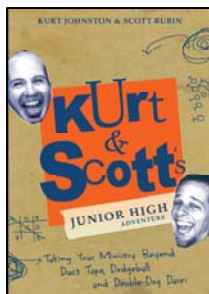


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Two Youth Pastors Release Playbook That Provides Insight and Encouragement for Junior High Ministry Leaders

Kurt Johnston and Scott Rubin encourage youth leaders to take groups to the next level



Denver, CO – Kurt Johnston and Scott Rubin are pastors at two of America's most influential churches, with Johnston at Saddleback Church and Rubin at Willow Creek Church. Combined, the two have over 40 years of youth ministry experience and when it comes to growing a youth ministry - they know what strategies works and what needs re-evaluating.

The two have created a “playbook” for junior high workers called ***Kurt & Scott's Junior High Adventure: Taking Your Ministry Beyond Duct Tape, Dodgeball and Double-Dog Dares*** (Group Publishing), a book that challenges the status quo in youth ministry into something greater—where teens connect with Jesus.

Johnston and Rubin want youth leaders to discover new strategies, think critically about what they're doing, and voice their opinion when new discoveries are made.

“The silly title of this little book really says it all. Working with junior high students is quite an adventure,” Johnston says, who has been involved in youth ministry since 1988. Johnston has been a columnist for Group over the past seven years, and the book is a compilation of his best work, alongside revised content, commentary and ideas from Rubin.

The two are humorous, honest and often disagree. Success with youth isn't about being cool, either, they say. It's not about MySpace, quoting movie lines or the latest trends in youth ministry. The author's insights will aid junior high leaders and volunteers, new and old. It's about recruiting volunteers, setting priorities, growing as a leader, connecting with parents, and above all, inspiring youth to live out their faith in an American culture that may be the most difficult and challenging it has ever been. Johnston and Rubin sound off on some of the following:

- **On Priority:** Remember the little things, practice the art of the second chance, put youth first, and be a source of security.
- **On Teachings:** Is it true? Is it encouraging? Is it applicable? Is it clear? Is it humorous?
- **Qualities of a good junior high leader:** Be ethical, be effective and be efficient.
- **Becoming a Game Guru:** Be energetic, be organized, be fair, be clear, be sensitive, and be willing to mix it up.
- **Seeing is Believing:** Examining what you're atmosphere, meeting space and adult leaders say about your ministry.
- **T.H.E. way to do junior high ministry:** Teamwork, humility and excellence.
- **Deciding to leave student ministry:** Pause, pray and progress

Johnston and Rubin cast a collaborative vision of what youth ministry can be—a place where families take ownership, the students take possession of truth and grace, and a place where more-and-more people get involved in the lives of today's youth. It's a life-changing vision.

-more-

About the Authors:

Kurt Johnston has been in junior high ministry since 1988—and he’s still smiling! Currently, he’s the Junior High Pastor at Saddleback Church in Southern California. Kurt also likes encouraging other junior high youth works, and has written a few books and created a ton of resources with that goal in mind. He’s also the founder of www.simplyjuniorhigh.com.

He’s a rabid Denver Broncos fan and believes orange and blue are God’s favorite colors. Kurt spends some of his free time golfing, surfing and riding dirt bikes. But more than anything else, he likes to hang out with his family. He’s been married to Rachel since 1991 and together they have two fantastic kids, Kayla and Cole.

Scott Rubin lives in Chicago, even though he loves tropical weather and there aren’t many beaches there. He’s the Junior High Pastor at Willow Creek...which is an imperfect-but-still-pretty-cool church. He also loves working with middle school students, and trying to help them follow Jesus. He’s worked with high school students, too, but for the last eight years he’s been a junior high pastor.

Scott has let junior high students shave his head, bean him with dodge balls, shove horse feed into his face, and he sometimes even lets them beat him in basketball...all in the name of ministry. (When he was in middle school, some of his best friends were named Gumper, Bubba, and Doper.)

Among the biggest honors of his life are being married to Lynette; being dad to Tanner, Dawson and Brock; and being teammates with his friends at Elevate, the junior high ministry at Willow Creek.

About Kurt & Scott's Junior High Adventure:

Title: *Kurt & Scott's Junior High Adventure: Taking Your Ministry Beyond Duct Tape, Dodgeball and Double-Dog Dares* by Kurt Johnston and Scott Rubin. Group Publishing, February 2008. 978-0764437397, Paperback, 80 pages. \$17.99.

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