

Auxano Program Description

The Auxano (Greek for “grew or increased” in Luke 2:52) Leadership Program is an initiative to develop teens into confident, Christ-centered leaders. It was created in response to a Teen Leadership Readiness Questionnaire administered to 32 teen leaders at Teens For Christ (TFC) clubs throughout the St. Croix Valley, which revealed that most teens rated themselves below the midpoint in many key areas. These findings, combined with input from an adult volunteer focus group, demonstrated that teens are eager for leadership growth, but need a trellis of structured training, mentoring, and a system to guide and track their progress. Drawing on the challenge to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” in 2 Peter 3:18 and the example of Jesus in Luke 2:52, Auxano emphasizes intentional spiritual and leadership growth while developing teens to carry out TFC’s mission.

Mission, Vision, and Values Statement

Mission statement

“Teens for Christ is dedicated to reaching teens with the gospel of Jesus Christ, helping them grow in the Lord, and guiding them as disciples for Jesus.”

Vision Statement

Auxano envisions a generation of teens transformed by Scripture, relational ministry, and intentional leadership development. Students will be deeply rooted in God’s Word, attentive to the Holy Spirit, able to discern truth, and equipped to live out the gospel in their schools, churches, and communities.

Through authentic relationships, students will be known, supported, challenged, and encouraged to grow. Through Student Leadership, they will move from spectators to active participants, leading Bible studies, serving others, developing their gifts, and courageously sharing the gospel with their peers.

Ultimately, we envision a movement of **Gospel-Centered Living** where students depend fully on God’s power and recognize that the gospel is worth everything. This conviction will shape

their identity, decisions, relationships, passions, and calling, equipping them to become faithful leaders who influence their world for Christ.

Program Values

Biblical Truth: Scripture is the foundation for all evangelism and discipleship (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Relational Ministry: We believe life change happens through authentic relationships (Proverbs 27:17).

Student Leadership: We empower teens to lead, serve, and minister to their peers (1 Timothy 4:12).

Gospel-Centered Living: The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are central to everything we do, inspiring teens to live out their faith daily through God's power at work in them. (Colossians 1:9).

Community Impact: We equip teens to serve their communities as visible, active witnesses for Jesus in their schools and neighborhoods, shining as lights for Christ. (Philippians 2:15)

Needs Met by Vision Statement

Our vision directly addresses key needs identified in our Needs Assessment. It builds leadership confidence through training and mentoring, strengthens biblical identity and spiritual growth, and provides a clear path for teen development. It deepens biblical knowledge, encourages growth through the Holy Spirit, and creates meaningful opportunities for teens to lead and serve. Peer relationships, mentorship, and visible progress through our jacket-and-pin system also foster accountability, motivation, and ownership.

Resource Needs and Leadership Development Strategy

Students Costs

Students will need to purchase their own Letterman's jackets at a cost of roughly \$50. Students will also pay \$5 for each pin they earn through the program. The total cost of participation in Auxano over their years with TFC will be capped at \$100 per student.

Leadership Competencies

We desire emerging leaders to be developing holistically across the domains of the head, heart, and hands. The “head” focuses on gaining and applying biblical and theological knowledge. Development of the “head” enables our leaders to think biblically and make wise decisions. They need a strong foundation in Scripture and must be able to explain it clearly, as they develop others to do the same. This includes actively applying the Bible to real-life situations for others to see. Leaders must be able to disciple others and adapt their situational leadership appropriately.

Developing the “heart” focuses on the leader’s character and spiritual growth. We desire leaders who live a gospel-centered life, not just teach well. This requires reliance on the Holy Spirit to demonstrate humility and live with integrity. They must be growing in faith, demonstrate obedience to God, and be committed to the ministry's mission and values. This is important because it emphasizes that leadership is not only about skills but also about the leader's character and integrity.

Finally, the leader’s “hands” focus on the skills needed to lead, including building relationships with others through listening, empathy, and consistency. Leaders should be able to teach and communicate clearly in different settings. Other required skills include giving and receiving feedback, adapting their leadership style, and mentoring other leaders, while taking initiative and demonstrating responsibility by completing ministry tasks.

The head, heart, and hands work together. A leader will not be effective with only one or two of the three. The goal is to develop balanced leaders across all three areas. This prepares them to lead others, grow in their own faith, and help carry out the mission, reinforcing the goal of producing leaders whose wisdom, character, and skill function together.

Competency Requirements Chart

Head	Heart	Hands
Biblical understanding	Gospel-centered living	Communication and teaching
Accurate Scriptural application	Humility, integrity, obedience	Listening, empathy, consistency
Biblical decision-making	Dependence on the Holy Spirit	Feedback and mentoring skills
Scriptural discipleship of others	Aligns with mission and values	Leadership adaptability
		Responsibility and initiative

Leader Identification Strategy

The Auxano program will be led by Chad Peterson. Most of the contact with teens, however, will occur through their program mentor. The following four criteria will help in the approval of Mentors: 1) current or past engagement in ministry (attendance, participation, seeking responsibility), 2) spiritual openness and teachability, 3) relational influence (character and leadership qualities), and 4) alignment with our stated program values.

