



Capernaum Ministries

Including teens and young adults
with disabilities

“We have parents who tell me that their son or daughter with a disability has never had a friend until they became involved in Young Life. Plus, we have typical kids participating with us who are reaching out and nurturing someone whom they may not have noticed before.”

– Pam Harmon,
Director of Operations

Young Life's Capernaum VISION



In Young Life, we believe young people with disabilities have the right to experience life as God intended it – life lived to the full. This includes meaningful relationships, fun and laughter, and adventure and acceptance. We believe that kids who need assistance

can and should participate fully in activities that build self-esteem, challenge their limits and help them discover their ability to do new things. And, we believe that all adolescents deserve the opportunity to explore a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

In Young Life, we go to every kind of kid, loving them just as they are with a vision for who they can become.

Young Life is a non-profit, non-denominational ministry founded in 1941. An international ministry, Young Life is located in more than 70 countries around the world – with more than 4,500 ministries in major cities, suburbs and rural communities.





Did You Know?

One out of five adolescents has a disability. Only one in 15 churches has a specific program designed for kids with disabilities.

You Can Make A Difference

through Young Life's Capernaum ministry:

- Recognize the unique needs and gifts of kids with disabilities.
- Develop a meaningful relationship with an exceptional adolescent.
- Help raise disability awareness within your community and church.
- Experience the joy of friendship with an exceptional kid.

You Can Help

teens and young adults with disabilities discover life to the fullest:

- Become a volunteer leader or driver.
- Provide financial support.
- Serve on a local area committee.
- Help start a Young Life Capernaum ministry in your community.

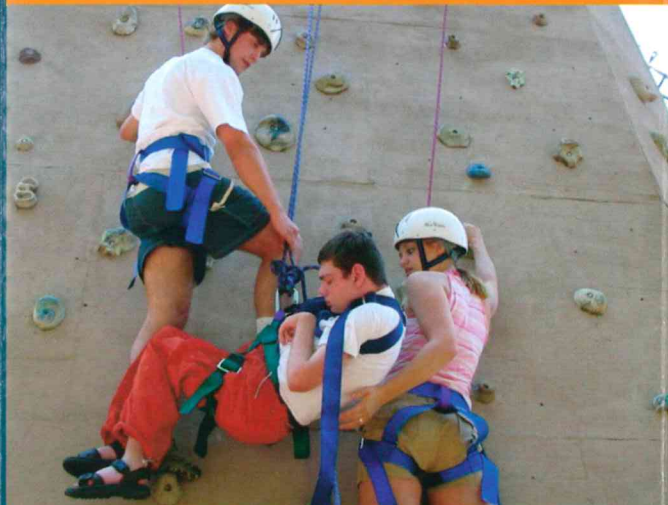
We call Young Life's ministry for teens and young adults with disabilities, "Capernaum," because we don't think that physical or mental limitations should keep an adolescent from the presence of the One who promises fullness of life. Like the friends in the story, we move through barriers including the isolation and marginalization that can accompany having special needs, believing that the lives of kids with disabilities, as well as their able-bodied friends, are transformed by the shared experience of Young Life.

Young Life's first outreach to kids with disabilities, The Capernaum Project, was founded by Nick Palermo in 1986 in San Jose, Calif. Since then, Young Life's focus on teens and young adults with disabilities, called Capernaum, has spread throughout the United States and abroad.

Capernaum is established and supported locally by caring people with a heart for adolescents with disabilities. Staff and trained volunteer leaders help these friends discover and enjoy acceptance, adventure and fun in the mutual friendships they develop and at weekly club meetings, special events and camping trips.

"My wife is committed to starting a Young Life Capernaum ministry because of our son. She refuses to let our blessings with Matthew go unshared."

– Scott, committee member and volunteer leader



"When you are around people with special needs, you never stop learning. The relationship can change both lives."

**– Maggie,
a high school senior
involved in Capernaum**

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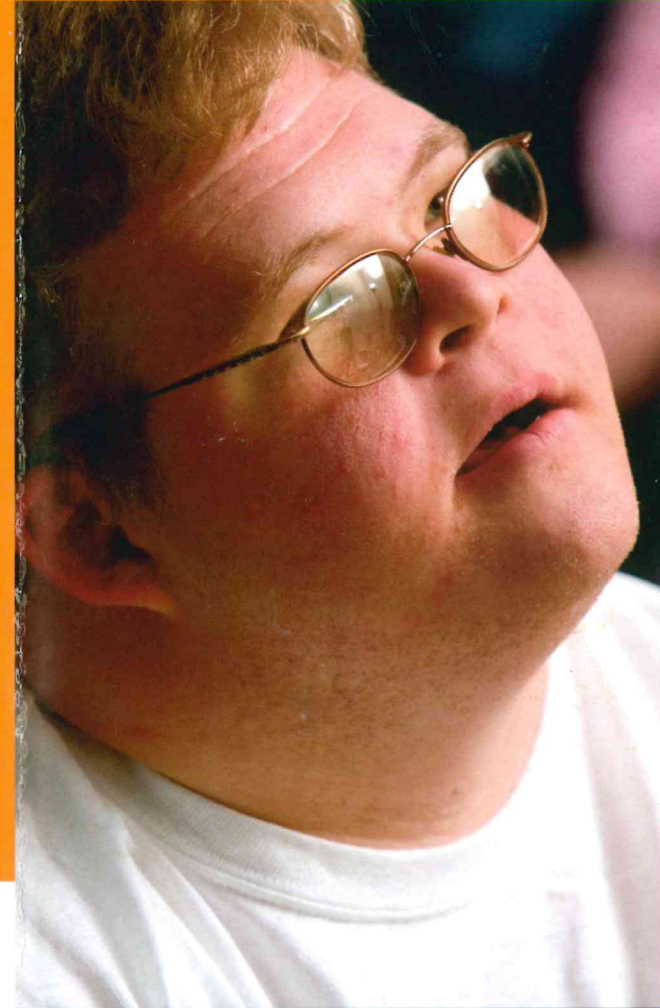
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Capernaum Ministries

