

Praying Together IN AN OUTSIDE YOUTH PRAYER EXPERIENCE

by Alistair Kendrew

What is the attitude of your youth to prayer? What have they seen? Do they think prayer means praying fancy prayers seated in church? Consider holding a prayer party—outside!

WHY?

- To provide positive prayer experiences for youth.
- To role model the priority of prayer.
- To strengthen your youth ministry. Youth love to hang out together—so let them hang out and pray.
- To make a difference in our communities—when we pray, stuff happens!

TIPS

1 Prayer should be a key part of our lives, so take it to where life happens—outside the Church!

- Pray for your city and churches ministry from a lookout.
- Hire a bus and do a 'prayer drive'.
- Pray for what happens in local community groups: Police, Housing New Zealand, Work and Income NZ, City Council, library, public transport, etc.
- Go (in large groups) to where the city's night life happens.
- Visit and pray for local church centres and ministries.

2 Make it easy to participate

- Choose a theme or topic.
- Provide clear instructions.
- Explain that this is a safe place to learn about prayer—it's not for 'experts'.
- If you're worried about numbers, invite other youth groups in the area to join in too.

3 Variety is the spice of [prayer] life

- Set up a range of prayer stations for people to move between.
- Do a 'Scripture wash': praying Bible verses over people (even strangers).
- Write prayers on Post-it notes, then stick them around the community.
- Provide prepared prayers for people to read.
- Pray for others. This could be structured (eg, 'pray for the person on your left') or completely random.

4 Expect God to do something ... and He will

- When you take prayer to the streets, you never really know what's going to happen, but something always does. Expect the unexpected!
- People will start off somewhat reserved and nervous, but keep going and these will quickly become 'must-be-at' events.

5 Include a feedback time at the end

- People's faith will be strengthened as they hear each other share their experiences about how God has shown up.

6 Socialising is important, so keep the format relaxed and provide supper. Keep people moving in groups.

7 When running events for youth, make sure you finish by 9:30 pm to allow time for kids on restricted licences to get home!