We will recruit new mentors through personal invitations to selected individuals from our graduating class at Ambassador College of Bible and Ministry, a challenge session for potential leaders at our annual teen leadership conference, and recommendations from current staff about adult volunteers or others in their sphere of influence. We will strive to include many adult mentors over the age of 40, recognizing the added maturity, life experience, and spiritual depth they can bring to relational discipleship. We will also look for new mentors from outside our ministry throughout the areas that we serve.

Training and Development Strategy

As part of this program, mentors will complete a situational leadership self-assessment and participate in a group discussion of their results to help them grow as leaders. This will help all mentors better understand their leadership styles and adapt to different situations. In addition, they should be familiar with Teens for Christ's Basic Counseling Course, both its written test and mock counseling experience.

For experiential and skills-based training opportunities, mentors will be invited but not required to attend Teens For Christ's annual teen leadership conference, where they will be exposed to new ideas, speakers, and leadership development. This component will help develop communication, empathy, and problem-solving skills for effective leadership. We will eventually encourage mentors to gather feedback, track progress, learn from one another, and model desired outcomes through an annual dinner.

Implementation Plan

Qualifying Condition

For the Auxano program to be successful, it must be grounded in God's will through prayer, obedience to Scripture, and focus on making disciples rather than just producing outcomes. Program mentors must be aligned with the board, the director, and TFC's mission and vision. Success will depend on having a clear plan with defined criteria. Great communication, active monitoring, and buy-in from all mentors and participants are required to ensure accountability, consistency, and quality execution of the program.

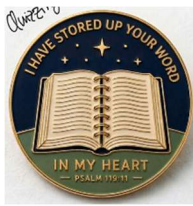
Communications and Marketing

A letterman's style jacket/sweatshirt for Auxano students will serve as an ongoing reminder of our vision and encourage teens to turn it into reality. Advancement ceremonies, with

the distribution of leadership accomplishment pins, will take place at large stakeholder events to reinforce progress toward the vision. To communicate it further, the short version of the program's vision statement will be displayed on the organization's webpage. A PowerPoint file will be used to explain the program for new participants. Finally, the organization's monthly fundraising letter will highlight teen leaders' progress to demonstrate Auxano's impact. Together, these approaches will keep the vision in front of all stakeholders and demonstrate measurable impact.

Program participants will share testimonies about its impact during other public ministry events, allowing students to highlight how God is working through them and the program. The intent is to create a culture of storytelling that builds momentum and inspires greater participation and long-term investment in the Auxano Leadership Program.

The chart below and graphic for teens outline the requirements students must complete to earn either a small or large pin for their letterman's jacket across six key development areas. Each pin defines what is required, how many times each action must be completed, and some timelines, ensuring that students, leaders, and mentors share a common understanding of



SMALL PIN LEVEL

- Join a quiz team
- Memorize a chapter
- Win 5 jumps in a quiz
- Captain for one quiz
- Recite a chapter at a small TFC event



LARGE PIN LEVEL

- Memorize Bible book (min. 4 chapters)
- Quiz at nationals
- Recite 100 verses (5 errors or less)
- Recruit a new quizzier
- Mentor a quizzier
- Attend Rhema
- Lead a devotion

SMALL PIN LEVEL

- Complete a two week devotion plan
- One month prayer journal
- Pass TFC's BCC
- Read a Bible book 5 times in 5 days
- Lead a group prayer
- Write a paragraph about God working in your life



LARGE PIN LEVEL

- Read through the Bible in a year
- Share a devotion, lead small group, or preach
- Counsel at a TFC event
- Write a 1 page life development plan
- 1 page TFC involvement testimony
- Complete Situational Leadership Assessment

SMALL PIN LEVEL

- Attend a TFC camp
- Write testimony of camp week
- One-on-one mentoring
- Earn Team Points
- Make three new friends



LARGE PIN LEVEL

- Become a Trailblazer
- Invite 5 new friends (1 must attend)
- 1 public engagement (speaking, music, etc)



SMALL PIN LEVEL

- Club leader for 1 year
- Share your testimony
- Lead a game
- Invite 5 friends (1 must attend)
- Lead a public prayer



LARGE PIN LEVEL

- Share 10 min. message
- Attend Top Gun
- Invite 10 friends (3 must attend)
- Plan & run one night
- Club leader for 3 years

SMALL PIN LEVEL

- Attend 2+ in one year
- Invite 5 new friends (1 must attend)
- Help setup & Cleanup
-



LARGE PIN LEVEL

- Attend all rallies for a year
- Attend POW or WOW
- Play a meeting role
- Available as a counsellor 3 times

SMALL PIN LEVEL

- 2 mission trips
- VBS crew leader
- Attend Serve Week



LARGE PIN LEVEL

- Be a Summer Servant
- 4 mission trips
- VBS rotation leader
- 2 serve weeks
- Spring break or overseas trips
- Missions trip 3 years
- Fundraise

progress and expectations. This chart will be hung in each room where TFC hosts its weekly

clubs and will be listed on the organization's webpage, which highlights this program.

