Today’s youth culture abandons teenagers during the time of their greatest need for adult leaders and trustworthy guidance. Today’s teenagers are thrust into adulthood while self-serving institutions such as media and the consumer market de-emphasize family, character, esteem and morals—the very things essential for an adolescent’s development. This systematic abandonment leaves teenagers feeling like they are on their own in today’s world.

This culture of abandonment hinders spiritual, emotional, and psychological development as students recognize the lack of personal concern or authentic care, and find it difficult to trust adults. Teens pull away from the adult world and create their own society, value system and social norms in order to survive adolescence. Consequently though, teens crave unconditional acceptance, stable identities and genuine relationships.

Teens look for answers in the “quick fixes” continually offered by their culture—alcohol, drugs, sexual activity and image management. They experiment and are left even more dissatisfied and uncertain about themselves and their world.

Young Life is committed to unconditional friendships and helping kids navigate through the issues and circumstances they face. We are committed to giving kids the opportunity to experience God’s dynamic love in comfortable and fun venues. We are committed to sharing God’s love in practical and life-changing ways, as well as showing kids how to love others as they love themselves.
FROM the staff

Young Life is about giving kids opportunities to experience the unconditional love of Jesus Christ. While I was in high school, a Young Life leader befriended me, was faithfully committed to my character development, and modeled a life of significance with Christ as the source. The return on the investment Young Life makes in the lives of young people is powerful and long-lasting. I am devoted to giving every kid a personal experience with Christ and equipping them for social and spiritual maturity.

On behalf of the entire Young Life team, thank you for considering the information in this document. I encourage your involvement with this growing mission and trust you will be blessed. I am grateful for this ministry and appreciate your role in it.

Andy Ward, Darien/Rowayton Young Life Staff

HIGHLIGHTS 2007

Hired and trained new staff to ignite the Young Life program in Darien and Rowayton

Impacted over 120 students through Contact Work

Directed and grew a dynamic multi-school Club

Hosted an All County Young Life Club drawing students from 9 different towns

Doubled size of the Young Life summer camp trip

Synergized with and served local churches and youth organizations

Pioneered a Work Crew Training program

Commissioned a Campaigner student to serve on a month-long Work Crew assignment at a Young Life summer camp

Pioneered a Launch Team to develop a new WyldLife program in Darien/Rowayton

GOALS 2008

Pioneer middle school WyldLife

Solidify foundational teams of Board and donors

Establish fiscal solvency

Diversify and maximize camping

Advance the Leadership Pipeline initiative

“On the surface the adolescent world appears to be relatively stable and healthy. Yet beneath the calm waters presented by positive empirical data there is turmoil that is difficult, painful, lonely, and even harmful to our young. Virtually no one would question the need young people, and especially adolescents, have for an adults who are available, care, and come to them without a hidden or self-centered agenda. Adolescents are desperate for adults who care enough to look beneath the surface of their layered living, to stand beside them in the midst of their inconsistency, and to gently and patiently lead, shepherd and guide them into adulthood.”

~From his book Hurt, Dr. Chap Clark, Ph.D., is an associate of youth, family, and culture at Fuller Theological Seminary

“Students are expected to excel academically, in competitions, on standardized tests, at getting into excellent colleges and nearly all that they do. Almost all students fulfill these expectations. This is not a typical public high school atmosphere.”

~Former DHS Principal Dr. Jerry Auclair, April 2007

“It was there I don’t feel rushed. I’m free to be myself and I don’t have to worry about climbing the social ladder.”

~DHS Senior

“I can attest the benefits of this program from what I have seen in my children who have experienced this ministry. With the help of Young Life and God’s direction, I have two incredibly caring and loving children who are successful, balanced and blessed young adults.”

~Craig Ferrer, Darien Parent

2008 ministry INITIATIVES

1. Pioneer middle school WyldLife

2. Solidify foundational teams of Board and donors

3. Establish fiscal solvency

4. Diversify and maximize camping

5. Advance the Leadership Pipeline initiative

2008

Funding GOALS

Staff Compensation

Includes salary, cost of living adjustment, FICA, worker’s compensation, Insurance, benefits, and pension for 1 full-time Intern

$40,000

Field Expenses

Expenses for office, administration, vehicle, training, promotion, fundraising events, donor appreciation and all programming for kids and adult volunteers.

$15,000

Support Services

Expenses for financial/donor services, information/communication systems, human resources, personnel infrastructure, technical support, legal services, mission-wide/regional leadership.

$10,000

Development

Funds for projected growth in staffing and programming for 2008-09.

$10,000

Total

$75,000

Funding PLAN

Individuals/Foundations

$50,000

Churches/Organizations

$15,000

Event-Driven (Golf Tournament, Receptions, etc)

$10,000

Total

$75,000