

Reaching Out to Girls

by Amy Taylor

Everyone wants to know that secret to getting younger women involved. But secret ingredients aren't secret once you get your hands on them. Special sauce? Come on, everybody knows it's just Thousand Island dressing!

I don't have a magic recipe that will guarantee your next event will be the must-attend for every woman under the age of 30 in your church, but I can tell you what made me, even as a young girl, want to roll up my sleeves and get involved.

Invited. From the time I was 9 or 10, the women in church made sure my friends and I were more than simply told about things that were going on; they let us know we were wanted. They didn't wait until we were in high school to include us and begin to build relationships. If they had, it might have been too late!

Important. Everyone appreciates feeling valued, and young girls are no exception. I didn't just feel wanted at church; I felt needed. Child care, folding bulletins, shaking hands—I was asked to do a variety of tasks. Far from making me feel imposed upon, these requests helped me feel important. Working alongside a friend was even better!

Involved. When I was in high school, a friend and I were asked to lead a Bible study during our women's retreat. After the shock wore off and the fear set in, I steeled my jaw, set to work, and got it done. For the rest of the ladies, it might not have been groundbreaking or memorable, but for my friend and me, it was huge. We had been honored with something we thought was way beyond our years. We felt respected and appreciated.

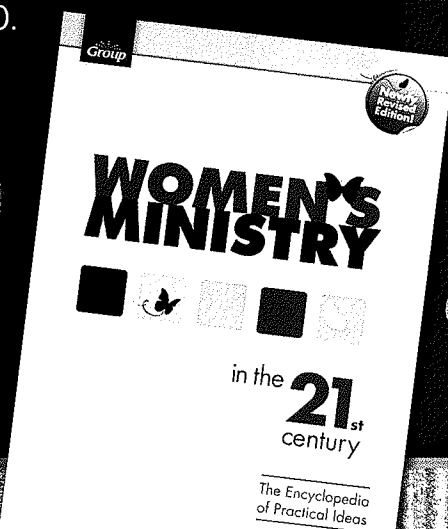
The other day, I tried a burger at a new place in town. Rather than play it safe, I went ahead and asked for their special sauce. It actually wasn't Thousand Island. To my delight, it was a great concoction that worked well together. It had some extra kick—perhaps horseradish? So maybe there is something to the idea of a recipe for greatness. Sure, you probably won't find one that suits everyone's taste, and you may have to modify things a bit to make it work for you. But adding new ingredients to your collection might be just what you need to freshen things up and cause more women in your church to take a taste (and come back for seconds).



Amy Taylor is Group for Women's art director and is passionate about seeing people remove their "Sunday faces" to develop real relationships. She's a design geek (her favorite color—this week—is PMS 445) and tries (unsuccessfully) not to let her entire world revolve around her 11-year-old son.

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