

YOUNG LIONS



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Over 20 years ago, while I was Youth Alive Director for AoG, Young Lions was birthed out of a desire to see young leaders across AoG churches identified, developed, assessed and released into big, faith-filled, dynamic leadership.

The essence of this unique programme hasn't changed much over the twenty years that it has run; this is still our desire, and Young Lions is the perfect vehicle to achieve this.

My current role as Leadership Development Director in AoG GB means that my scope is somewhat wider, but Young Lions is still essential in the bigger picture, the need to help churches to identify and develop the next generations early is as important as ever, both to the Church and AoG.

Wherever you are in the Young Lions picture; from nervous first time delegate, to empowered third year, or maybe one of our coaches, I encourage you to embrace the journey; throw yourself into the challenge, into building life-long relationships and into all that God has for you in this!

Live Big

SIMON JARVIS
AOG GB LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

HANNAH WILLIAMSON

YOUNG LIONS LEAD

I stepped into Young Lions at the age of 17, a shy and 'reluctant leader' wondering why I had been chosen to be there. Young Lions for me was instrumental in my growth and development. I look back 20 years thankful for these three weekends that shaped me and prepared me for leadership.

When I became a Youth Pastor, I committed to sending young people every year so they could experience what I had. I am passionate about Young Lions because it's unique in the way it identifies, develops and assesses young leaders. We need young people today who will influence the world with the power of the gospel, making a difference in every sphere of life and my hope is that Young Lions will be a vehicle to make this happen.

I hope you will commit to sending Young People in this year to come!



WHAT IS YOUNG LIONS?

FOR OVER 20 YEARS, YOUNG LIONS HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATIONS OF AOG GB LEADERS.

Just over 20 years ago around 60 young people came together from churches across the UK to experience a bootcamp style weekend to develop and assess them as leaders. We have seen over 2000 young leaders trained over the years that Young Lions has been running. Many of these young leaders have gone on to lead in all spheres of life, having influence in both the church and world around them.



TODAY WE HAVE A VISION OF IDENTIFYING, DEVELOPING AND ASSESSING OVER 1000 YOUNG LEADERS EACH YEAR.

Young Lions is a bootcamp style weekend for young leaders between the ages of 15-19. It offers a unique mixture of ministry, teaching, coaching groups & practical challenges, all designed to identify, develop and assess the next generations of young leaders. Our Nation needs young leaders who know God, know themselves, and are equipped to further His Kingdom wherever they are. Our Nation needs Young Lions.

We believe that the church needs to have a 'wave after wave' approach to developing leaders; understanding that the second we stop investing in those coming after us, we're a generation from dying out! Young Lions plays a part in that, exposing young people to what leadership is, the call on all believers to lead where they are, and to take responsibility to shape themselves into the image of Christ.

“Young Lions was foundational in my leadership journey. It built within me the resilience required to keep going whatever obstacles may lie ahead. It taught me how crucial feedback is to grow in both self-awareness and self-development. It provided me with friends that have lasted a lifetime who still encourage and sharpen me as a leader to this day. And it ignited a Holy Spirit fuelled passion within me to join with Jesus in building His church that hasn't dwindled in nearly 20 years! Every pastor needs to send their young leaders to Young Lions!”

Danny Murphy
Lead Pastor - Life Church Bedworth



WHAT HAPPENS AT A YOUNG LIONS WEEKEND?

COACHING GROUPS

On arrival, delegates are placed into coaching groups, who they spend the weekend with. These are mixed groups with other delegates in the same year as them. Each group has a Coach assigned to them, who is an older leader skilled at working with this age group. The Coach supports the Young Lions through the weekend, facilitating relationship growth and conversation and completes an assessment of the delegates in their group.

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Over the weekend, we gather all Young Lions and Coaches together on a number of occasions for our Keynote Sessions. These are powerful times of worship and ministry and feature a message from a guest speaker or a member of the Young Lions team.

YEAR GROUP SESSIONS

Each year group have their own programme, delivered by the year group team. These sessions are designed to equip the Young Lions progressively over the three year journey with some key principles and skills involved in leading in the Kingdom of God. Sessions are a mixture of teaching, interaction and coaching group breakdowns. Year Group summaries are included in this booklet.

THE STRETCH

The Stretch is an outdoor activity designed to put the young leader in a more 'pressured' environment so that they can be challenged to push themselves beyond what feels possible and to encourage team work. This is explained further in this booklet.

