

The game-changing presence of a
LEADER

Contact Work in 2026



Who is Kate?

- Area Director of Greater Alexandria
- Has held the title of “YL leader” for 16 years
- Navigated life with kids in various communities: rural, private school, suburban, and multicultural

I've learned how to meet teenagers where they are and build authentic relationships with them so that I can share the Gospel with them and help them grow in life and faith.

Matthew 9:36 “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

When you think of Young Life, what comes to mind?



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CAMP



CLUB



CAMPAIGNERS



None of these would happen without..



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Relationships

How do we build relationships? It starts with **contact work.**



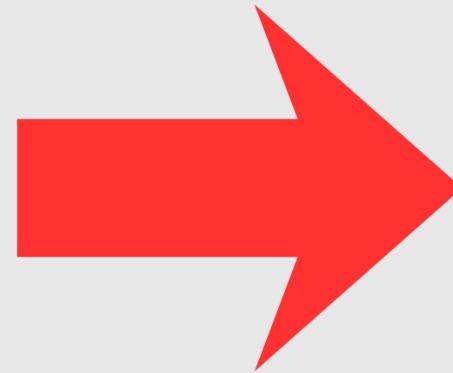
*Showing up in the world of kids,
building relationships with them,
and earning the right to be heard.*

“The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish.” John 1:14 (The Message)

CONTACT WORK

We want to take people from:

DISINTERESTED



**WORLD
CHANGERS
FOR THE
GOSPEL**

THE 3 LEVELS OF CONTACT WORK

DOING THINGS TOGETHER



TALKING



BEING SEEN

What compels us is the love of Christ *and nothing else.*

“More and more the desire grows in me simply to walk around, greet people, enter their homes, sit on their doorsteps, play ball, and be known as someone who wants to live with them. My own desire to be useful, to do something significant, or to be part of some impressive project is so strong, that soon my time is taken up by meetings, conferences, study groups, and workshops that prevent me from walking the streets. It is difficult... but I wonder more and more if the first thing shouldn't be to know people by name, to eat and drink with them, to listen to their stories and tell your own, and to let them know with words, handshakes, and hugs that you do not simply like them, but you truly love them.” From the book Gracias by Henri Nouwen



**Entering into the world of kids
will require something of you.**

Your time. Your energy. Your money. Your comfort. Your pride.

But it will be worth it!

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So you show up. now what?

- **HAVE FAITH**
- **SET A GOAL**
- **BE PRESENT WHERE YOU ARE**
- **PLACE YOURSELF IN A STRATEGIC PLACE**
- **BE READY TO ENGAGE**
- **TAKE THE INITIATIVE**
- **ASK QUESTIONS**
- **MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME THERE**
- **DON'T STAY IN ONE SPOT**
- **USE WISDOM**
- **PAY ATTENTION**
- **TAKE NOTE**



TIPS & STRATEGIES

- **PRAY OFTEN**

This is holy work. You are partnering with the God of the universe. Let him lead you!

- **MAKE A PLAN**

Consider contact work a big rock that you plan other things around

- **LEAN ON YOUR TEAM**

Ask a more seasoned leader if you can go with them to the next game, parenting workshop, play, or concert. We don't do this alone.

- **SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS**

Think about what you are going to say when meeting a kid. "I like your shoes!" "What's the best food here?" "What's your favorite part about going to Alexandria City High School?"

- **REMEMBER**

A kid's name is their favorite word to hear. Remember it! Remember important details from your interaction so you can follow up with them next time you see them. This is how we care for kids well.

PRACTICALS

- Showing up for something is better than not showing up at all.
- Ask yourself, “How am I showing up today? What do I need from God?” Before you get out of the car. He will give you what you need.
- Think about who you're going to text to let them know you're coming. Who can you invite to come with you?
- Be consistent! What rhythm can you build into your schedule so you don't have to think about coming up with a plan from week to week? Is it Saturday morning coffee dates, or basketball with the guys every Sunday afternoon?
- Keep the main thing the main thing. It's all about relationships.
- Pursue young people with love and curiosity. Regardless of the outcome.
- Celebrate the victories!



“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” Hebrews 11:1

“Well done, my good servant!” his master replied. Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.” Luke 19:17

Q&A

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