Timeline of Activities

This program will operate over school years. The prototype of this program will happen from June to August of 2026 with our five teen Summer Servant interns. The larger program will begin in September 2026, with the goal of involving at least 3 teens from each club this year. As teens graduate from the program, we will add replacement teens the following year. Students who graduate and remain in the area will be invited to continue their involvement in the program as mentors, reinforcing program culture. We will invite all past participants to the annual senior recognition ceremonies to maintain connections and celebrate the program's impact.

Personnel Needs

The program will require one supervisor, one adult volunteer per one or two mentees, and one person to oversee communication, finance, jackets and pins, and technology needs. Before initiation, we will design a jacket and pins that publicly demonstrate accomplishments.

Training Plans

- Mentors will be trained on program accomplishment criteria
- Situational Leadership Self-Assessment & Debrief Workshop
- TFC Basic Counseling Course (including written exam + mock counseling)

Biblical concepts of developing teens:

God produces growth. 1 Cor. 3:5-6

Scripture provides the foundation. 1 Peter 2:2

Relationships and ministry create the environment. Eph. 2:21 & 2 Cor. 10:15

Teens actively participate in the process. 1 Timothy 4:12 & 2 Peter 3:18

The goal is maturity in Christ. Eph. 4:15

In Colossians 1:10, Auxano exemplifies the growth we desire in teens when it combines **knowledge of God, fruitful service, and spiritual growth.**

Auxano Leadership Program Commitment Agreement

Participant Name: _____

Mentor Name: _____

School Year: _____

Our Commitment

The Auxano Leadership Program exists to help students become confident, Christ-centered leaders who grow in their knowledge of God's Word, their relationship with Jesus Christ, and their ability to influence others for His Kingdom.

We recognize that excellence is not perfection. Excellence is giving God our best with the gifts, opportunities, and responsibilities He has entrusted to us. Together, we commit to pursuing growth with humility, faithfulness, and a teachable spirit.

Participant Commitment

As an Auxano participant, I will strive to:

- Pursue a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, and obedience.
- Remember that leadership is a privilege to serve others, not a position to elevate myself.
- Guard my heart against pride, recognizing that every ability, opportunity, and accomplishment is a gift from God.
- Seek faithfulness over recognition, knowing that God values obedience more than achievement.
- Demonstrate Christ-like humility by listening, serving, accepting correction, and treating every person with dignity and respect.
- Attend at least three annual one-on-one Auxano mentor sessions.
- Complete trainings, leadership activities, and program requirements to the best of my ability.
- Encourage and help other students succeed, celebrating their growth as much as my own.
- Represent Jesus Christ, Teens For Christ, and the Auxano Leadership Program well both in public and private.
- **I understand that the purpose of Auxano is not to earn pins, jackets, or recognition. These are simply reminders of God's work in my life and opportunities He has given me to grow. My goal is to become more like Jesus Christ and to faithfully serve others through the gifts He has entrusted to me.**

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." — Philippians 2:3

Mentor Commitment

As an Auxano mentor, I will strive to:

- Pray regularly for my participant.
- Meet consistently (at least 3x's/ year) with my Mentee for encouragement, discipleship, and accountability.
- Model Christ-like character through my words and actions.
- Provide honest, gracious feedback that encourages continual growth.
- Celebrate progress while helping my mentee pursue excellence rather than perfection and development rather than pride of accomplishment.
- Support the mission and values of Teens For Christ and the Auxano Leadership Program.

Our Shared Commitment

Together we agree to:

- Build a relationship marked by honesty, trust, encouragement, and respect.
- Communicate openly and promptly.
- Pursue continual growth in our **Head** (Biblical knowledge), **Heart** (Christlike character), and **Hands** (leadership and service).
- Remember that leadership development is a journey. We will celebrate progress, extend grace during setbacks, speak truth in love, and continually strive to become more like Christ.

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” — Colossians 3:23

By signing below, we affirm our commitment to pursue excellence together throughout the Auxano Leadership Program.

Participant Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Mentor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian (if under 18): _____ **Date:** _____

Auxano Staff Representative: _____ **Date:** _____

To be an Auxano mentor, please contact Chad Peterson

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