THE CONVERSATION

The Conversation is a Keynote session consisting of a Panel made up of Young Lions Team and Coaches. It creates space to engage with some hot topics and ask questions in a safe environment.

GRADUATION

At the end of the weekend, we graduate our third year group, celebrating their Young Lions experience, commissioning them for their ongoing leadership journey and of course, awarding them their famous Young Lions Dog Tags!

ASSESSMENT FORMS

Every delegate is sent home with an assessment form, completed by their Coach. This form looks into their Young Lions experience holistically, how did they interact with others? What did they display in the Stretch? What is their leadership style and personality? What can they do to grow? The form is an excellent discipleship tool and snapshot of where the Young Lion is currently.

PRACTICALITIES

All meals are provided at Young Lions; delegates are expected to sit with their coaching groups for mealtimes. Rooms are generally arranged in dormitories, and delegates are placed in rooms with delegates of the same gender, and similar age. Under 18 and over 18 delegates are placed in separate rooms, delegates will never share a room with a Coach.

YRI: CHARACTER

We want to help young leaders understand that the primary and most important thing they can work on as a leader is their character.

In year 1, we look at setting the culture for the three years of young lions - a leadership bootcamp aimed to identify, develop and assess young people with the potential to lead. We want to give a strong focus into what it means to build character as a leader and how integrity of character is so necessary to have in the world we live and lead in.

'WE SET YOUNG LEADERS UP FOR A FALL IF WE ENCOURAGE THEM TO ENVISION WHAT THEY CAN DO BEFORE THEY CONSIDER THE KIND OF PERSON THEY SHOULD BE.' - R. RUTH BARTON

'Young Lions year 1 is a game changer for young leaders. I have personally seen young people go to young lions for the first time and get a glimpse of the leadership potential that is on their lives. Year 1 focussed on character and what better way to start the young lions journey. You may be gifted but without character you cannot lead well. Year 1 is no doubt an eye opening experience for all young leaders.'

Callum Shinnie, Year 1 Lead



'It's hard to put Young Lions into words. I walked into young lions with a few expectations but finding I left with so much more than expected! I came away from Young Lions with so many different leadership skills and the confidence to be able to lead in different areas of my life.'

Emily Dadzie, 1st year delegate

YRII: LEADERSHIP

Year 2 builds on the first year teaching on the individual's character. On this foundation, we begin to explore the concept of leadership: principles of self-leadership, different leadership styles and our ability to communicate. This all helps develop the ability and awareness of the young leader to lead themselves and others to a higher level.

"BEFORE WE CAN CONQUER THE WORLD, WE MUST FIRST CONQUER THE SELF... MANY WHO DROP OUT OF MINISTRY ARE SUFFICIENTLY GIFTED, BUT HAVE LARGE AREAS OF LIFE FLOATING FREE FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT'S CONTROL... JESUS CALLS US TO DIG DOWN DEEP AND LAY A GOOD FOUNDATION." - MICHAEL D. MILLER

"I love second year because the Young Lions reach us having had a year to build on the character principles that have been taught in year 1. The delegates are in a place of wrestling with the sense of the call of God to lead in a kingdom way in a world that often screams so loudly the opposite way. Watching them get to grips with their personal leadership journey and style is always a joy"

Reg Awoliyi, Year 2 Lead



'Year 2 created an opportunity for me to encounter God like never before and helped to clarify what I can do in this great commission we have all been tasked in. Through participation and opening up to my coaches, I was able to open my heart for God to speak to me and through me.'

Albert Opoko, Year 2 Delegate

YR III: VISION



Year 3 is all about helping young leaders to identify their 'why' and begin to start forming a vision for their lives. Throughout the weekend we help the young people to begin thinking about what God has uniquely called them to and the type of lives they want to live, as well as looking into what potential pitfalls may come so that they can best avoid them. There is an opportunity during the weekend for them to share with the group what their vision is helping to build confidence and encourage one another. Our hope is that year 3's will go away from the weekend empowered to be an influence in their localities.

'GOD'S VISIONS FOR YOUR LIFE ARE THE THINGS THAT WILL GIVE YOUR LIFE IMPACT BEYOND THIS LIFE.'
 - ANDY STANLEY



'Year 3 is all about helping the delegates when the rubber hits the road. We look at leading under someone else's vision, making choices that will sustain and grow you and help the delegates to articulate what they feel god is calling them to. Year 3 will set up the delegates for leading in the next season after being in youth ministry.'

