prayer that relates to that topic – i.e. a prayer about refugees or human trafficking.
- If you have enough time, check out one of the different prayer styles in Part C of the Prayer Kit and run your prayer time this way.
- Have a song as part of your prayer.



GETTING STARTED

TOOLS FOR STARTING A REVIEW OF LIFE IN YOUR GROUP



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Tool No. 1 **Contradictions**

Purpose

In the first meeting of the NUTS Program students would have done Contradictions (previously called the Three Truths Exercise). This time we will repeat it and use it to lead into a Review of Life to show that groups should always have situations and experiences to review in their meetings.

Equipment

- Whiteboard or butchers paper
- Pens for whiteboard or butchers paper
- A copy of these instructions

Leading the Activity

To prepare this activity you need to:

- Read an explanation of “The Three Truths” and discuss it at your Leaders Meeting. You can get a copy from p10 in the NUTS Program or in the “YCS Information Pack” at: www.aycs.org.au/Content/Resources.html
This activity is based on that concept so you need to understand it to run the activity well.
- Read the directions below for running the activity, go through each step and work out what you would say and how to explain it.
- Make sure that you are comfortable with everything you need to explain.
- Make sure you have all of the necessary equipment.

Process

Your experience

The leader should get everyone to pair off into groups of two and ask each pair to come up with two things that concern them about the world. One should be something that affects them directly and the other should be something that is happening in the wider world. If they are struggling to think of things ask them what problems they see or what they would like to change.

Quickly list these, writing them on a whiteboard or butchers paper.

Your beliefs

Then ask each pair to say in one sentence what they think the world should be like. You should ask them to think of if they could create an ideal world what would it be like:

- How would people treat themselves?
- How would they treat each other?
- How would governments and countries relate to each other?

List these next to the previous list so that people can see the comparison.



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Explanation

1. Explain that the first list describes the world that we currently live in. And that the second list describes the world we would like to live in.
2. Tell them that: "YCS is about giving you the power to transform the world we are in now into the world we would like to live in."
3. There is a contradiction (a difference) between what they see and what they believe; YCS is about bridging the gap between our everyday experiences and our Christian values. YCS gives us a way of doing this through the Review of Life that allows us to change the things within our influence.
4. Explain that as members of a movement we can actually make that change in the world but we need a Movement and a method for it to happen:
 - There needs to be a movement of people working together to overcome these differences. Individually we can make a difference but when you have 2.5million people in YCS around the world then you can truly change things.
 - And there needs to be a method, a way of going about things that teaches people how to change the world. The Review of Life is this method.
5. From this point the group now has a list of things that they would like to see changed. They can then use any of these as situations or topics to do a Review of Life on.
6. The leader should ask the group whether someone has had a recent personal experience of some of the concerns that have been brainstormed or if the group has seen any examples of the concerns in their everyday experiences?
7. If a few people say yes, the leaders should use the questions below to choose one situation to focus on for the Review of Life, once you have decided on that situation you start to ask the SEE questions from your Meeting Outline.
 - Is there anyone who would like to review their experience of this concern this week?
 - Are there any concerns that are quite urgent and need to be reviewed and action taken as soon as possible?

Obviously if only one person says yes then you focus on that situation. If you can't get anyone to name an experience, try getting the group to vote on a topic from the list of concerns, then as you ask the SEE questions try to focus on one specific situation.



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Tool No. 2 Review of Happenings

Purpose

The purpose of the “Review of Happenings” is to develop the process of students sharing something important from their lives. YCS uses the Review of Life on the everyday situations of student’s lives, as this is where students can take effective actions.

Therefore they need to share something that has happened in their lives. To develop this process, in this activity students do a “Review of Happenings.” They bring up something that has happened in their lives and ask each other a few questions about it. They then choose one of these situations to focus on, which leads into the SEE section of the Review of Life.

Leading The Activity

To prepare and lead this activity you need to:

- Read all the instructions and be clear on what you need to ask and say. It might be good to have a quick practice run during your leaders meeting.
- Give one of the group members the questions before the meeting and ask them to think of their answers, that way you know there will be at least one person who can start off the conversation.
- Make sure you know how much time you have allocated for this activity. It is something that can easily go overtime so make sure you control this.

Process

1. Everyone needs to share something that has happened in the last week. It can be something that happened at school, or in their family. It could be:
 - A conversation they had
 - Something they read that caught their attention.
 - It can be something that made you angry, happy, confused, depressed, anything that impacted you.
2. Group members may ask some of the following questions as people share their happenings, but don’t ask them all or it will take too long:
 - What happened?
 - What caused it to happen?
 - How did it affect the people involved?
 - What are the good and bad things about what happened?
 - How did you act or react?
 - Was that a good reaction? Was it responsible?



