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# You Know You're a Youth Worker If...

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When is the last time you laughed? Since you are a youth worker it hasn't been long. From the teen who drools while sleeping through the preacher's sermon...to the one who asks with innocence if it would be ok to play X-BOX during the devotional – our world is wrapped in humor.

Within these pages are thoughts, accounts, and occurrences from the world of youth work. Feel free to laugh and say, "Boy, have I been there!"

We have reserved the final section of this book for more serious reflections on what it means to be a youth worker. May God continue to bless your ministry, and may your heart always be filled with the joy that comes from serving the youth of the kingdom.



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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have a lock-in and have to  
Notify the National Guard, CIA,  
And FBI (Non of which are  
willing to accept the  
assignment).

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You blow your nose during the  
preacher's dramatic pause.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You wear a nose ring with a chain attached  
to your navel to prove you can relate to the  
group.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You blind the youth group by unleashing  
your white legs by wearing shorts to Six  
Flags.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have a burning desire to rebaptize several teens in shark-infested waters.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You try to be hip, cool, groovy, or anything else that does not come naturally.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You allow the unchurched teens visiting the group to blow smoke rings around group members heads...only to help them fit in...and only because they resemble halos.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You allow the teens to ride in the U-haul on the way to the youth retreat.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your hair has turned a significant gray by your thirtieth birthday.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The entire staff at the area youth detentions knows you on a first name basis.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You tie the most rambunctious kid to the hood of the bus when returning from camp joust to prove to the rest of the group exactly who is in charge.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You allow the youth group to “mix-bathe” while cleaning the bapistry.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You show the movie that Johnnie brought without previewing it first...you discover that it contains the birds and the bees, would make Rambo look passive...and could extend a sailor's vocabulary.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Everyone thought you were “winging-it” when it was your best planned devotional ever.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**



You fall asleep during a teen's confession of sin.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**



On youth trips you will only stop at fast food restaurants that allow bus drivers to eat free.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**



You play "Chubby Bunny" with beef bullion cubes instead of marshmallows.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**



You have to explain to the preacher that you are not his gopher.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

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You give the keys to the van to a teen to unlock it and have to add, "And don't drive off this time! That state trooper did not think it was funny."

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

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You have to keep the congregation informed of all your activities so they will think you do more than roast those cheap red wieners and play volleyball all the time.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

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You break into a spontaneous ovation after a baptism.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You take two or three teens to play tennis, bowl, or just goof off and get to call it work.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

It seems like you constantly offend the elderly of the congregation.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

When driving the church van on a late night return trip, you turn off the lights, slam the brakes, and scream at the top of your lungs...just to repay a portion of the trauma the gang has caused you during the trip.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The teens demand that you stop at every fast food joint.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You memorize a great lesson you heard and expect to get the same results when you present it to your group.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You motion to the guy serving communion that his fly is open when it really isn't.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You feel the need to go fishing or play golf after every negative comment you receive.  
(You may find yourself making a lot of birdies and giving Roland Martin a run for his money.)

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You volunteer you spouse for a ministry without checking with her/him first.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You think it's easier to get forgiveness than permission.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You've never been caught letting the teen drink the leftover communion juice (and you have never been caught yourself.)

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You lead the new praise songs with the charisma of Lawrence Welk...while the kids keep watching for "champagne bubble" to rise from behind the pulpit.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You plan your Sunday night devotional during Sunday night services.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have a kid that constantly shows off her Bible knowledge, but doesn't have the lifestyle to match.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You remind everyone of your birthday and about Christmas with the gentle reminder that cash is accepted.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You know more of the VJ's on MTV than your group does (how else would you know what to preach against?)

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your youth trip dress code consists of mandatory shorts length of three inches below the knees...even when seated.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have six month to prepare for one of the two sermons you get to present each year.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You try to cram all six months of study into a twenty minute lesson and still hear, "You know you went over two minutes."

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You act like attending all the church functions is a tremendous blessing.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your group has more goats than sheep.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You act like you are really interested in what a belligerent parent has to say. A real youth pro will nod in agreement while devising a new strategy for paring the final four holes.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You joke on your spouse to get a laugh. Be Ye Warned: This does tend to nullify a romantic home life.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You exaggerate the number when asked, "How many did you have at devo last night?"

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The budget committee breaks into hysterical laughter when your salary is brought up.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You draw food stamps your first three years in youth ministry.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The custodian gets a raise for being more productive than you.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You saw a kid take the wrong trail on the hiking trip, but didn't say anything about it.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You constantly hear:  
"Are we there yet?"  
"I've got to go to the bathroom!"

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You plan and carry out more pranks at camp than the campers.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You are never taken seriously by most of the congregation.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You get excited about the blue light special at K-mart.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You sift through the donated clothes in the benevolent closet in an effort to upgrade your personal wardrobe.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You've done your best promotional job ever for the car wash - and no one shows.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your office looks like a sporting goods store.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The ski chalet is mistaken for your office.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You plan an event and only one teen shows up. Unfortunately, it happens to be the kid that creates the most trouble. Is this God's providence or Satan's hand at work?

