



Teen Tips? Try These!

#1 **ASK!** Wondering how to add teen appeal to your church library? How about asking young readers about what they're reading now – or what they would like to read.

#2 **WRITING ON THE WALL** Set up a Talk-it Board – what would teens like to see in the library? What would they recommend? Then your challenge is finding Christian titles that match your selection policy and teen preferences.

#3 **FOLLOW THE LEADERS** You're not alone in finding materials that appeals to teens. Get help from leaders in student ministries – they'll know what the youth group and teen programs are discussing, what's being read/listened to/watched.

#4 **FIND A BELL COW** That's a Southern expression, explains NCLA's **Alrene Hall**, "for teens willing to give you their opinions and help raise the library's profile among peers." (*Libraries Alive*, Spring 2006). Look for youth who are the *unofficial* leaders, too, then get to know those kids. You may be surprised how ready they are to say what's on their minds.

#5 **PUT YOUR MONEY...** Hall also suggests enlisting teens directly in building up their collection. "We once called our local Christian bookstore manager and told him we were sending down a few kids with \$100 to spend on whatever appealed to them."

#6 **SMALL=BEAUTIFUL** Start with a handful of titles, then add/subtract items as teens show their likes and dislikes. Think fresh! Think current!

#7 **LOCATION, LOCATION....** No room for a separate teen section? Set it up in the adult area, rather than children's. Be aware of teen sensitivities, and focus on their future rather than the past.

#8 **LIGHTS, CAMERA** Break out your camera and take photos of teens reading, then put pictures all over the church building. Better yet, give the camera to the kids and ask them to take as many different (make that *weird*) pictures as they can of teens reading. Then post prints on the church website, in a pre-service Power Point, send them by videophone to friends, to a youth group at a nearby congregation. Bet that gets some **ACTION** in the library!

#9 **ONE FOR ME, ONE FOR YOU** Work with youth leaders to hold a swap of Christian paperbacks and comics among your church's youth. And serve refreshments!

#10 **2G2B4G** Use text abbreviations in teen pr and displays. To make sure you've got it right, check a site like www.netlingo.com/top50/popular-text-terms.php - and as a precaution, check with a youth leader. Otherwise, you may have teens **ROTFL** [In case you don't know: too good to be forgotten/rolling on the floor laughing]

#11 **AND THE WINNERS ARE...** Set up Readers Choice Awards, recommendations from teens and youth leaders. Ask for favorites, add their names and comments. Post on a Talk-it board (see #2)

Judy McIntosh, Richmond Presbyterian, Richmond, BC Canada