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with disabilities

Capernaum:

*working with
our friends with
disabilities*



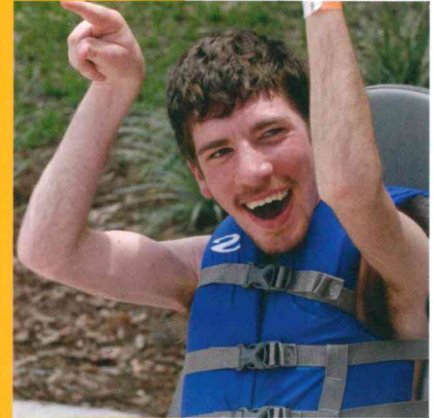
Young Life's Capernaum Vision

In Young Life, we believe young people with disabilities have the right to experience the abundant life God intended for them. This includes meaningful relationships, fun, adventure and acceptance. We believe teens who need assistance can and should participate fully in activities that build self-esteem, challenge their limits and help them discover their abilities to do new things. And, we believe all adolescents deserve the opportunity to explore a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Young Life is a non-profit, non-denominational ministry founded in 1941. A global ministry, Young Life is present in more than 90 countries around the world — with nearly 6,500 ministries in major cities, suburbs and rural communities.

“ *The leaders were the most compassionate, loving people we'd ever seen. They made every kid feel like the most special person in the world.* ”

— Nancy, mother
of a child with disabilities



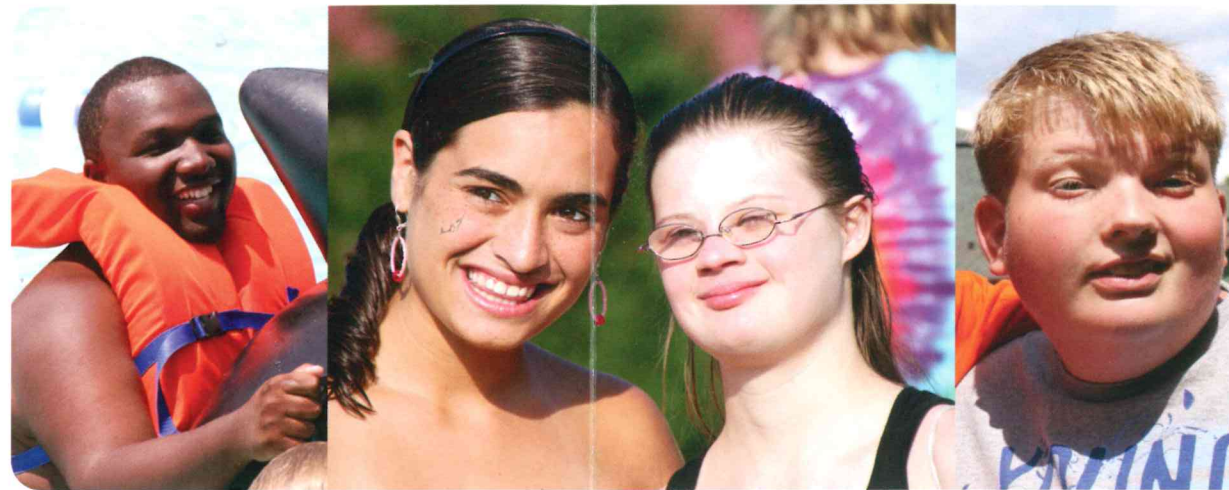
Capernaum?

abled men and their friend with a disability. Eager for their friend in Capernaum (kuh-per-ney-uhm), the men carried him to the boat. When the friends arrived, crowds already there were gathered anywhere close to Jesus. Undaunted, they carried him on mats of straw and hardened mud, and lowered the man into the boat.

Jesus took the man with a disability to wholeness and health. The man who witnessed the event — were never the same.

Young Life calls these events with disabilities “Capernaum,” because we don’t want our children should keep an adolescent from the presence of the friends in the story, we move through barriers, including those who accompany having special needs, believing that the lives of our able-bodied friends, are transformed by the shared

experience locally by caring people with a heart for adolescents with disabilities. Leaders help these friends discover and enjoy acceptance, and as they develop and at weekly club meetings, special



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You Can Help

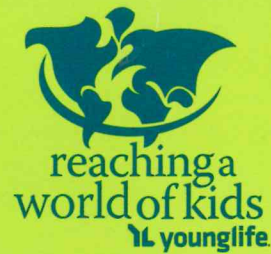
adolescents with disabilities discover life to the fullest:

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- Serve on a local area committee.
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“*Capernaum is not just a place to drop your kids off — this is a place where people are passionate about showing the love of Jesus to your child.*”

— Regina,
mother
of twins with
special needs





Reaching a World of Kids is Young Life's strategic initiative to extend our worldwide impact to two million kids annually by 2016. An integral piece of this global initiative will involve increasing the size and number of Capernaum ministries and increasing camp opportunities for our friends with disabilities. We believe the mission can reach this ambitious goal in part because of the firm foundation of support that exists in the form of faithful friends in communities throughout the United States and around the world.

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Capernaum: *working with our friends with disabilities*