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

A parent asks you to get off the slide at the McDonald's playground so his kids can play.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

It's always the same deranged parent who calls you at least twenty-four times before each trip.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You slip up and pray for the “Fruit of the loom” instead of the “fruit of the vine” at communion service.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You are constantly asked, “When are you going to get a real job?”

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have ever been asked, “Seriously. What do you do during the week?”

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your group has ever started the wave during worship.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You've ever heard, "They pay you how much just to do a Sunday night devotional?" (Yet another blessing of having the financial sheet published.)

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The youth group wants to substitute "Herman the Wormin'" for "Our God He Is Alive" as the opening song for worship.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your youth activities have often been mistaken for a babysitting service.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

90% of your group is more creative than you.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your yard has been rolled with toilet paper heisted from a local service station.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have caught a boy and girl friend zipped tightly in a sleeping bag at a lock-in and got the awesome excuse, "But we were only trying to keep warm."

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have ever planned a beach retreat in February to escape the mixed-swimming controversy.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The youth group acts up in church and they suddenly become "your teens."

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You go to a shrink and take an inkblot test. Every blot looks like a teen.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have ever been told by the leadership, "Absolutely not! We have got to draw the line somewhere."

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have ever dreamed of sacrificing a couple of teens on the alter of burnt offerings.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

It was three months after your resignation before the congregation realized you were gone...and only then because they missed your spouse and kids.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your community publishes a list of the areas poorest, and your name is in the middle of the pack.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You have said to a teen, "You just *think* you're going on the next youth trip."

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The kid that causes the most trouble in the youth group is your own.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

98% of your food consumption is from the big three: Hamburgers, hot dogs, and pizza.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Your family forgets your name by the end of the summer because they have seen you so little.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

The students think you are a geek because you refer to the Greek.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**



You are as confused about the sermon as the teens.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**



You show up at a funeral wearing tennis shoes and a t-shirt.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**



You have the urge to leave every three months because you have used up all your Sunday school material.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**



The word “change” means more to you than coins.



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### **You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

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Most of the deacons refer to you as “The goob who gets paid to play, have fun, and dodge the real world.”  
(Let them host the next lock-in.)

### **You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

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A parent asks, “What time will you get home?” ...two months before the trip.

### **You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

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You push three of the teens into the aisle during the invitation as a subtle hint of their need to repent.

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**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

A teen smarts off at you and five things immediately come to mind...all of which are illegal.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

Most of your Scripture knowledge comes from Paraphrases 1:1 and the book of Second Opinions.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

People see you acting normal and wonder if you are in need of counseling.

**You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

You've ever heard from the kid holding the rock, "Don't worry. It's just one of those ugly stained glass windows."

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### **You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

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You have been on a mission trip to Mexico and called a parents saying, "Yes, I know it is 2 a.m., but there seems to be some confusion regarding your son...he wouldn't happen to be there with you, would he?"

### **You Know You're a Youth Worker If...**

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On a youth trip the teens stay in church member's homes, while you bunk at the hotel with cable television and a Jacuzzi.

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You strive to live an authentic Christian life before the teens and the church at all times.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You set aside a specific time for a devotional period with God each day.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You pay extra attention to the obnoxious teens in your group.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You prepare every Bible class and devotional to meet the needs of your group.

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You can admit when you are wrong.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You are able to laugh at  
yourself...because others will.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You visit the sick no matter their age.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You strive to be holy as God is holy.

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### **You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You hold the hand of those you visit as you pray. You may never forget their shaking hand, and they will never forget your gentle heart.

### **You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You sit with the elderly ladies occasionally at after service lunches and make them laugh.

### **You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You visit the youth group members at their homes.

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You provide planned activities for spiritual growth.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You smile a lot and have a ton of fun. Just because others dislike their work does not mean you have to hide the love for yours.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You send your spouse a card if your trip lasts more than three days.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You bring a gift back from a trip to your family. Especially if it is a place they really wanted to go.

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You leave your office door open so teens can drop in for unexpected visits.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You let your family know that they are more important than the youth group.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You always express your true feelings about youth group problems, and you let the youth group work them out.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You allow the teens to discover biblical truth for themselves.

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You pray that every teen will mature and grow closer to God.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You are available for the needs of your group twenty-four hours a day.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You fall deeper in love with Jesus daily.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You go into all the world to teach the gospel (whether across the street or across the ocean.)

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You do not expect your biological children to be perfect because of your position.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You pray for each coworker and youth group member as often as possible.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You do not believe that bigger events are always better events. You know that small group activities are often the best relationship builders.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You talk less and listen more.

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You use your talents for God's glory.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You back away from your ministry a few days each month to recharge your batteries...Jesus did.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You study to show yourself approved by God.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You try to be all God wants you to be, where He wants you to be – even if you do not understand why.

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You have a contagious passion for Christ.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You continue to dream.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You believe in the kids that everyone else  
has given up on.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You seek to learn something new everyday  
that will help your ministry.

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**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You rely on the Father to guide your life rather than plotting your own course.

**You Really Are a Youth Worker If...**

You become more like Jesus each day.

**GOD BLESS YOU IN YOUR  
MINISTRY!!**

**Paul & Al**

**<http://www.teenlifeministries.com>**

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