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For Immediate Release

70% OF CHRISTIAN TEENS WILL WALK AWAY FROM THEIR FAITH DURING THEIR FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE

In an August 7, 2007 USA Today article (“Young Adults Aren’t Sticking With Church”), a national survey by LifeWay Research unveiled groundbreaking research that shows that 70% of church-attending Christian teens leave the church. The greatest numbers leave at ages 17, 18 or 19 throughout their senior year of high school and upon entering their freshman year at college. College becomes a spiritual graveyard for many Christian students... a place where their faith wanes. Culture shock, loneliness, peer pressure and an environment of freedom without bounds result in 70% of approximately 1.2 million youth ministry graduates per year leaving the foundations of their faith. For many of them, their God-given needs go unmet for the first time: to be loved, accepted and to fit into a group. When our students leave home alone with no established connection to Christian roommates, college, career or military ministries (on campus or in the church) and godly Christian friends they lose the accountability and balance provided by these vital relationships.

THE CHURCH HAS JOINED FORCES TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

Youth Transition Network (YTN), founded by Jeff Schadt, has assembled an historic gathering, crossing denominational boundaries, of our nation’s largest youth, college and military ministries to address the alarming reality of the loss of youth from our churches. Campus Crusade, Chi Alpha, InterVarsity, The National Network of Youth Ministries, The Navigators, Youth for Christ and many others have decided to join forces to find solutions to this problem and to provide resources for students, parents, youth leaders and pastors to help our teens make the leap from high school to college, career and the military with a vital Christian faith.

YTN has identified some of the keys that can help transform the freshman year from a graveyard into a spiritual greenhouse where a student’s faith blossoms. A Christian roommate provides friendship and accountability, helping students connect with a Christian community during the highest point of vulnerability: the first 72 hours on campus. It is during this period when the stress and loneliness are at their peak, that many students set the course for their first semester, first year and potentially for the rest of their lives. Motivating and connecting students relationally with college, career and military ministries BEFORE they arrive on campus is essential. These godly relationships provide balance and offer the opportunity for God to work in teens’ lives as they internalize their faith, apart from parents ... some of them for the very first time.

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Through this historic coalition of ministries, **YTN** is launching the “Be Prepared” Campaign to increase the priority of preparing and connecting our graduates to military, college and career ministries across the nation. The coalition has assembled transition videos, biblical materials and a student connecting point (LiveAbove.com) to help parents and youth leaders connect our graduates before they leave home.

The **Youth Transition Network** is a non-profit organization dedicated to decreasing the annual loss of youth from the church following graduation and leveraging the existing infrastructure of their ministry partners to make the relational transition of youth a reality. For more information go to www.YouthTransitionNetwork.org.

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TO BOOK AN INTERVIEW with JEFF SCHADT or YOUTH TRANSITION NETWORK contact
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