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

3. Once everyone has had the opportunity to share their happenings the leader asks the group the following questions to help the group decide what situation they should review this week:
 - Is there anyone who would like to review their happening this week?
 - Does anyone think we should review someone else's happenings?
 - Are there any happenings that are quite urgent and need to be reviewed and action taken as soon as possible?
4. Once a person's happening/situation has been decided upon, the leader starts asking the standard Review of Life Questions, which are in the meeting plan, starting with the SEE section.

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Tool No. 3 A Day in your Life

Purpose

Another different way of starting a Review of Life by getting the group members to think through events that happen throughout their day and reflect on concerns, successes and injustices.

Leading This Activity

To prepare and lead this activity you need to:

- Read the directions below.
- Choose what day or event you will “talk them through.”
- Write some questions to ask about the situation.
- Make sure you leave enough time between each question so that people can relax and think about their answers. About 15 seconds between each question is a good aim.
- Practice reading the questions out loud, make sure you read them slowly and clearly.
- At your Leaders Meeting work out how you will run the last couple of steps of the activity where you are asking people to share their significant experiences. Also prepare how you will get the group to choose one situation to focus on for the Review of Life.

Process

1. Get your group to sit in a relaxed position so that they can reflect.
2. “Talk them through” the things they would do in a day, getting them to reflect on different activities and events.
3. Ask them questions that relate to relationships, interactions, feelings and emotions. For example, if you were walking them through a school social. You could ask:
 - How did you get there?
 - When you got there did you have someone to talk to?
 - Did everyone have someone to hang out with?
 - How did everyone interact with each other?
4. If you were walking them through a normal day, you could ask them:
 - What time did you get up?
 - Who was the first person you saw? How did you feel?
 - How did you get to school?
 - What did you see on the way to school?
 - What happened at school?
 - How did you feel about school?
 - After school, did you watch TV?



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

- What happened on TV?
 - Did you eat dinner with your family? How did you feel?
5. As you can see these are just some examples but it gets the group members to look at their everyday situations and recognise concerns, events, or injustices which they can then focus on in the Review of Life.
 6. To finish the exercise the leader would ask each member to share one significant thing or experience that stood out for them after reflecting on their day.
 7. Once everyone has had the opportunity to share their experience the leader asks the group the following questions to help them decide what situation they should review this week:
 - Is there anyone who would like to review their experience this week?
 - Does anyone think we should review someone else's experience?
 - Are there any experiences that are quite urgent and need to be reviewed and action taken as soon as possible?

Once an experience/situation has been decided upon, the leader starts asking the standard Review of Life Questions which are in the meeting plan, starting with the SEE section.

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SECTION SIX:
WHAT COMES NEXT?





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Strong and Sustainable

When you started this program the aim was to make your group self-sustainable so that it could continue to be active and grow without needing to rely on a written program.

By working through the planning process, meeting plans and preparation provided in **“Taking The Next Step”** you should now be able to confidently fulfill the six elements of a self-sustainable YCS group:

- **Review of Life:** Being able to do a Review of Life in your group meeting by focusing on a situation that a member has experienced in their life.
- **Leadership:** Being able to prepare your own meetings, run your own group, plus plan and carry out effective actions.
- **Prayer:** Being able to prepare your own Gospel Reflections and Prayer time.
- **Personal and Collective Action:** Taking action coming from the Review of Life, both individually as members, and collectively as a group.
- **Movement:** Be linking up with other YCS groups as part of a movement – i.e. through attending diocesan events, being part of a co-ordination team, or having joint activities with another local group.
- **Social:** Have social activities that allow the members to build a strong sense of friendship and community.

You should now have the basic skills needed to do all of these things, which will enable you to put your faith into action and transform the world around you. However, they are all things that you can never be perfect at! You will always be learning how to do each these things more effectively as you continue as a YCS group, and hopefully for the rest of your lives as active Christian leaders.

This last section of **“Taking The Next Step”** simply provides some tips, resources and contact details for you to use in ensuring that your group continues to take actions that build the Kingdom of God.





Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Key Tips:

How to keep the group going forward:

- 1. Keep using the meeting outlines in this program:** you get to choose how to start your Review of Life, what games to play, what prayers and Gospel Reflections to use, etc but it all still fits into the same meeting structure. The beauty of YCS is you get to set your own direction and focus while still using a structure and method that is proven to work. Plus you get to pick and choose which resources you want to continue using out of all the ones you've tried.
- 2. Leaders Meetings and Core Leadership Team**

As you will experience from using this program, the Leaders Meetings are what makes or breaks the sustainability of a group. Without these Leaders Meetings the group meetings either don't happen or they aren't very useful.

