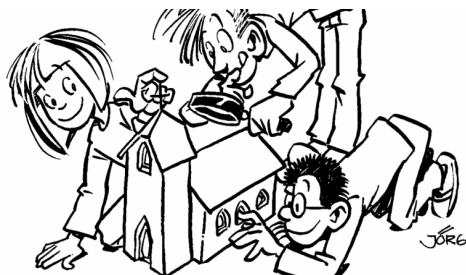


## BESJ and municipalities



The aim of the BESJ services is to win young people for Jesus and the church and to consciously encourage them.

### BESJ has an auxiliary and service character

BESJ assumes that the Jungschar is part of the local community. This is also clear from the chosen structure of the BESJ, in which the local youth groups are passive members and autonomous from the BESJ. **The BESJ therefore only has an auxiliary or service character.** However, there are sometimes uncertainties as to which tasks should be carried out by the BESJ and which by the municipality. The following explanations are intended to help clear up any uncertainties.

Such a catchphrase sounds good to the ears. But does the BESJ deliver what it promises? Isn't this objective sometimes miles away from reality? Sure, there are places where the leadership team and the church leadership can sign up to this common goal and act accordingly. This annual focus proves that this is not the case everywhere, or that there are individual aspects that could be improved. If everything were for the best, the annual focus on the topic of the church would be superfluous. Over the past few years, the BESJ has undergone continuous expansion. One of the consequences of this is that local youth leaders are increasingly referring to the BESJ in their activities here and there. Through course searches and personal conversations, they have received a number of suggestions about new creative forms of youth group work, new evangelistic opportunities, young leaders, internal training, etc. They want to put many of these ideas into practice. They want to put many of these ideas into practice, which is desirable and gratifying. There is nothing more beautiful than when young hearts burn for Jesus and become creative as a result. Where this appeal to the BESJ happens without consultation with the congregation and/or as a demarcation from it, this is not in our interest. However, it should be noted that such demarcations are sometimes due to a lack of flexibility on both sides. Often the leaders do not yet have the necessary insight, experience and maturity. However, in order for this to grow, the young often have to make the same mistakes and gain the same experience as the older generation. That is why leaders should also have room for new forms, accompanied and supported by the congregation. This results in a:

### Heartfelt plea for more mutual understanding

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However, there are sometimes uncertainties as to which tasks should be carried out by the BESJ and which by the municipality. The following explanations are intended to help dispel any uncertainties.

## **The BESJ tries to**

1. To equip youth leaders for their task through training and further education.
2. To support young people in a targeted manner through the cooperation of youth leaders in training. The background to this is the multiplication idea of 2 Timothy 2:2.
3. To contribute to the most efficient youth work possible by advising the local church and the leadership teams. In cases of conflict, the BESJ can also provide advice.
4. To offer help in the structural development of the youth group work, especially in the area of promoting young talent. The Ameisli, Jungschar and teen work must not be viewed in isolation.
5. To offer suitable material for local work.
6. Carry out regional and supra-regional activities and events to complement, not compete with, the local program.
7. To inform pastors and preachers or church leaders about current events in the BESJ by means of written documents, verbally or in personal conversations.
8. To discuss recommendations, concepts and structural models with the participating congregations, because it does not simply want to influence the congregations on its own authority.

The auxiliary or service character of the BESJ makes the management of an association considerably more difficult. However, it also offers great opportunities and the chosen path of being as close to the community as possible is confirmed time and again in the long term. Ultimately, the church is to be built as God's chosen form of his kingdom on earth. This is why the BESJ is fully committed to community-based work. However, this does not mean that the BESJ can take into account every separate wish of a congregation in its training content and activities, as this would make training in general impossible on the one hand and the content of the training courses impossible on the other. What the BESJ does not want and cannot do is provide direct support for the leaders on site. Of course, this is sometimes done very intensively in the training events. However, the BESJ does not want to be the first point of contact in the event of difficulties and thereby bind the leaders to itself. We consciously want the church to take on this task and be the first point of contact. Ensuring the spiritual orientation of the Jungschar is a direct task of the church and not of BESJ. BESJ only contacts the church leadership if someone registers for a camp leader or instructor course or would like to take on an inter-church task (regional or district leader), or if serious problems arise with a leader during a training course.

**The goal of community-oriented Ameisli, Jungschar and teen work can only be achieved through joint efforts, joint agreements and mutual fertilization between the community and BESJ. The BESJ tries to take into account the local framework conditions, while the congregations take into account the supra-congregational, nationwide character of the BESJ and the fact that the BESJ is affiliated with youth groups from over 15 denominations.**

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## References:

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

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