

The Relationship between Presidents: Temple President and Youth Group President



At the outset of the year, use this guide for a meeting of the temple president and youth group president to strengthen your goals and achievements for your boards and your communities at large.

“Why should the presidents meet?”

Everybody benefits! The congregation benefits from the creativity, passion, and commitment of a young generation of leadership. The willingness to learn and be trained in the ways of temple leadership sets the standard for future involvement in congregational life. The youth group benefits from learning essential skills and the values that guide the congregation. This meeting helps both parties build an invaluable relationship in which they will learn, grow and thrive.

Goal Setting and Alignment

Share your goals, large and small, with each other. Being aware of what the other is trying to achieve will open the lines of communication between the temple board and the youth group board and will highlight opportunities where the two bodies can align with each other. For example, if the temple has identified a goal to increase religious school enrollment by 10%, the youth group could be instrumental in recruiting among their peers.

Budgeting

Share the temple budget with your youth group president, and assist them with developing a youth group budget. When given the opportunity, teens will rise to the opportunity (and use their discretion!) For example, your youth group may identify “remodel the youth lounge” as its goal for the year, while the temple may be buckling down on building renovations. Sharing some of the budget goals with the youth group president will help align the youth group’s goals with the rest of the congregation’s – and it may inspire you, too.

Resources

Ask the question, “**What are our resources outside of the synagogue walls?**” As president of the congregation, you may have access to a wide network of resources that can be useful to your teens in establishing contacts that will enrich their programming, mentorship, and service opportunities within the community. When you meet with the president of the youth group, ask them what they want to accomplish during the year, and think about who you may be able to connect them with.

Also think about the **committees** your congregation has, and consider asking the youth group’s chairs to join or participate in a meeting for the relevant committee to strengthen the work each group is doing (example: the teen social action chair might join the social action committee).

Additional tips:

- Establish a mailbox, inbox and desk or workspace for your youth group president
- Meet monthly with your youth group president to update on goal progress
- Ensure you (the temple president) are on the youth group mailing list
- Give teens the opportunity to rise to the occasion, and they will!

This guide was created with input from the 2013-14 NFTY President, Andrew Keene. Additional resources can be located online at www.urj.org/cye and www.nfty.org.