

# Growing Young Cohort

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## Fact Sheet



# All churches grow old... but strategic churches are growing young.

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## Overview

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Churches across the country are both shrinking and aging as more young people disengage. However, there are scores of congregations that are bucking this trend and developing cultures that welcome, empower, and engage teenagers and young adults.

The Fuller Youth Institute (FYI) has conducted groundbreaking research with over 250 of these leading congregations to learn what they do right. Based on this study of a diverse group of churches, we've discovered six essential strategies any church can use to better involve and retain young people. What's more, we've found that as these innovative churches engage younger generations, it breathes life and vitality into the *whole church*.

Through the ***Growing Young Cohort***, we want to help you sort through the numerous strategies you *could try* and instead focus on what's *most essential* in helping young people discover and love your church. This advanced training model invites your team to journey with like-minded churches for one year through:

- **Two in-person summits** that dive into the research behind *Growing Young*, foster small and large group discussions, and help you create a plan to implement new strategies in your church.
- **Regular online webinars** hosted by FYI and other leading ministry voices on topics such as leading change, sociological and cultural trends among today's young people, conquering conflict and more.

- **One year of personalized coaching**, including support in developing a strategy for change.
- **Comprehensive online diagnostic tests** that shed light on areas for growth and guide your steps.

The Cohort will provide your church with both a holistic philosophy and practical ideas to make much-needed shifts in your congregational culture today.

## Key Dates

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- **Final Registration Deadline:** September 8, 2017
- **In-Person Summits:** October 12-13, 2017 and March 8-9, 2018 at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.
- **Webinars:** The first webinar will take place in early October 2017. Additional webinars will take place every 1-2 months and will be scheduled a few months prior.

## Cost

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\$4,000 per church. Fee includes all program elements and most meals for a team of up to four people from your church for both summits (additional team members attending each summit are \$350 per person), all webinars, access to a coach throughout the year, and church assessments. Travel and lodging expenses not included. Scholarships are available upon request.

## Who Should Attend the Summits?

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We allow each church to bring up to 4 team members to each summit. In addition to considering youth and young adult ministry staff or volunteers, we *strongly recommend* including a representative from both of the following groups:

- **Senior leaders** (such as a senior pastor, executive pastor, elder, or a similar role). Given the key part that senior leaders play in the culture of the overall church, we've especially designed this research and the resulting resources to speak to their needs and interests. This is a great opportunity for your church to involve senior leaders from the start.
- **Young adults** (especially those in the 19-29 year-old range). Much of the discussion during the summits will focus on ministry to teenagers and emerging adults. You'll position your team to receive immediate and relevant feedback regarding potential opportunities and challenges by involving a young adult in the discussion right off the bat.

## Can you tell me more about the content?

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The content of the summits will begin by debunking many of the popular—and harmful—myths of what is needed to reach young people. Then, through expert teaching from world-class Fuller faculty and other ministry thought leaders, we'll explore the six core commitments our research revealed that can unleash the passion of young people:

- **Unlock keychain leadership:** Instead of centralizing authority, empower others—especially young people.
- **Empathize with today's young people:** Instead of judging or criticizing, step into the shoes of this generation.
- **Take Jesus' message seriously:** Instead of asserting formulaic gospel claims, welcome young people into a Jesus-centered way of life.
- **Fuel a warm community:** Instead of focusing on cool worship or programs, aim for warm peer and intergenerational friendships.
- **Prioritize young people (and families) everywhere:** Instead of giving lip service to how much young people matter, look for creative ways to tangibly support, resource, and involve them in all facets of your congregation.
- **Be the best neighbors:** Instead of condemning the world outside your walls, enable young people to neighbor well locally and globally.

## Registration

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To register your team, please return the attached Commitment Form along with your deposit. Space is limited, and we anticipate it will fill up quickly, so we recommend you register as soon as possible. **The final deadline is September 8th, 2017.**

## Sample Summit Schedule

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(While some details are subject to change, the 8:30 am start time on October 12 and 4:00 pm conclusion on October 13th are firm)

### Thursday, October 12:

*Summit begins at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California*

8:30 am:	Check in
9:00 am:	Welcome, introductions, and research overview
10:15 am:	Session 1 <i>(including presentation and team time)</i>
12:00 pm:	Lunch
1:30 pm:	Session 2
3:30 pm:	Break
4:00 pm:	Session 3
5:15 pm:	Dinner
6:30 pm:	Session 4
7:30 pm:	Dismissal

### Friday, October 13:

8:30 am:	Breakfast and affinity groups
10:00 am:	Session 5
12:00 pm:	Lunch
1:30 pm:	Core commitment idea sharing & brainstorming (across churches)
2:45 pm:	Team time to determine next steps and session 6
4:00 pm:	Dismissal

## What Others Are Saying about Growing Young

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"Such an incredible amount of creativity and depth has been locked up in conventional youth ministry. This work can break youth ministry out of its silo and shape church systems."

- Andy Crouch, *Christianity Today*

"*Growing Young* demonstrates how prioritizing the young is a church-changing strategy, not a youth ministry-changing strategy...and how pursuing Jesus by 'growing young' fundamentally changes the ways congregations interact with their communities, their leaders, as well as with youth and adults."

- Dr. Kenda Creasy Dean, *Princeton Theological Seminary*

"I can attest to the careful attention and rigorous research that the team brought to this topic...my strongest recommendation is for those committed to reaching the next generation of believers to read, engage, and apply this material."

- Dr. Soong-Chan Rah, *North Park Theological Seminary*

"*Growing Young* carries an urgent message. Young people need the Body of Christ—and vice-versa. This work is theologically informed, research savvy, and pragmatically outstanding."

- John Ortberg, *senior pastor of Menlo Church*

## Further Questions

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If you have additional questions, would like to request a scholarship, or would like more information, please contact: **Matthew Deprez** | [matthewdeprez@fuller.edu](mailto:matthewdeprez@fuller.edu) | (626) 584-5580