SUBMITTED BY
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Keine Stimmen

Community supports the Jungschar



As obvious as this statement seems, it is often disregarded in practice. The expectations of the church, the youth club and its leaders are often very high (something similar can also be said of the other branches of children's and youth work).

Do not misuse young people as bandwagons

We must not use our youth as draft horses for church work and at every opportunity that arises.

We are overtaxing leaders and children. We also cannot expect the leaders to work in other areas in addition to their time-consuming youth work and to be present at all church events. **The church supports the Jungschar and not the other way around.**

What does this support look like in concrete terms?

- The Jungschar and its leaders need prayer support. This requires regular information from the congregation (church newsletter, church service, etc.).
- The congregation is fully behind the Jungschar and its leaders. The congregation knows the leaders. Changes of leaders (especially main leaders) are not made in secret, but in a church service.
- The Jungschar needs the financial support of the congregation (see article: Financing the Jungschar).
- The congregation also bears the "inconvenience" that any work with children brings with it, e.g. noise, a broken window, marks on Sunday morning from the previous afternoon of Jungschar
- The support of the Jungschar is reflected in the involvement of parents, the Brethren's Council, the preacher and the congregation in what happens in the Jungschar. The Jungschar is not simply left to its own devices. The leaders are assisted in solving open questions and problems.
- Supporting the Jungschar also means being lenient and merciful in dealing with mistakes and wrong decisions made by the Jungschar leaders. Those who work with us make mistakes from which they can learn.

Our young employees need a helpful conversation instead of unkind criticism.

Cooperation in the congregation requires mutual sympathy and sharing. When things are going well in the youth group, the whole congregation rejoices, and when things are going downhill, the whole congregation suffers and shares in the pain. We want to keep this biblical principle of the body of Christ in mind and strive for it in our relationships as a youth group and as a congregation as a whole.

Supervision of the youth leaders

In some places, the supervision of the leadership team is still in disarray. This can lead to a feeling of being left alone, insecurity and frustration among the leaders, or it can be exploited and lead to tensions with the church leadership. The causes of a lack of support can be varied:

- Those responsible do not even know what is expected of them in terms of supervision.
- The idea that the Jungschar staff do not need this support as it is provided by the BESJ.
- The excessive demands on the time of those responsible for supervision.
- The Jungschar work is given too little importance. The Jungschar is primarily seen as an "Indian troop" and the spiritual and missionary aspect is underestimated.

It is therefore not malicious intent that often leads to neglect of the staff, but a certain awkwardness in the question of how supervision should be carried out.

Clear community structures as a prerequisite for good supervision

The youth group is part of the community. It is therefore integrated into the structure of the whole community. Clear management structures must be in place to ensure good supervision and leadership. Many congregations today have reached a size where the preacher can no longer accompany all the groups and supervise the staff. In some places, there are now people responsible for the individual areas of church work in the councils of brothers, elders or church councils. Every member of the congregation and especially every member of staff has a church organization chart and knows who is responsible for what. The person responsible for the youth group has a list of duties that describes their tasks, responsibilities and competencies (see worksheet on the relationship between church leadership and youth group leadership). Now the targeted supervision can begin.

Targeted support

It comprises three areas:

- Leadership of the youth leaders
- Training of the youth leaders
- Spiritual and pastoral care of the youth leaders

This shows that, as a rule, the supervision task cannot be carried out by one person, but that several people will have to share the leadership, training and spiritual supervision tasks.

Targeted support

Leadership of the youth leaders

In order for the youth leaders to be led like any other area of the church, it is necessary for the church to have a strategy and goals that are binding for all areas of work. Without this, leadership remains a groping in the dark.

The youth leaders' team works together with the person responsible for the church leadership to develop the medium and long-term goals in quantitative terms (e.g. founding additional youth groups, division into age groups) and in spiritual terms (coordinating topics with the other areas of children's and youth work).

Part of the management of the youth group is that the main leader has a list of duties (see sample in the appendix). Although this does not always avoid conflicts of responsibility and accountability, it certainly makes them easier to clarify and resolve.

The youth leaders are entitled to a meeting with the entire church leadership at least once a year. This is where upcoming questions and problems are discussed, goals and plans for the future are presented and questions regarding staff recruitment are addressed. The congregation is also entitled to information about what is going on in the Jungschar. Once a year, the youth leaders are given the opportunity to present a report on their work at a community meeting.

1. **Training of the youth leaders**

   Training and further education is an absolute must for working with children and young people. The BESJ is responsible for the technical training of leaders specific to youth groups. It cannot be offered at local level, but takes place through the national BESJ courses. What remains is the continuation of spiritual life and training in the spiritual area. Before creating new vessels for this and encouraging the risk of fragmentation of church work, it is important to make better use of existing resources:

   Preaching/Bible evening They are not primarily to be geared towards the edification needs of passive members of the congregation. Rather, teaching and preaching should be so practical that they serve to "equip the saints for service" (Eph. 4:12). If this goal is taken into account, our employees will make greater use of this natural training opportunity. This does not exclude specific groups of employees and employee training. For certain questions and topics, all employees of the church can be brought together.

   Literature Today, we have many good books that can be worked on together in the leadership team and are just as useful as a presentation.
2. **Spiritual and pastoral care**

   It is crucial! The best methodological and didactic training is of little use if the employees are not motivated or if there are spiritual deficits in the team that lead to tensions and employees then drop out in frustration. In an acute phase, the parish pastor will certainly be happy to provide help or to pass on a spiritual and pastoral word in a meeting of the young people.

   However, continuous support for the team is important. This is best provided by a counseling group or a counseling couple.

   Prerequisite for taking on such a task:

- if possible, experience as a youth leader
- pastoral gift
- a spiritual attitude

Ideally, the couple in charge or someone from the circle of advisors should host the youth group sessions. This allows for good support and sympathy. The employees have a first point of contact without always having to involve the church leadership. The young employees benefit from both the professional and spiritual experience of the advisors.

For further information see: Counselors.docx.

Advisory Board

Duties: main manager, head of department

11 Duties of the principal manager
Specifications of the department heads

References:

Contents: Annual focus 1993 "Community", Peter Blaser, Siegfried Nüesch, Martin Bihr, Hansruedi Tanner, Ueli Obrist, Johannes Wallmeroth, Peter Schulthess

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Expectations
Municipality
Management team
Children and youth work

Age
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13–16 years

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Duration
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