So keep having your Leaders Meetings before each group meeting and use the Leaders Meeting Template on p22 as a guide.

You should also continue to get the Core Leadership Team together about twice per term to check that things are on track and share the responsibility for keeping things self-sustainable.
- 3. Contact your nearest YCS Office, or the National Office:** let us know that you're finished this program. We can then update you on anything new and exciting that is happening.
- 4. Make a balanced term plan:** at the end of each term, use the process from pages 25-32 of this program to plan what you're going to do in the next term. This is a process that all YCS groups use.
- 5. Be involved in your diocesan YCS:** now that you are set up as a YCS group you should have a representative on the Co-ordination Team for YCS in your diocese, so that you get a say in all the big events and actions that are happening. You should also continue to be involved in wider YCS events because this bigger movement is where we get our strength by joining all our little groups together with 400 students across Australia and 2.5million members around the world. If there is no diocesan YCS team in your area, let us know and we can try and work with you to develop a way to start something up!
- 6. Connect to the AYCS National Campaign of 100% Respect focusing on Fair Trade.** Join the YCS for Fair Trade Facebook.
- 7. Sign up for the YCS E-Bulletins**

The E-bulletin updates local groups about what is happening in YCS across Australia. We would love to profile your group or hear about some of your actions so if you're interested in appearing in the E-bulletin or being on the email list, please email us at office@aycs.org.au



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

8. Adult Assistant Networks and Training

Being a YCS Adult Assistant or Chaplain can sometimes be an isolating job. So to provide some support we try to set up Adult Support Teams that provide a network with other adults in YCS, plus some training and social events.

These events are a great support to many local groups and they allow Adult Assistants to get a lot more out of their YCS experience. Using the list at the end of this book, contact your closest YCS office and find out how your Adult Assistant can get in touch with the one of these support teams.

9. Never Underestimate The Students

Last but certainly not least, always believe in the ability that you as young people have to participate in the world and to change it. Remember what you are capable of, keep your eyes on what you believe and the world that you want to create. Be confident that God has created you to achieve something amazing and that you should NEVER underestimate the students.



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Other Resources

We have a wide range of resources that have been produced to help you. New resources are constantly being developed so the best thing to do is to check out our website at www.aycs.org.au

You will already have used or heard about many of these resources whilst using NUTS and Take The Next Step. Some of our present resources are listed below and if you can't get them from the website or you would like a hard-copy version then please contact the National Office. National Office details are on the next page.

Some examples of our other resources are:

- AYCS NUTS Program
- AYCS' Gospel Reflection Booklet
- AYCS Prayer Booklet
- 'Gone Fishing' Recruitment Kit
- Post- School Retreat Kit
- Public Speaking Kit
- Get SMART About Casual Work Curriculum Kit
- Say NO To Racism Kit
- Adult Assistants and Chaplains Info Kit
- Guide for Recruiting and Training Adult Assistants
- Everything and Nothing- 8 modules for AAs.



Australian Young Christian Students Movement

Contact Details

As was explained throughout the program, being self-sustainable doesn't mean you shouldn't ask for help. All our leaders, co-ordination teams and offices are very keen to help you out. If there's anything you need a hand with then contact the YCS office closest to you. If there isn't one in your region or your state please contact the National Office and we will do everything we can to assist you.

National Office

PO Box 210
Bendigo VIC 3552
(03) 5441 2544
office@aycs.org.au

Melbourne YCS

537 Brunswick St
North Fitzroy Victoria 3068
(03) 9489 4387
melbourne@aycs.org.au

Townsville YCS

PO Box 6149
Townsville QLD 4810
(07) 4726 3241
townsville@aycs.org.au

Parramatta YCS

25 Union St
Granville NSW 2142
(02) 9682 6719
parramatta@aycs.org.au

Brisbane YCS

84 Park Rd
Woolloongabba QLD 4102
0420 311 271
brisbane@aycs.org.au

Perth YCS

40A Mary St
Highgate WA 6003
(08) 9422 7911
perth@aycs.org.au

Sandhurst YCS

PO Box 210
Bendigo VIC 3552
(03) 5441 2544
sandhurst@aycs.org.au

Port Pirie YCS

c/O 117 South Rd
Thebarton SA 5031
(08) 8234 2937
portpirie@aycs.org.au

Canberra/Goulburn YCS

c/O Rheinberger Centre
PO Box 7174
Cnr Loch & Weston Sts
Yarralumla ACT 2600
0402 705 119
cg@aycs.org.au