Andy Smith, Year 3 Lead

'I absolutely loved my third year. There was such a fun vibrant group of us that were passionate about God. I felt uplifted and positively challenged by the leaders and group and this encouraged me massively when going back to my normal day to day life.'

Abi Jarvis



THE STRETCH

'The Stretch' has been a regular part of the vision of Young Lions and is an outdoor activity aimed at putting the young leader in a more 'pressured' environment so that they can be challenged to push themselves beyond what feels possible and to encourage team work. This allows their coach a way of better assessing where they are truly at.

We all know that it is not until you are in a pressured situation that you realise what you need to work on and 'The Stretch' allows for this to happen.

Our Stretch lead constructs a programme to help us encourage the 'pressure-building' for this and ensure we create opportunities for the young leader to reflect on what they have learnt about themselves from this. All activities are risk assessed and developed with all delegates in mind.



"The Stretch has the ability to expose our weakness and shed light on our vulnerabilities quicker than anything else. Through the stretch we're able to create a safe and controlled environment for an individual to reach beyond their physical and mental barriers that they may have created. We want young people to learn to push past what they feel and start tapping into what they believe. In a society that's driven by self, 'The Stretch' forces them to lay down their pride and come face to face with their weaknesses, finding strength despite them."

Rachel Isaiah, Stretch Lead



COACHING AT YOUNG LIONS

Coaching delegates at Young Lions is as much a stretch and growth opportunity for the coach as it is for the delegates. It requires strategic thinking, keen observation and judgement, reserves of energy and brutal honesty. The primary role of a coach is that of an observer, assessor and mentor. This means taking responsibility for a small group of delegates and their development throughout the weekend. This is made easy by the strategically planned, intense programme which is full of opportunities to see the young leaders in different situations.

We ask a lot of our coaches, so ensure that you are supported and looked after as well. Ahead of the weekend, we will ensure that you as a coach are properly equipped to do this by providing training sessions in advance and support throughout the weekend from the 'head coach.' These sessions will consist of both prep for the weekend and safeguarding training. At the weekend, there is a coaches lounge, which is the perfect place to grab a cuppa and network with other coaches.

All Young Lions Team and Coaches are required to either hold a current enhanced DBS Certificate that is registered to the Update Service or we will arrange for a free of charge Enhanced DBS Check to be conducted ahead of attending. This must be renewed every three years. If you do not receive your certificate in time, you will not be allowed to coach at the weekend.



“Coaching facilitates an environment of reflection and growth, Enabling delegates to evaluate their current position in their leadership journey and what progress they want to make.”



The unique nature of coaching at Young lions is the peer to peer dynamic. Delegates are encouraged to see and call out the good in those they are in a group with. The impact of encouragement from your peers in your leadership journey is vital as it creates a bond that is necessary for ministry.”

Jeronne Rudder, Coaching Lead

YOUNG LIONS FAQs

HOW MUCH DOES YOUNG LIONS COST AND WHAT DOES IT INCLUDE?

Young Lions has a different cost for delegates and coaches. For up to date costs and when the earlybird rate ends for each weekend please visit aoggb.com/younglions. This price covers everything outside of your transport - so your accommodation, food, Young Lions T Shirt, assessment forms and more!

DO I HAVE TO ATTEND THE NEAREST YOUNG LIONS WEEKEND TO ME?

You are welcome to attend whichever Young Lions Weekend works best for you either by location or date - you do not need to attend the weekend that is in your country if another works better for you!

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I ATTEND A YOUNG LIONS WEEKEND?

You should aim to complete your Young Lions journey over a three year period, however if for any reason you are unable to attend a weekend for a year, you may pick up your progress the following year.

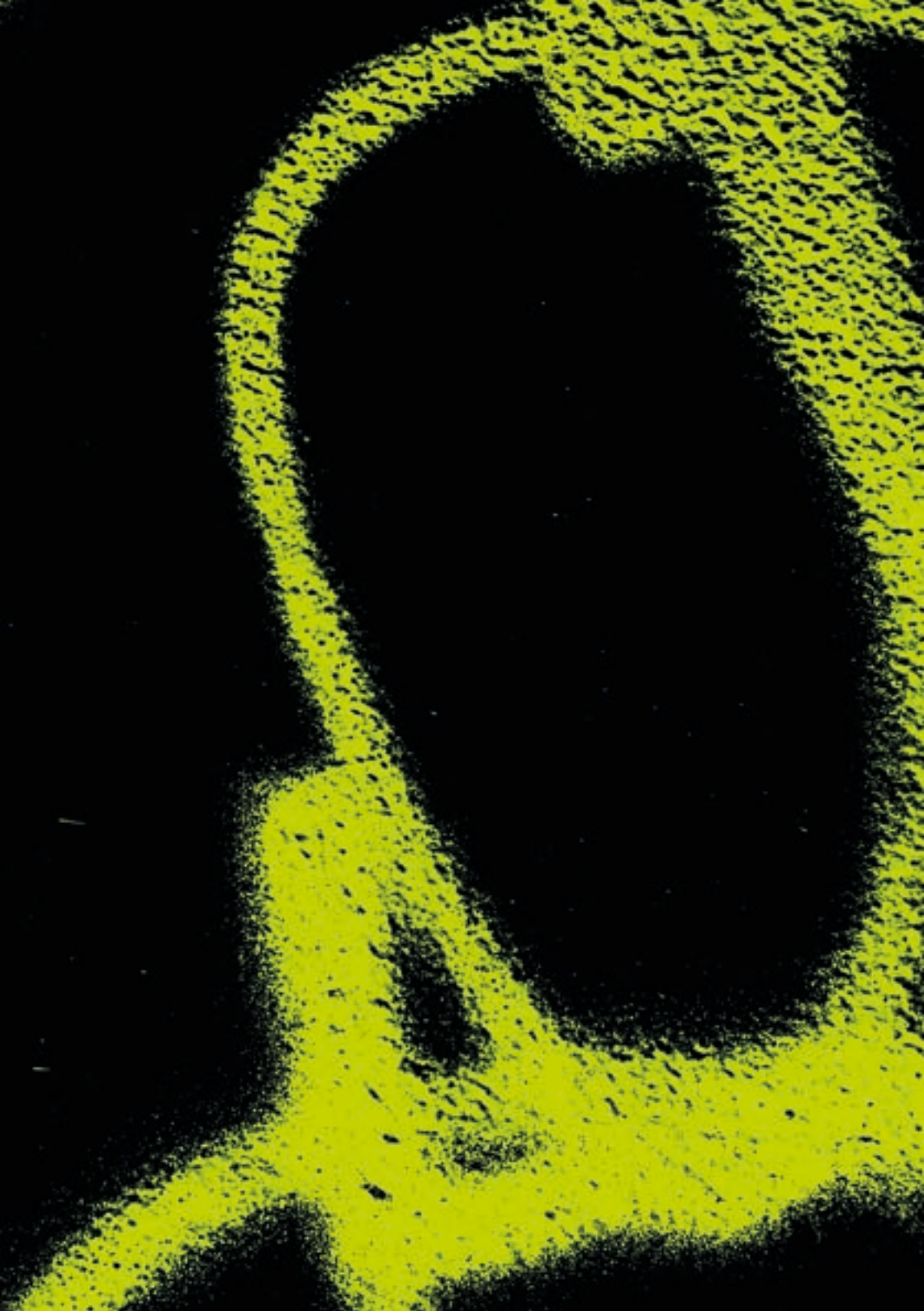
I'M THE OLDER END OF 15-19, CAN I JUMP STRAIGHT INTO YEAR 2 / 3?

Every Young Lions delegate must start from 1st year, the experience is incomplete without it! 19 is the oldest you may begin your Young Lions Delegate journey, however if you were to start at 19 years old, you may complete years 2 & 3 beyond the age of 19.

HOW SAFE IS YOUNG LIONS?

All Young Lions Team and Coaches are required to either hold a current enhanced DBS Certificate that is registered to the Update Service or we will arrange for a free of charge Enhanced DBS Check to be conducted ahead of attending. This must be renewed every three years. All leaders involved in making Young Lions happen must also be recommended by their home Church, and undergo online safeguarding training ahead of the weekend.

Activities are risk-assessed and supervised, and appointed first-aiders are on site at all times. The Stretch (our outdoor activity) does involve some physical activity, but is designed with the delegates in mind. All under 18 delegates must provide a signed consent form before attending the weekend.



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